

WATERMARK

9

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Watermark accepts submissions annually between October and February. We are dedicated to publishing original critical and theoretical essays concerned with literature of all genres and periods, as well as works representing current issues in the fields of rhetoric and composition. Reviews of current works of literary criticism or theory are also welcome.

All submissions must be accompanied by a cover letter that includes the author's name, phone number, email address, and the title of the essay or book review. All essay submissions should be approximately 12-15 pages and must be typed in MLA format with a standard 12 pt. font. Book reviews ought to be 750-1,000 words in length. As this journal is intended to provide a forum for emerging voices, only student work will be considered for publication. Submissions will not be returned. Please direct all questions to editor@watermarkjournal.com and address all submissions to:

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WATERMARK⁹

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A Note from *Watermark's* Editor

While the spirit of *Watermark* will always remain consistent, the flesh and guts carrying it forward, and the minds imagining it, evolve. Today's ecology of scholarly writing brings patterns of necessary changes to the conditions within which thinkers think, and within which creators create. It is for this reason that we present *Watermark 9* in a new kind of skin.

Today's rain of innovation shifts accessibility, calling for increased visibility. To be viewable is to be accessible. In reaction to this pattern shift, the staff of this edition of *Watermark* has worked to increase the journal's online presence tremendously. The waters from these rains have been channelled out, and the embankments they have rinsed down have yielded a river of visibility and accessibility--*Watermark's* familiar spirit, progressing within new skin.

While washes of rain have driven *Watermark* forward through spaces, increasing visibility, the winds encountered along the way have lilted the journal forward through time. Integral to the healthy evolution of the flesh and guts carrying *Watermark's* spirit is an awareness of tomorrow's possible evolutionary nuances. To look ahead in time we decided to pull tomorrow into today. The staff of *Watermark 9* is proud to have crafted the first edition of the journal with editorial contributions made by an undergraduate English student from CSULB. The unification from the interplay of the current generation with the next has yielded a new base camp, for future editions to come out of, that the elements of coming ecological patterns cannot mar.

Of course, not one instance of this progress could have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the staff members placing the puzzle pieces of the following pages together. The fruits of their labors emerged only from blossoms that were the guidance and contributions of our faculty advisor, Dr. George Hart; as well as the assistance of Lisa Beherendt, Doris Pintscher, and Christopher Knight; the departmental leadership of Dr. Eileen Klink; and the support provided to our staff by the entire English Department faculty at CSULB.

Levon Parseghian
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Contents

- 11** Restoring the Material
Status of the Body in Walt
Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* MICHAEL
BENITEZ
- 27** Making Use of "Sad Trash":
An Examination of Order
and Waste in *Frankenstein* NICOLE
BENNETT
- 44** Female Friendships
Explored: Esther and Ada
in *Bleak House* SARA
BITAR
- 59** "Queering the Dark Side":
Interrogating Anguish in
"A Story of Rats" and "The
Terrible Sonnets" MERRY
DEATH
- 70** An Ecocritical Look
at Mythic Spaces and
Nationalistic Sentiment in
Bill Willingham's *Jack of
Fables: Americana* AMY
DESUZA
- 84** "Wash my fierce hand in's
heart": The Language of
Contagion, Duality, and
the Body in *Coriolanus* ALEXANDRIA
GILBERT

- 99 Whig Ideology, Predestination, and “Monstrous Generation”: Rowe’s *Tamerlane* as a Key to Defoe’s *Roxana* OMAR HUSSEIN
- 115 Cannibalism, Currencies, and Consumption in Christopher Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* ANDRES LARA
- 127 Daguerreotype: Mirror and Record in an Age of Consumption MICHAEL PALOMAREZ
- 137 A Price to Pay: Gender, Rape and Power in J.M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace* LAURA PICKLESIMER
- 151 “The Forest Closed Upon Her Like a Pair of Jaws”: Lycanthropy and Female Sexuality in Angela Carter’s Wolf Trilogy KAYLEIGH QUARTERMAN
- 162 REVIEW: Richard Kern and Jean Schultz’s “Beyond Orality: Investigating Literacy and the Literary in Second and Foreign Language Instruction” EVAN RUIZ

- 168** Created in His Image: The
Void of Lacanian Desire
that Birthed Frankenstein's
Suicide
KRISTEN
SKJONSBY
- 182** "Hope and No-hope,
Both at the Same Time":
Reading *Time's Arrow* as a
Deconstructionist Text
ANTHONY
URQUIDI
- 199** The Twisted Dichotomy of
Masculinity and Femininity:
A Study of Gender Relations
in Ernest Hemingway's *The
Sun Also Rises*
ERIKA
ZEMANEK

Restoring the Material Status of the Body in Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass

MICHAEL BENITEZ

The theme of corporeality emerges as one of the dominant concerns in Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, as is evident in many of the poems from the "Children of Adam" sequence. While this theme is overtly central to the sequence's erotic poems, such as "I Sing the Body Electric" and "Spontaneous Me," this essay examines "As Adam in the Early Morning" and "Once I Pass'd through a Populous City," two poems that deploy the theme of corporeality in strategic, compacted, and nuanced ways.¹ Taking into account what seems to be a simple privileging of the body—or even a gratuitous fetishization of the body—I will argue that Whitman's engagement with the theme of corporeality in these poems reinstates what some critics call the "body erotic," or what we might also call the "body proper";² Whitman renders the body in all of its physical glory,

1 It should be noted here that these two poems contain 5 lines and 7 lines, respectively—hence the limited textual references in this essay, although each poem is quoted almost in its entirety. Despite their brevity, these poems are extremely dense and this essay attempts to unpack them.

2 I prefer this latter term because it is as not suffused with eroticism as the former term is. As I will explain below, the "body proper" has a more neutral and all-encompassing connotation, whereas the more commonly used "body erotic," perhaps inadvertently, limits the body's primary role to (en)actor of eroticism. Viewing the body through this lens of eroticism isolates it to those terms, but a materialist framing helps to account for the body's erotic possibilities and more. Critics who usually favor analyzing the "body erotic" include Aspiz; Erkkila; Killingsworth; Miller; Oerlemans; Pollak; and Teichert.

and not merely as a manifestation of the spiritual. This terminology suggests that Whitman's poetic project is to reimagine a traditional model of stratification that places soul above the body and, in turn, to restore the body's status as equal to that of the soul.

By creating a physical-metaphysical commingling rather than reinforcing a physical-metaphysical hierarchy, these poems pose a bilateral interaction of the body and the soul that operates dialectically, a model in which the body and soul become inextricably bound together, mutually inform one another, and are in tension with one another. In this formulation, the confluence of the body and the soul—two originary yet separate sites of identity formation, two basic yet distinct foundations for a sense of the self—lays the groundwork for a new understanding of the self. Whitman's verse stages this dialectical process for poetic purposes, instilling his poems with imaginative verve rather than prosodic precision, and exploits it for political purposes, striving to impart to the reader a self-awareness that is as firmly rooted in the physical as it is in the spiritual.³ While more politically oriented readings of *Leaves of Grass* aim to expound the outcomes of this emerging (self-)awareness—that is, readings that tend to center how on the body's universality imprints a vision of democratic sameness, and on how such an ideology of the body figuratively establishes a united American body politic—this essay presents a more direct analysis of the materialist implications of Whitman's poems. My readings elaborate how, rather than poetically figuring an American political body, this newfound self-awareness of physicality advocates the praise of and the respect for the individual body as a necessary American principle. This celebration of the body becomes a value that, for Whitman, helps to inform a nascent American identity of selfhood—with its idealization of individuality, of independence, of Emersonian self-reliance—rather than merely using the body as a meta-

3 A brief note on the chronological tension between composing these poems and reading them: while Whitman's poetry is representing this dialectical work at the same time it is enacting that work, the poems are arguably a byproduct of the poet's own epiphany of the self, emulations of the process that the preeminent poet has already undertaken in his own exploration of the self. Although fascinating, the inquiry into the potential for a dialectical between poet and audience, between poetic intention and readerly interpretation, is beyond the scope of this essay.

phorical founding for an American body politic.

Although his poetry often details the body's functions, pleasures, and limitations, Whitman scholarship tends to explore how the body is configured in starkly universal and communal terms in order to establish a physical foundation for Whitman's spiritual vision of democracy and a united body politic. Emblematic of this critical tradition is the work done by Jimmie Killingsworth, who states that "sexual instincts provided a paradigm for inducements to social action, and the language of sexual behavior became the source of figures of speech whose deviations from conventional language could produce in an audience the shifts of awareness required for political acts" (xvi). By reconfiguring social relations as sexual ones, according to Killingsworth, Whitman textually enacts the intimacy and intense energy that he envisions for an ideal politically and morally conscious America. However, I would contend that to grant the body grand political importance, and to claim that its presence in *Leaves of Grass* acts merely as a vessel for a political or spiritual message, is also to deny the legitimacy of the body on its own physical terms. Such critical emphasis on the spiritual, political, and ideological implications of Whitman's poetry works against Whitman's own project of celebrating the body as having its own physical ontology, that is, as having an intrinsic meaning that can be communicated in materialist terms.

In recent years, some critics, such as Paul Gilmore and Mark Noble, have explored the materialist implications of Whitman's poetry. As Noble asserts, these larger, more abstract inquiries and the tensions that arise out of them are actually significantly steeped in Whitman's materialist concerns:

Conceptually prior to questions about whether or how it [a subjectivity founded by one's sense of his/her own materiality] obtains a political utility, however, are these questions about whether or how Whitman's materiality works in the first place—if it can privilege subjects it also reduces to objects and how it can sustain a materialist ... and from which poetic vocation appears to derive its authority. (261)

This materialist framing is not meant to discount the readings of potential political advocacy expressed in Whitman's poems, but rather to redirect these critical discussions toward a recognition that they are as fundamentally rooted in the renderings of the materiality of the body as Whitman's poetic celebration of the body is. Such arguments about Whitman's politics vis-à-vis his poetic rendering of the body necessitate an acknowledgement of the high status that Whitman confers upon the body; otherwise, they fall into "political reductiveness" (Gilmore 143), referring to how political readings of the body, by reducing the meaning of the body to a disembodied collective unit, do not fully account for the poetry's dynamic engagement with the politics of physicality or individuality. The stakes of these politically oriented readings, as Noble suggests, hinge profoundly, yet rather subtly, on Whitman's materialist figuring of the body. While this new critical direction has placed some pressure on previous political readings in such a way that those readings seem to co-opt Whitman's poetic investment in the body instead of rigorously investigating his materialist concerns to ground their political readings, there is a minimal amount of sustained closed readings of the body's materiality.⁴ This paper will inspect some specific textual moments in the "Children of Adam" sequence that help substantiate these materialist claims—indeed, moments that provide more material to flesh out these claims.

A great deal of Whitman criticism has also more specifically focused on the prevalence and sometimes rather explicit treatment of sex in *Leaves of Grass*, often paying particular attention to its homoerotic overtones and connecting this feature to Whitman's own homosexual behavior.⁵ One such critic, Sophia Rodriguez, contends that there must be a critical recognition of Whitman's view of "the central role of the erotic body in the shaping of American identity in the nineteenth century" (78). She asserts that, in Whitman's earlier poems, the union of erotic bodies entails

4 Gilmore, who provides an entire chapter to analyzing the aesthetics of materiality in "I Sing the Body Electric," is one exception. But this poem and "Spontaneous Me," perhaps the two most prevalently discussed poems, are more often read in terms of their sexuality rather than their materiality.

5 Cf. Byrne R. S. Fone for an extensive study of the homoeroticism in Whitman's poetry.

a spiritual connection, a sense of connection that is integral to his democratic vision of a community of love. But as I previously alluded, she is part of a critical consensus that still regards the “body erotic” as being constitutive of and foundational to the American identity, that the union of bodies anatomizes and perfects the political union of the country, and that these erotic bonds should be celebrated. While many of Whitman’s poems are rife with sexuality—that is, accounts of sexual encounters rather than any stable identitarian view of sexuality—it might be best to examine Whitman’s poetry as celebrating the human body’s materiality rather than the human subject’s sexuality; the body itself, rather than its erotic potential, is to be celebrated. With this new formulation in mind, the undeniably sexually charged content becomes reframed as an expression of the material body, not vice versa in which the body becomes a vessel for sexual expression. The assertions that Whitman eroticizes or sexualizes the body, rather paradoxically, affirm its materiality and simultaneously deny it, for the erotic/sexual meaning bestowed upon the body confirms the physical interaction of the body with other bodies (itself a conceptual projection of the various meanings attending embodiment and the enactments thereof), but it also divests the body of its self-contained materiality. In other words, these interpretations of the “body erotic” participate in a sexual politics rather than a “radical body-politics” (Moon 4); it is as if the body can only be “embodied”—that is, can only experience its own material existence—if it comes into contact with other bodies.

Two poems from the “Children of Adam” sequence, “As Adam Early in the Morning” and “Once I Pass’d through a Populous City,” have received scant critical attention, despite the fact that they contain many of the same preoccupations with the materiality of the body that much of Whitman’s other poems have. The two individual readings of these poems that follow mostly treat each one in isolation, but these readings speak to a larger poetic project that posits the importance of the body’s materiality. If the recurrence of the motif of the body signals anything, it is that Whitman is gesturing toward a philosophy of monism (i.e., the equal and indistinguishable coexistence of the body and the soul), or as

Whitman puts it at the very beginning of *Leaves of Grass*, “the Form complete” (“One’s-Self I Sing” 9).⁶ This philosophy is one that understands the body not as something to be read or defined but to be experienced physically, which is also to understand the body as something that potentially escapes language, as a physical entity that is not confined by words and can contribute toward an idea of freedom and self-ownership. In short, Whitman puts forth the concept of “the body” as *a* body—just the body as itself, as-is—and not merely the body as a text or a literary device, or as a political unit, or as a receptacle/conduit for the spirit. Importantly, the poetic rendering of the body is capable of being interpreted, and it is precisely, and perhaps only, through the poetic mode that Whitman achieves this form of worship that is devoted to the materiality of the body rather than to relegating the body to a hermeneutic device. This does have larger implications for the body’s relationship to its representation, which I will address later.

“As Adam Early in the Morning”: Edenic Corporeality

To begin examining the “Children of Adam” sequence, I will start with the final poem included in that section, “As Adam Early in the Morning,” which itself can be regarded as the “Children of Adam” sequence in miniature. While Whitman sprinkles allusions to the Garden of Eden throughout many of the “Children of Adam” poems, this specific piece, perhaps because of its brevity and its title, homes in on Edenic corporeality as a perfect union between body and soul in a rather succinct and efficient way. For a poet who is no stranger to loquaciousness, “As Adam Early in the Morning” marks itself as a formal and stylistic anomaly for Whitman, but it is still somehow as strikingly dense as some of his other poems in this section. The poem’s final line exemplifies how profoundly concise Whitman’s celebration of the body can be: “Be not afraid of my body” (95). The perfect motto for this section of *Leaves of Grass*, it is a fitting closing that encapsulates what Whitman both explicitly and implicitly suggests about the body: to not be afraid of it, but also to

⁶ For some readings of Whitman’s engagement with monism, cf. Duncan and Wrobler (esp. 21).

embrace it. Whitman subtly puts his dialectical understanding of the body to work here, as the speaker asks the reader to disabuse him/herself of any aversion to the body (or more precisely, any fear of its desires) and also to incorporate a sense of tangibility into the reader's experience of the body—indeed, for the reader to become incorporate with the speaker's body—both of which culminate in a more thorough appreciation of the body.

In terms of Edenic corporeality, Whitman pointedly focuses on an idealized vision of the human body as a fully intact entity, by which I mean a body that unites its material presence with its sensory experience. Primarily, the Edenic body is something to behold (“Behold me where I pass” [95]), inscrutable and unattainable yet visually discernible. Not only is it a sight to be seen, but also to be heard and touched: “hear my voice, approach, / Touch me—touch the palm of your hand to my body,” the poetic speaker beckons (95). Passive beholding transitions to active movement and touching. A pseudo-synesthesia is at work here, such that there is not an odd mixture of the senses in which one sensory faculty mistakenly interprets and communicates another sense, but rather an accretion of the senses that creates a more totalized account of the body. To be Edenic, or at least Eden-like, is to “approach” corporeal and sensorial unification—“the Form complete.” While this experience of seeing, hearing, and feeling the body seems to be a simultaneous sensory experience or a multitude of sensations compacted into one and refracted through the speaker's body, it is primarily something to experience through the tactile in a way that pleasure and sensation create, maintain, and confirm the reality of the human body. The speaker starts out by asking for less-than-physical interaction (i.e., the seeing and the hearing), but he quickly shifts to imploring for the interaction of the flesh; the intimacy with his body begins in an intangible manner but culminates in the tangible connection, perhaps suggesting that the only way to reach a better metaphysical understanding or an all-encompassing reality is through a reenactment of prelapsarian embodiment.

To return to the speaker's godlike beckoning, this is a case of what I would call reverse interpellation or a self-reflexive interpellation. A brief

explanation of Louis Althusser's theory of interpellation might be helpful to understanding how Whitman reconceptualizes this subject formation through the emphasis on the body. Althusser posits that ideology constitutes the subject by addressing him/her: "*the subject is only constitutive of all ideology insofar as all ideology has the function . . . of 'constituting' concrete individuals as subjects*" (1503).⁷ He then points to "the ambiguity of the term *subject*," elaborating on its dual meanings: first, as establishing an agency, "a free subjectivity, a centre of initiatives, author of and responsible for its actions," and second, as producing "a subjected being, who submits to a higher authority, and is therefore stripped of all freedom except that of freely accepting his submission" (1507). He summarizes this duality as follows: "the individual *is interpellated as a (free) subject . . . in order that he shall (freely) accept his subjection*" (1508). The only freedom any individuals have, therefore, will be to always freely choose their own submission; subjects actively choose to submit to ideology. What we have in this poem, then, is a scene in which the subject now demands affirmation from another individual in order to constitute his sense of self, rather than tacitly accepting validation from an ideologically-determined authority figure. The subject—who is, in this case, the speaker—does not submit to ideology but instead imposes his body onto ideology, such that this scene of beholding the body instantiates any ideology that emerges out of it.⁸ Therefore, if the body is here an initiator of ideology rather than a site of preexisting ideology, then the self emerges from the body and is enabled by ideology; ideology does not determine the self, but rather the self and ideology are concomitant. (But, presumably, Eden is supposed to be free of ideology, so this framing might envision more of a natural preeminence of the body rather than a constructed ideology that purports the body's preeminence.)

Thus, here the power/authority originates in the speaker's own affirmation of his early rising and "Walking forth" *body* (95), as if pure

7 The italics in these quotations from Althusser appear in the original text; no emphasis has been added.

8 I should note here that Althusser does admit that subjects can influence ideology and have some freedom as to choosing which ideologies they follow, but he does not seem to believe that a subject can exert as much force and agency as the speaker of this poem does.

physicality and even the most mundane bodily action automatically constitutes one's subjectivity. If the speaker locates his sense of self in his own body, then this moment of interpellation is self-reflexive. But Whitman's account is more nuanced than this, as the authority also then derives from the beholder (i.e., the reader) because the speaker asks for the self-affirmation of his body to be recognized. Of course, it is a power that is only bestowed upon us by the speaker's imperatives, but it nonetheless seems to be a disavowal of a bodily solipsism—or, to be less philosophically fraught and more aligned with Whitman's politics of the body, perhaps it is merely a benevolent acknowledgement and appreciation of another body.

We should not forget, after all, that this sequence of *Leaves of Grass* is entitled "Children of Adam"; if that title is meant to remind us that we all are children of Adam, perhaps we are meant to perform this constant reaffirming of one another. But we should also recognize that the poetic speaker frames himself through simile ("As Adam" [95]), Eve becomes the implied viewer, thereby making the reader a feminized recipient of male embodiment, seed, and poetry (a poetic maneuver that is more direct and sustained in "Spontaneous Me"). This arrangement should not be seen pejoratively, though, as there is a much more of a reciprocal dynamic between the poet and the reader because, as Michael Moon notes, "the impossibility of . . . successfully disseminating the author's literal bodily presence through the medium of a book" is what necessitates the poet's resorting to a symbolic exchange between poet and reader (5). Adam/the poet is not merely a disseminator, nor is Eve/the reader an empty vessel; there is much more mutual benefit involved in this process that emerges much more clearly in other selections from the "Children of Adam" sequence,⁹ namely because this relationship compels readerly investment in and direct engagement with Whitman's work. However we parse the gender and power dynamics between the body of the speaker and the body of the reader, here the body, using Althusser's formulation, becomes ideology and we are the interpellated subjects, but here the body is much

9 In "One Hour to Madness and Joy," for instance, the speaker proclaims, "O to return to Paradise!" with reciprocal "yield[ing]" to one another in "defiance of the world!" (91).

more apparent, more assertive, and more of an active agent than ideology tends to be. In this sense, the body-as-ideology (or perhaps more accurately, the body-as-ideology's-replacement) starts a process that reverses Althusser's model of interpellation because the agential body constitutes ideology rather than vice versa.

As a final thought, like many of the other poems in this sequence, the bodily experience of temporality is yet another preoccupation for Whitman. "As Adam in the Early Morning" makes use of the present tense, as well as the imperative mode, to lend more immediacy and urgency to its summoning of Edenic corporeality. The emphasis on time in the very first line ("early in the morning" [95]) images a new day and a sense of renewal, regeneration, and rebirth. Furthermore, this Adamic speaker describes himself "Walking forth from the bower refresh'd with sleep" (95), illuminating the importance of maintaining the body, of keeping it "refresh'd" through one of its most basic yet essential needs: sleep.¹⁰ But what larger significance for the body does this engagement with temporality suggest? Perhaps the implicit sense of immediacy and urgency signals the tension between the ephemerality of the material body and the immortality of Edenic embodiment, thus reminding us of the perfect bodiliness we have forever lost. Eden, thus, acts as an allegorical space in which prelapsarian corporeality can be recognized and can then be appropriated for/by Whitman's reader(s). If his growing disenchantment with "fleeting connections" found expression in some of the more fatalistic interpretations of the body later in his poetic career (Rodriguez 80), here Whitman is a full-fledged advocate of the body. The poet, it seems, hopes this recognition can amount to renewed consciousness of the potential of the human body and a recuperation of its appreciation.

"Once I Pass'd through a Populous City": Memory Embodied

If "As Adam in the Early Morning" tangentially deals with temporality, then "Once I Pass'd through a Populous City" treats it rather directly.

10 The extent to which "sleep" might function as a euphemism for sexual intercourse is ancillary to my materialist concerns here. I would point out, however, that this pun would further illustrate the recharging of the body precisely through bodily interaction.

Interestingly, the latter poem is only two lines longer than the former, yet “Once I Pass’d through a Populous City” seems much more sparse in terms of its content and in terms of its representation of the body. Part of the reason for this apparent dissociation from material concerns is this poem’s persistent tackling of the theme of time and memory (which perhaps precludes a more nuanced approach to its other concerns), but also because it contains much more introspective content and a more cerebral tone than the body-centric “As Adam in the Early Morning.”

For example, in the first line, the speaker ruminates on how his experience of walking through the city became an act of “imprinting” that experience in his “brain, for future use” (94), thereby setting this intellectualizing of perception and memory into poetic motion. Furthermore, temporal adverbs and nouns abound in this poem, (“once”; “future”; “now”; “day”; “night”; “again” [94]), and its use of the past tense directly engages the theme of memory. This explicit meditation on temporality works much differently from “As Adam in the Early Morning,” as here the awareness of time seems to remind the speaker not only about his past bodily experiences with a woman, but also how that bodily experience *currently* preoccupies his mind in the present. This sexual encounter with a woman is so strongly attached to his memories of the city that that he must poetically narrate it by the second line: “Yet now, of all that city, I remember only a woman I casually met there, who detain’d me for love of me” (94). The speaker tries to work out, retrospectively, what it is about the body that creates or influences memory, discovering that it is connected almost exclusively to the body and that perhaps the ephemeral experiences of the body do not so quickly fade away.

The use of memory-inflected diction, such as “imprinting my brain,” “remember,” and “forgotten” (94), exposes the irony that the poetic speaker wants to remember all the sites of the city he has visited, but all he can remember now is a woman he met there and specifically his sexual encounters with her. Perhaps even more ironically, he knows that he *wants* to remember all of these other items relating to the city—“its shows, architecture, customs, and traditions” (94)—but he just cannot recount them because that woman dominates his memory. Oddly

enough, her body is precisely what constitutes his memory but also what demarcates the limits of his memory. Moreover, her body signals the end of those “shows, architecture, customs, and traditions” that belong to and are associated with the city; she both reminds him of the city’s wonders and occludes them. Emulating and surpassing the city’s sites and culture, the woman’s body interferes with his recollection of the city in such a way that does not wholeheartedly deny the importance of the city’s non-corporeality, but instead puts into perspective the incommensurability of the body: the city can simply not compare to or compete with her body.

This nameless woman, however, is recounted just as ambiguously as the city itself is. Is she a prostitute, or just a casual dalliance? The poem does not inform us, nor does it provide any clues other than a few quibbles about more intimate gestures in public; but this namelessness and overall mystery is entirely the point, as the emphasis is entirely on their experience of one another’s bodies. However, she receives no physical description other than that she has “silent lips sad and tremulous” when he must leave the city (94). (Or is this her physical reaction when he must leave their sexual encounter? Again, the poem is ambiguous, and deliberately so it seems.) The woman, whose appearance is just as murkily remembered as the city’s attractions, becomes a metonymy and even a replacement for the city in his memory, even though they are fairly mismatched: she is singular, individuated, localized, and embodied; meanwhile, the city is multiplicitous, a conglomeration of a population, a diffused space, and disembodied. This incongruity problematizes the function of the metonymy itself, as metonymy becomes a failure when the body (and presumably its subjectivity) is involved; it is vital to note, however, that it is the representational function of metonymy that fails and *not* the body itself. Once again, the body supersedes the city, and even the body’s seemingly mundane parts—those sad and shaking lips—prove to be more memorable and more constitutive of the speaker’s experience.

Whitman, therefore, privileges the unidentified woman’s body and his bodily experience with her, which is an implicit distancing from the disembodied and cultural (read: abstract, immaterial) experience that the city offers. The speaker highlights this privileging of the body by inun-

dating the poem with physicality: the clinging (she “passionately clung to me”); the detaining (she “detain’d me for love of me”); the wandering (“Again we wander”); the handholding (“Again she holds me by the hand”); and the already quoted final line (“silent lips sad and tremulous”) (94). Focusing on her body and what actions it carries out, this is all performed in an apparently compulsory and monotonous manner, as evinced by the languid and blasé tone, the parallelism, the repetition of the word “again” (simultaneously reiterating the focus on temporarily), and the dashes in these lines: “Again we wander—we love—we separate again; / Again she holds me by the hand—I must not go!” (94). But even if this rendering of the body is diminished to mere repetition temporally and behaviorally (“Day by day and night by night we were together” [94]), it is not done as a jilt at this specific lover, but rather as an authentic retelling of the body’s tendency to enact repetitiously its own materiality.

This accretion of bodily experiences, while recounted slightly insipidly by its conclusion, is nonetheless a testament to and a monumentalization/memorialization of the body. The speaker’s bodily interaction with a stranger is what he feels compelled to record, but we are invited to wonder why the city has faded in his memory (but is importantly not absent from it), while the woman’s body has left a lasting impression. Perhaps if one uses the scene of interpellation in “As Adam in the Early Morning” as a point of reference, it becomes more clear that the city provides no subject—indeed, it is not a subject at all—for the speaker to engage. What this relates is a craving for the body to enact consistently its material condition through more than its sheer existence, a desire that the woman helps fulfill. Such a desire for the body becomes expressed and potentially revived (if only partially) through memory and through the poetic articulation of that memory, itself yet another reiteration (though a discursive one) of the body’s materiality.

Conclusion

“As Adam in the Early Morning” and “Once I Pass’d through a Populous City” both contain accounts of time as omnipresent and everlasting, which juxtaposed with the body’s prowess seems to limit its material-

ist potential. The poet, thus, wants to compensate for this material loss through allusion, memory, and/or the poem. However, for a poet who is so concerned with the materiality of the body, what is Whitman to do with the fact that the reader can only read and can only “see” these poetic scenes, that poems only relate ideas rather than provide a tactile experience? The speaker in “I Sing the Body Electric” explicitly admits this limitation: “To see him pass conveys as much as the best poem, perhaps more” (82). While the physical is privileged over the word and the aesthetic, the tactile experience of reading Whitman’s poetry is relegated merely to touching the pages, to feeling those very leaves of grass that comprise the work. Aestheticizing or figuring the body may have its appeal for Whitman, but its inability to render it in a fully mimetic way that translates or replicates the full bodily experience appears to be an implicit frustration. As if the leaves of grass are just a poor vestige of corporeality, the poet must confront the stark reality that his celebration of the body may be for naught; this, in spite of that final, defiant declaration “Be not afraid of my body.” But they also provide the opportunity for transformation. The poet, thus, renders the soul much more explicitly and conceptually but must do it through these leaves/pages. And even with Whitman’s transition from being a poet of the body to a poet of the soul after 1860, as Jimmie Killingsworth and others observe, it is still worthwhile to analyze his earlier work’s preoccupation with the body, not only because it may better illuminate the nuances of this shift in his poetic career, but also because the body plays such a prominent role in the “Children of Adam” sequence. The body itself, its materiality and its concomitant spiritual existence, and our understanding of the body all become foundational to an American value system, and, for Whitman, that cannot be for naught.

Here I would briefly point out that my own framing of “the motif of the body” does somewhat of a disservice to the body by consigning it to literary device and making it textually legible. Whitman, however, encounters much the same problem in his poetic representation of the body, which is why he frames the body in two ways that help the body escape linguistic limitations: in “As Adam Early in the Morning,” the Edenic

body as an allegory for the body's material perfection prevents the body from slipping into a broken language ideological system, and in "Once I Pass'd through a Populous City," the body's confinement to a metonymy exposes its incommensurability. If unencumbered and interpreted as the body proper, Whitman's portrayal of the body defies any textual imprisonment of legibility. The popular critical maneuver of "reading the body as a text" (and all of its various literary permutations, such as a metaphor, simile, metonymy, allegory, etc.) directly contradicts what Whitman attempts to do in his depiction of the body. And while he may be inescapably forced to use these devices as a means to represent the body, this form of representation is not meant to relegate the body's presence as standing in for something else—that is, Whitman's poetry invites us not to read the body as a text, but rather to read the body as, quite simply, the body.

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Making Use of “Sad Trash”: An Examination of Order and Waste in Frankenstein

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Frankenstein begins on the outside. Robert Walton’s narrative, the outermost frame of the triply-framed novel, opens in St. Petersburg, far beyond the borders of Walton’s home in London. And, as his story continues, he moves progressively farther from home in an attempt to travel beyond the limits of the known world, deep into the wasteland of the Arctic. He writes to his sister, Margaret, of his ambitious plans: “I shall satiate my ardent curiosity with the sight of a part of the world never before visited, and may tread a land never before imprinted by the foot of man” (7). Walton dreams of a verdant utopia beyond the icy wastes of the North Pole that will provide “inestimable benefit . . . on all mankind to the last generation” (8). His dreams are so crowded with majestic images of a cultivatable Eden, that he has trouble making room for the possibility, indeed, the reality that there are some parts of the world hostile to human habitation and domestication. Walton’s ambitions seem to embody the Lockean dogma, paraphrased by John Scanlan in *On Garbage* that “natural potential . . . would be squandered if human labour failed to make the best use of it” (24). This belief, along with its applications and consequences, reverberates throughout *Frankenstein*. By means of their labor and discipline, the characters of *Frankenstein* attempt to refine nature and create order out of chaos, but in the end, these attempts are consistently frustrated by the return of waste and disarray. The ideal objective

of these endeavors is to create a closed system where what is inside—all that is ordered, clean, and rational—is not only separated from what is outside—related as it is to chaos, filth, and uselessness—but also impermeable to those outside forces and pollutants. To use the theory put forth by Mary Douglas in *Purity and Danger*, it is precisely these “ideas about separating, purifying, demarcating, and punishing transgressions [that] have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience. It is only by exaggerating the difference between within and without . . . that a semblance of order is created” (4). However, in *Frankenstein*, the distinction between “inside” and “outside” is consistently obscured. The impossibility of such distinctions is examined in depth by Judith Butler in her complication of the “body” as a fundamentally closed system: “What constitutes through division the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ worlds of the subject is a border and boundary tenuously maintained for the purposes of social regulation and control This sealing of [the body’s] surfaces would constitute the seamless boundary of the subject; but this enclosure would invariably be exploded by precisely that excremental filth that it fears” (182). And so it is in *Frankenstein*. In this novel, striving for purity is a necessarily self-defeating process. The attempt to dispose of the waste inherent and necessary in any ordered system is frustrated and ultimately destructive, producing as it does the central figure of waste, Frankenstein’s creature.

Keeping out Contamination by Keeping it in the Family

Lineage is incredibly important to the Frankensteins and Victor indicates this by beginning his narrative with the claim, “I am by birth a Genevese; and my family is one of the most distinguished of that republic” (18). In effect, by having this line be the opening sentence of his story of loss and woe, Victor is choosing to construct his tale around the primacy and centrality of the family unit. Indeed, with the exception of a few, very intimate friends, all the major characters in Frankenstein’s narrative are members of the Frankenstein family. Additionally, much of the creature’s narrative focuses on the DeLacy family and all of Walton’s letters are addressed to his sister back in Europe. The novel is so focused on fam-

ily that it has lead many critics, including Ellen Moers, Adam Komisaruk, and Debra E. Best, to write about the domestic relationships of the characters within the novel and to examine Mary Shelley's own family life. For example, in "The Monster in the Family: A Reconsideration of *Frankenstein's* Domestic Relationships," Best goes so far as to claim that *Frankenstein* is a domestic novel, or perhaps, as she claims in her conclusion, an "anti-domestic" novel. Seeing as the novel is intimately invested in the depiction of families, it is important to examine the formation, organization, and aims of the Frankensteins.

According to Victor, his father, Alphonse, was a dedicated family man. Although he had been a firmly-established and well-respected public servant, a man who "filled several public situations with honour and reputation" and was widely respected "for his integrity and indefatigable attention to public business" (18), he abandoned that life in order to devote himself to fatherhood and educate his children. In some respects, Alphonse sounds like an ideal father, but Victor subtly complicates that reading. Victor tells Walton, "[I]t was not until the decline of [my father's] life that he thought of marrying, and bestowing on the state sons who might carry his virtues and his name down to posterity" (18). Victor makes it seem as if the elder Frankenstein views children, specifically sons, as valuables—souvenirs of himself, so to speak—that he can "pass down" to his beloved state. This admission sullies the image of the ideal father and illustrates a narcissistic patriarch preoccupied with fatherhood as a means of prolonging his own polished reputation. Thus, Alphonse can be read as being concerned with education as a means of maintaining and perpetuating his own virtues and squeaky-clean image. This is evident when Victor looks back on his childhood education and describes himself as "the destined successor to all [my father's] labors and utility" (19).

As a means of achieving his goal of producing heirs, Victor's father eventually marries in what can only be seen as a union of practicality rather than passion. After the death of Alphonse's close friend, Beaufort, Alphonse "came like a protecting spirit to the poor girl [Beaufort's daughter, Caroline], who committed herself to his care" (19). Because there is no other mention, besides Alphonse's desire to have sons, regarding the

impetus to marry Caroline, and any description of her own affections toward Alphonse prior to becoming his wife are conspicuously absent, Victor's narrative gives the impression that the marriage of his mother and father was simply a means of accomplishing the goal of creating heirs. Eventually, they are successful in this goal; Caroline gives birth to a son, Victor. Furthermore, she ultimately adopts Alphonse's desire to continue the family's legacy.

Caroline takes the idea of legacy one step further in her insistence that Victor marry his cousin Elizabeth, a girl whom the Frankensteins adopt and, by way of that adoption, create a sister out of a cousin. Victor recalls that Caroline "had a desire to bind as closely as possible the ties of domestic love [which] determined [her] to consider Elizabeth as my future wife" (20). Adam Komisaruk makes a similar connection between incest and family legacy in "'So Guided by a Silken Cord': *Frankenstein's* Family Values" when he writes the "specter of incest in the Frankenstein home suggests inbreeding worthy of a royal clan—an appropriate throwback to a system that regards marriage as an expedient for the securing of political power and the transference of property" (418). In *Frankenstein*, both depictions of marriage attempt to accomplish these goals. Not only does Alphonse's marriage to Caroline serve as the expedient for securing a means of creating Frankenstein heirs to carry on the respected family image, Victor's planned marriage to Elizabeth keeps the familial unit incredibly close and closed off. In this way, Caroline and Alphonse can ensure that the Frankenstein name and any property connected to it will not fall into the hands of outsiders.

The stress on legacy and the inducement to incest by the elder Frankensteins exposes a certain anxiety permeating the familial unit in the novel. In addition to claiming that *Frankenstein* is a domestic novel, Best makes the argument that the novel "interrogates multivalent domestic relationships between characters of varying gender in order to suggest that these large extended households generate a sense of uncertainty and a longing for a stable family" (367). While she uses this to examine the multiple domestic roles of each character, this longing for stability also manifests itself in both Alphonse and Caroline's attempts to create a do-

mestic structure that is clean and impermeable. Alphonse wishes that the well-respected Frankenstein name, along with its spotless reputation, would continue into the future through his children. On the other hand, Caroline more concretely ensures that the Frankenstein bloodline remain pure in her incestuous marital decree. Furthermore, Caroline's inducement to incest, her attempt to "bind as closely as possible the ties of domestic love," is an attempt to further close off that structure from external forces, presumably to maintain the heretofore-unstained image of the Frankenstein name.

The development of the family unit in *Frankenstein* can be read as an ultimately failed attempt to create a clean, closed system. The stress that the Frankensteins place on the perpetuation of their well-respected family name and the encouragement of Victor and Elizabeth's incestuous relationship speaks to a desire to keep the family unit clean and closed off to outsiders. However, the demands of Victor's parents are impossible because the novel refuses to allow a clean and closed system. Thus, like Butler's impossible, impermeable body, the Frankenstein family and their reputable name is inevitably destroyed by an outsider.

How was this close-knit family so thoroughly invaded and destroyed? How could a name as polished as Frankenstein become so tainted? In order to answer these questions, we must first examine the education of the heir and bearer of the family legacy, Victor Frankenstein.

The Consequences of Failing to Take Out the "Sad Trash"

Victor seems to be mostly satisfied with the education he received as a child and confesses that "[n]o youth could have passed more happily than mine" (21). Nonetheless, in the same way that Victor complicates the image of Alphonse as the ideal father, he also complicates the image of his father as the ideal educator. Despite Alphonse's commitment to Victor's education, Victor blames him for committing a thoughtless error that precipitates Victor's downfall. He claims that if only his father had explained the ancient scientists current irrelevance, then the "train of [Victor's] ideas would never have received the fatal impulse that led to [his] ruin" (22).

Young Victor's passionate interest in the ancient alchemists and insatiable curiosity regarding the "elixir of life" paradoxically began with a brief moment of boredom and apathy (23). During a vacation, Victor finds himself stuck inside an inn due to some bad weather. He happens upon the works of Cornelius Agrippa while perusing the bookshelves and, for some unknown reason, decides to read from them. His disinterest quickly dissipates and he eagerly attempts to share his discovery with his father, only to be confronted with disappointment and censure. He recalls, "I cannot help remarking here the many opportunities instructors possess of directing the attention of their pupils to useful knowledge, which they utterly neglect. My father looked carelessly at the title-page of my book, and said, 'Ah! Cornelius Agrippa! My dear Victor, do not waste your time upon this; it is sad trash.'" (22). It is at this early point in the novel that a dichotomy is established between good, "useful" knowledge and knowledge that is unsound and thus, useless. Although he may not have been completely cognizant of it at the time (obviously, Alphonse's advice had little impact), Victor takes this dichotomy very seriously later on in life, lamenting that he wished his father had "taken the pains to explain to me, that the principles of Agrippa had been entirely exploded, and that a modern system of science had been introduced, which possessed much greater powers than the ancient, because . . . [they] were real and practical" (22). Victor blames Alphonse for failing to both preserve and bequeath, through the act of teaching, the acceptable structure of knowledge concerning modern science. Alphonse failed to educate his son regarding the necessity of a clean and ordered system of knowledge that properly disposes of useless information as a means of perpetuating its cleanliness and orderliness. Thus, Victor's youth was full of "dreams [that] were . . . undisturbed by reality" due to the fact that his family "was not scientific, and [he] had not attended any of the lectures given at the schools of Geneva" (23).

Victor eventually interests himself in the ideas and experiments of modern science. He claims to be especially interested in the workings of distillation and experiments involving the air pump. He also realizes the shortcomings of his favorite authors and admits, "The ignorance of the

early philosophers . . . served to decrease their credit with me[,]” but tellingly goes on to say, “I could not entirely throw them aside, before some other system should occupy their place in my mind” (23). This admission recalls Victor’s lament concerning his father’s failure to elaborate on why Agrippa was “sad trash” and “explode” that ancient knowledge structure. At this point in the novel, no one has properly educated young Victor on how to dispose of useless knowledge. Victor’s father should have introduced an acceptable system of knowledge and showed his son how to maintain it, but, since this teachable moment was neglected, Victor could never properly dispose of the “sad trash” he had imbibed as a curious, bored child.

In the chapter “Garbage and Knowledge,” John Scanlan discusses how Enlightenment philosophers like John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Immanuel Kant saw the development of knowledge through the faculty of reason as a process “of cutting off, chucking out, and of sweeping away the debris that lies on the territory of reason” (61). In other words, in order to create a bounded structure of the knowable, these philosophers took up a method of either completely disposing of “useless” knowledge, or recycling some old piece of knowledge and incorporating that information into the preestablished epistemological structure. Scanlan uses these ideas to analyze Sir Walter Scott’s 1817 novel *Rob Roy*, but it could just as easily be applied to *Frankenstein*. In *Rob Roy*, the son of a wealthy business owner, Frank Osbaldistone, is encouraged to continue the family legacy by getting an education and taking over the family business; unfortunately for his father, he is much more interested in poetry than commerce. At one point in the novel, Frank is obliged by his father to keep a journal that tracks the dealings of their business. Frank’s father refers to this journal as a “waste-book” and its purpose is to serve as “source material from which the proper and orderly accounts are later compiled” (Scanlan 68). Later on in the novel, Frank’s father discovers a piece of paper on which some poetry is written in one of his “waste-books” and severely reprimands his son for it. This scene leads Scanlan to argue that “Frank is undone by a piece of garbage, something within these waste-books that was not amenable to

inclusion within the body of soon to be recycled and thus useful knowledge” (69). This is precisely what happens to Victor Frankenstein. The works of Agrippa, Paracelsus, and Albertus Magnus have become, in Victor’s more enlightened, modern time, “waste-books.” It is because Alphonse fails to educate his son about modern science and Victor himself is unable to rid his mind of the useless contemplations concerning philosopher’s stones and the elixir of life, Victor is effectively undone by this “sad trash.”

Lawrence Lipking recognizes this failure of education in “*Frankenstein*, the True Story; or, Rousseau Judges Jean-Jacques.” Although he reads the “sad trash” scene as a moment of authorial didacticism influenced by Rousseau, he does acknowledge that Victor’s father neglected to steer his son’s attentions toward more serviceable records of knowledge, and thus, by the standards of Rousseau, committed a great error of education. Lipking argues, “Despite Victor’s many gifts and privileges, an arbitrary method of teaching has made him hunger for useless knowledge that poisons his soul” (428). Though Lipking is reading this scene in *Frankenstein* with the educational theories of Rousseau in mind, one could also apply the educational values of his close predecessor, John Locke, in a similar manner. In *On Garbage*, John Scanlan argues that “Locke, in his writings on education, almost regards the uneducated child as a walking embodiment of rubbish. The child has to be disciplined, brought under control; its curiosity directed away from the development of wasteful habits and idle entertainments” (71). Whether one uses Rousseau or Locke to help point the finger, Victor’s father has obviously failed to provide an education for his son in a manner appropriate to ideals of modern philosophy. Victor’s system of knowledge is flawed, contaminated by ancient and useless information, and he lacks the means of disposing it.

Because Victor’s father has failed to destroy old, useless structures of knowledge and replace them with newer, more practical ones, the responsibility eventually falls upon an entirely different authority figure: the university professor. Victor encounters his first professor, M. Krempe, shortly after he arrives at Ingolstadt. When he admits to Krempe that he

had only ever read the medieval alchemists, his professor responds in exactly the way he wished his father would have when he first encountered Agrippa at thirteen:

“Every minute . . . every instant that you have wasted on those books is utterly and entirely lost. You have burdened your memory with exploded systems, and useless names . . . was [no one] kind enough to inform you that these fancies . . . are a thousand years old, and as musty as they are ancient? . . . My dear Sir, you must begin your studies entirely anew.” (27)

Krempe then initiates Victor’s reeducation by supplying him with a list of books on natural philosophy. Victor’s arrival at Ingolstadt and his introduction to Krempe is the first step in an ultimately failed attempt to indoctrinate the young scientist into the Age of Reason, wrapped up as it is in ideas of clean, closed systems and waste management. Krempe’s assertion that Victor must begin “entirely anew” speaks to the idea that he must erase all the knowledge he has gained before arriving at Ingolstadt because it does not conform to modern philosophy’s standards of knowledge. In other words, he must now, with the help of his university professors, dispose of the “sad trash” he (or his father) failed to rid himself of so many years ago in order to clear the way for acceptable structures of knowledge. In his analysis of philosophy during the Enlightenment, Scanlan basically repeats the exact sentiment of Krempe’s reprimand when he writes, “The clearing away of rubbish is . . . directed towards the means of making knowledge most workable and efficient, because to neglect such means of self-improvement . . . is equivalent to laying waste to one’s own life” (66). This is precisely what happened during Victor’s youth. His failure to partake in such self-improvement leads to Krempe’s reproach that he has wasted a good portion of his life. Nonetheless, at this point, disposing of the “sad trash” he has been captivated by for many years will be an enormous task to undertake—perhaps, even an impossible one.

Although Victor admits after his meeting with Krempe that he “had long considered [the alchemists] useless,” he is still not inclined to begin

his studies anew and take up the reading that his professor suggested to him (28). He laments his belief that, although the ancient alchemists pursuits were “futile,” at least they were “grand;” the modern scientists, on the other hand, seemed interested in “realities of little worth” (28). He maintains this belief until he attends M. Waldman’s lecture, and, later, meets with him in person. Unlike Krempe and Alphonse, Waldman does not dismiss the alchemists offhandedly and this is why he is able to have a profound effect on Victor. In their discussion of Agrippa and Paracelsus, Waldman tells Victor:

“[T]hese were men to whose indefatigable zeal modern philosophers were indebted for most of the foundations of their knowledge. They had left to us, as an easier task, to give new names, and arrange in connected classifications, the facts which they in a great degree had been the instruments of bringing to light. The labours of men of genius, however erroneously directed, scarcely ever fail in ultimately turning to the solid advantage of mankind.” (29)

It is only after their discussion that Victor admits to having “removed [his] prejudices against modern chemists” (29). Waldman has basically told Victor that “[t]he contents of the waste-book are of potential value, but they need to be cleansed in order that their value in the overall order of things is made apparent” (Scanlan 68). Waldman obviously believes in the importance of recycling the knowledge of the past. Thus, even though the labor of Victor’s favorite philosophers was “erroneously directed,” Waldman assures him that modern science can “turn” these labors in the right direction, one that presumably leads toward order. Additionally, Waldman uses a language of structuring to credit the alchemists with laying the foundations for modern science. Now, it seems, it is up to modern science to not only maintain this foundation, but to build upon it by discovering new information and recycling what they can of the old. Essentially, Waldman’s acknowledgement of this method of recycling ancient science ends up functioning as an implicit authorization for Victor to attempt the same.

Garbage In, Garbage Out

Following this life-changing meeting with Waldman, Victor develops into an outstanding student of natural philosophy. He learns and practices the techniques of the modern scientists while simultaneously holding on to the “grand” visions of his beloved alchemists. Spurred on by the lingering influence of the alchemists, scientific success, and hubris, Victor endeavors and eventually succeeds in discovering the source of life. Immediately, his thoughts are filled with possible applications of this newfound knowledge. He finally determines to create his own human being and he hopes, in time, that he might be able to “renew life where death had apparently devoted the body to corruption” (33). This ambition seems to blend the aims of both the ancient alchemists and the modern philosophers in that it seeks to locate and perpetuate the animating principle of life as well as rid life of waste, of the decay that inevitably reclaims life in all its forms. It also reflects a paradox; by holding on to the useless information (related as it is to discovering immortality) found in the alchemists’ work, Victor’s system of knowledge is still infected with “sad trash.” Nonetheless, it is this same, unclean system of knowledge that aims to rid nature of its own waste—death. On the one hand, Victor succeeds in cleaning up nature by animating his own creation. On the other hand, his creation becomes the ultimate figure for waste. Victor’s creation results in a boomerang effect: he tries to jettison waste from his ideal, ordered system of nature, but it returns with a vengeance and exposes the impossibility of any such permanent expulsion.

Victor’s attempt to dispose of the waste in nature entirely seems to literalize Scanlan’s idea that “the garbage of knowledge is always present as a spectral double” (65). Though Victor receives permission from Waldman to build on the foundations of his beloved alchemists, he still fails to properly recycle their knowledge. Instead of disposing with the useless pursuit of immortality, he retains this “sad trash” in his system of knowledge and uses that same system to bring his creation into being. Thus, the waste that once existed only in Victor’s head is given form once he puts that system of knowledge to work. It is useful to compare this idea to the concept in computer programming known as “garbage in, garbage

out.” Scanlan analyzes this concept in detail and writes, “In the technical jargon of the world of computing ‘garbage’ symbolizes the boomerang effect of sloppy thinking, faulty programming or even bad information processing” (56-7). Victor’s system of knowledge can be compared to a type of faulty programming which produces its own waste, embodied in the character of the creature.

The equation of the creature with waste is not meant as a dysphemistic categorization. Waste is simply a useful index to use in analyzing the character of the creature. In a number of ways, the creature can be related to waste both literally and conceptually. To begin with the former, though the novel is not explicit about the composition of Victor’s creation, the creature seems to be composed mostly of corpses, as Victor admits that he gathers many of his materials from “the dissecting room and the slaughter-house” and labored in a “workshop of filthy creation” (34). In the introduction the 1831 edition of *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley is much more explicit about how the creature was made. While discussing her inspiration for the novel, she writes, “Perhaps a corpse would be re-animated” (168). The corpse is profound image of waste. Indeed, in *Powers of Horror*, Julia Kristeva calls the corpse “the most sickening of wastes . . . a border that has encroached upon everything” (3). Not only does it represent the ultimate wasting away of the body, but it also signifies waste in the way that it is firmly and categorically separated from everyday life. Kristeva makes a similar claim: “[R]efuse and corpses *show me* what I permanently thrust aside in order to live” (3). This process of separating, “thrust[ing] aside,” is a central component of waste; in fact, it how waste comes about. Scanlan explicitly ties waste to a process of separation when he writes, “[T]he creation of garbage is the result of separation” (15).

Seeing how waste is so integrally connected to the creation of the creature, Victor’s immediate abandonment of his creation once it is given life is unsurprising. Furthermore, if the creation of garbage begins with an act of separation, then the creature’s characterization enters into the metaphorical realm of waste. Where as before, he was merely composed of waste parts, now, due to Victor’s absolute rejection of him, he becomes

an allegorical representation of waste. Before Victor has succeeded in his goal of bringing life to the inanimate, the ambition to do so consumed him; it was all he wanted. He admits that he spent the entire summer “thus engaged, heart and soul, in one pursuit” (34). However, once he succeeds, he confesses, “[N]ow that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart” (36). The creature had barely awoken before Victor’s disgust with his own project forced him to abandon his own creation entirely. This initial rejection by his creator foreshadows the successive rejections to come. Throughout the novel, the creature is constantly forced outside the structure of society. Thus, he becomes the ultimate, metaphorical figure for waste: the thing that was created for a purpose, but is now undesired by nearly all of society.

The ambiguity of the creature also contributes to his representation as a figure for waste. Garbage is often highly ambiguous. Scanlan describes garbage as “a jumble of inexactness, a disordered condition (in the metaphorical sense), or degraded husk of some *former* object, [and] it seems to lack conventional symbolic referents” (16). Because the creature is so similar to waste, it allows him to remain highly ambiguous, without “symbolic referents.” It is for this reason that he can be read in diverse and often contrasting ways. Is the creature human or other? male or female? adult or child? good or bad? creature or monster? It is not hard to find critical essays that argue for one or the other, or both. These questions and the readings that result from them are possible due to the fact that the creature is so much like waste itself, rejected by individuals and the world and thus, supremely ambiguous.

The Waste Space of the Novel

Not only does waste play a role in the creation of the monster and an examination of his ambiguous identity, it also can be used to examine the form of the novel itself. In “Waste Aesthetics: Form as Restitution,” Susan Signe Morrison uses the concept of waste to analyze the structure of literature. She claims that “[s]o called quality literature is often messier than the more generally popular ‘trashy’ literature that gives the illusion

of clarity in a cluttered world” (472). This “messiness” is produced by digressions in plot as well as “intertextuality, bricolage, and appropriation,” which she refers to as “the metaphors of cultural recycling” (472). The appearance of these elements in the novel frustrates the typical notion of what a novel is supposed to be. In other words, the inclusion of waste aesthetics in *Frankenstein* ends up confounding the typical bounds of the novel as a particular type of literature. Waste aesthetics infiltrate the accepted structure of a novel in the same way that the “sad trash” of the alchemists infiltrated young Victor’s mind.

In many different ways, *Frankenstein* engages in its own cultural recycling. The most obvious example is the importance of other, existing texts within the novel itself. Throughout *Frankenstein* works by Percy Bysshe Shelley, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Plutarch, and John Milton, among others, are either inserted directly into the narrative or included as an allusion. The inclusion of these authors is a form of cultural recycling in that the novel takes what it finds useful in those texts, or it relies specifically on the impression that these famous works might impart on a reader, and includes those works within its own pages to create its own meaning. Additionally, the novel makes use of not only poems, but also letters and oral narratives to make up its structure. And the lack of consensus about whether or not the novel fits in the generic category of Gothic, science fiction, domestic, all three, or some other genre entirely points to the same waste-like ambiguity that categorized the creature himself.

Finally, the matryoshka frame structure of the novel itself participates in an act of border crossing akin to waste. Though the novel divides its space between the narratives of Walton, Victor, and the creature, their narratives are permeable to the other characters. This is most evident in the outermost frame of Walton’s narrative, where Victor punctures the border in the beginning of his tale and the creature intrudes at the end. The novel is effectively performing the inability to maintain a clean and closed system. Narrating itself is an attempt to impose order where none existed, and though *Frankenstein* contains all the necessary elements of a comprehensible story, it does not allow the individual stories within it

to remain closed off to one another; they are porous and bleed into one another. Like Kristeva's corpse, the borders of these narratives encroach upon everything. Or, as Morrison puts it, "Rather than a consumable of closure, literature filled with 'waste' suggests a porous aesthetics of promise and becoming" (472). Perhaps this is why *Frankenstein* continues to permeate the culture almost two hundred years after it was first published; because it refuses to impose clean, closed systems and allows figures of waste to suffuse the narrative, the story remains perpetually open to interpretation and adaptation.

Conclusion

Waste serves as an excellent index by which we can examine the structures and systems of society and culture. The things that we separate and cut off from our lives and our selves end up indicating the ways in which we structure those same lives and selves. As we have come to understand, waste can never be completely jettisoned from our lives or our world; instead, it lives at the borders and perpetually encroaches upon them. By the very fact of existing on the *outside*, waste ends up structuring what is within; it gives form to the structures we construct by the very fact of existing at their borders. Furthermore, because waste always threatens to encroach upon these structures, they must constantly be maintained, cleaned, and ordered, otherwise they might fall right back into the disorder from which they were built. In the same way that it functions as a means of examining the world, waste can also be used to analyze literature. *Frankenstein* is a novel that deals implicitly and explicitly with various functions and figures of waste. From the relation between waste and knowledge, to the characterization of the creature as a figure for waste, to the similarities between the structure of the novel and the concept of waste, *Frankenstein* illustrates and performs the ways in which waste is both necessary to all attempts at ordering and extant in all structures, regardless of how frequent or vigorous attempts are made to keep those structures clean. Thus, it is fitting that the novel ends with even more border crossing. After the death of Victor, the creature speaks briefly with Walton before leaping through the window and out of the

hull of Walton's ship. The reader is not told what happens to the creature after this point, only that he "was soon borne away by the waves, and lost in darkness and distance" (161). Shelley resists giving the creature an ending and effectively closing off both his own narrative and the story of *Frankenstein* itself. Nonetheless, it is possible to imagine that the creature escapes deep into the wasteland of the Arctic, past the ice that kept Walton from discovering his Eden, beyond the boundaries of the habitable world.

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Female Friendships Explored: Esther and Ada in Bleak House

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Charles Dickens' *Bleak House* portrays a close intimate relationship between two female characters, Esther Summerson and Ada Clare, who both embody the most cherished values of Victorian femininity. Close female friendships were historically encouraged in the nineteenth-century as appropriate avenues for girls because these relationships kept them within the domestic and away from the public sphere. Critics have recently contended that homoerotic desire and queer attachments are evident in nineteenth-century Victorian novels, but most critics have emphasized homoerotic relationships between men. In contrast, in *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England*, Sharon Marcus writes that the Victorian world was one that "made relationships between women central to femininity, marriage, and family life" (1). Further, these friendships could be seen as a tool for girls to practice for their eventual roles as mothers and wives. Yet what makes this relevant to a discussion of *Bleak House*? Pointedly, Marcus writes, "The nineteenth-century novel was one of the most important cultural sites for representing and shaping desire, affect, and ideas about gender and the family. Since nineteenth-century novels consist almost entirely of accounts of social relationships—bonds between individuals and the ways that communities respond to those bonds" (8); novels are an essential space for studying mid nineteenth-century opinions on gender, sexuality, and domesticity.

Seeing female friendship as an entryway to marital relationships renders Dickens' portrayal of Esther and Ada's friendship as normative female behavior within the cultural standards of the time period. While considering their relationship within a historicist lens does uphold it as normative, this essay posits that their friendship blurs the lines of friendship and romantic intimacy. This essay argues that Esther and Ada's interactions are often punctuated by moments of extreme emotion, intense longing, and highly effusive romantic language, which produces erotic desire in Esther that is affectively evident in the fervency of her attachment to Ada and the manner in which she demonstrates that attachment. It would be anachronistic to read lesbianism in their relationship; yet their actions indicate a sort of homoerotic longing that is distinct from lesbian sexual identity as it is understood today. However, it is still nevertheless queer, since it does alter traditional binaries of heteronormative marriage. For example, Esther's marital home expands (for a brief amount of time) to include Ada and her son in what can be seen as a queer reconceptualization of the domestic space as well as a reimagining of the nuclear family. This spatial expansion allows Ada and Esther to maintain their intimate friendship even after Esther marries and performs a heteronormative identity. While, homoerotic longing is evident in this relationship, this paper asserts that this relationship is affected by the specific connection to trauma in Esther as an adopted child who lacks a maternal presence with the homoeroticism functioning as a reaction to the trauma of Esther's childhood. Further, the trauma is emblematic in her relationship with Ada as it reinscribes itself in a manner that allows her to reenact her maternal yearnings symptomatically in an erotic desire for Ada.

Of course, sexual female relationships certainly existed in the nineteenth-century, but lesbianism as an identity was not defined. Mary Armstrong writes, "[b]efore lesbian becomes a new identity, and before a semidistinct break between 'female bonding' and female homosexuality, the rise of the female homosexual in narrative expresses and intensifies the homoerotic possibilities of the *perfect domestic heroine*" (76 emphasis mine). While, it is true that Esther and Ada do not represent lesbian identity, it is even truer that Esther does represent a type of homoerotic

(possibly pseudo lesbian) attachment to Ada. This paper is in agreement with Armstrong and contends that Esther and Ada's homoerotic feelings are allowed to exist because both women represent Victorian feminine ideals in their roles as "perfect domestic heroines." Yet, they are not lesbians not only because the language of the 1850s did not accommodate such an identity but also because both women experience intense romantic feelings for men, marry those men, and consummate their relationships. In *Bleak House*, Esther and Ada's relationship contains strong suggestions of romantic love, is punctuated by moments of homoeroticism, but is ultimately supported by the text for its ability to work within a heteronormative frame that can contain their homoerotic desire and thereby uphold family values and the home and avoid a disruption to patriarchal authority.

Friendships between women were culturally important to the nineteenth century, and women were encouraged to find affinity with other females especially in the domestic sphere as mothers and sisters. Sharon Marcus cites Sarah Stickney Ellis' influential book, *The Women of England*, (which was written in 1839) as primary textual evidence of the importance of female companionship in Victorian England. Marcus writes "she also assigned women another obligatory role we may now be surprised to find so prominent in a guide to correct feminine behavior: friend...making friendship between women as essential to proper femininity as a woman's obedience to her parents, subservience to her husband, and devotion to her children" (25). Thus, not only are gender standards of the time insisting women marry, have children, and honor their parents, but such standards are also stressing the importance of women finding proper relationships with other women in order to learn proper femininity. Domesticity and gender function in and are defined in tandem so that proper femininity is delineated as something that upholds traditionally understood gender roles, maintains women in the domestic and private sphere, and upholds patriarchal heteronormativity. Further, Lisa Moore contends "such a friendship could be argued to guarantee female virtue, because it fixed women's desires and attentions upon one another rather than upon sexual relations with men" (507). Friendships

between women were seen as a determining component in keeping girls ensconced within a domestic space that could help them to focus on each other as opposed to concentrating their attentions on men, which could encourage expressions of pre-marital sexuality.

For Esther, a character without the opportunity of expressing her emotionality to either a mother or a sister, the need to have an intimate female friendship is even more pronounced especially because Victorian ideology articulated “female friendship as a basic element of a middle class organized around marriage, family, and Christian belief” (Marcus 25). Thus, the necessity of female friendships is not just important for Esther because she lacked the presence of a loving female in her life, it is also important because nineteenth-century social conventions privileged values and behaviors that emphasized the importance of casting the domestic space as an exemplary model of middle class values. Dickens’ portrayal of Esther elevates her as a character who demonstrates the most cherished values of the time, values such as duty, humility, and modesty; bearing this in mind, for Esther to further serve as an example of Victorian values, she must find a female friend so that she may settle herself within the domestic sphere. If it is true that women’s relationships were central to Victorian society, then it follows that Esther is only substantiating that importance in her friendship with Ada. However, while a historical awareness of the value of female relationships helps scholars to understand that Victorian femininity wanted women to form close bonds with another, it is important to remember Esther’s background as a character who lacked a maternal or female presence in her life.

Esther and Ada’s relationship contains strong suggestions of romantic affection; but, one reason for this ardent affection and love stems from Esther’s own traumatic background and upbringing. Since Esther has lived her life without a sense of maternal or female love and nurture, she is more susceptible to feel that longing for it. She could not fulfill a cherished role as a daughter, sister, or wife, thus she had to seek another female outlet; this was necessary not only because of her emotional yearning for female connection but also because society encouraged friendship between females as a determining factor of successful middle class life.

Esther's emotional desire for female companionship is expressed through her attachment to her doll because she "never dared to open [her] heart to anybody else" (Dickens 73). Furthermore, Esther was unable to open her heart to another figure in her life as the woman who raised her did not allow for that level of intimate emotionality. Esther narrates that she "felt so different from her, even making every allowance for the differences between a child and a woman. I felt so poor, so trifling, and so far off; that I never could be unrestrained with her—no, could never even love her as I wished" (Dickens 73). From Esther's narrative, the reader understands that this emotional divide was not just because Esther was a child and her godmother was an adult woman, but it was also because Esther felt she was too "trifling" and "far off" to be able to love her aunt fully or feel comfortable enough to be an unrestrained, honest version of herself. Moreover, Esther's aunt did not nurture or love Esther in a manner that Esther, as a young child, would have interpreted as love. To such a degree was this emotional divide that Esther's godmother even spoke "it would have been far better, little Esther, that you had had no birthday; that you had never been born" (Dickens 74). For Esther, a young child without a mother, a child who would undoubtedly yearn for maternal or female love and affection, her godmother's seemingly hateful statement explicitly insisting that it would have been "far better" had she not been born must have had a troubling and traumatic effect on Esther's emotional position and development. Carolyn M. Dever asserts that Esther's narrative is a journey that functions as a "quest for identity" and "is structured through her desire to reunite with her missing, mysterious mother" (42). Dever's argument centers on the claim that Esther's narrative is articulated through a sense of abandonment, an abandonment that is ever present and constantly reaffirmed throughout the text. Such an interpretation of Esther seems correct and most certainly contributes to her development. As Esther grows and manages her feelings of loss, her ability to relate to women is, by virtue of her development, altered. Femininity, in the sense that it is a socially defined convention, is learned from other women through relational interaction. Thus, because Esther is an orphan who did not have an emotionally nurturing female role

model, her ability to relate to women and express heteronormative femininity is altered. She must build her own understanding of femininity and motherhood, which affects her emotionally and is an explanation for her overly sentimental attachment to Ada.

Understanding Esther's background positions the reader to fully grasp the complexity of Esther's emotional deficit and how that deficit could be expressed by her attention on Ada. Due to the lack of emotional and loving reciprocity in Esther's relationship with her godmother, Esther was unable to truly feel completely welcomed, loved, or at home with her. Moreover, Esther's experience left her abandoned from a comforting and nurturing maternal presence; additionally, her experience at school left her without female companionship. Esther's godmother, who is also her maternal aunt, often distanced herself from Esther and even interfered with Esther's ability to develop female friendships with her peers at the local school. Esther remembers, "although there were seven girls at the neighborhood school where I was a day boarder...I knew none of them at home. All of them were older than I...but there seemed to be some other separation between us besides that" (Dickens 74). It is clear that even though Esther is around other girls, she is still separated from them and does not have a relationship with them. Esther is insightful enough to recognize that the relational gap between herself and her female peers is not simply due to their age differences; rather there is a more deeply rooted reason for her friendship deficit. Further in her memory she says of one of her schoolmates, "one of them, in the first week of my going to school (I remember it very well), invited me home to a little party, to my great joy. But my godmother wrote a stiff letter declining for me, and I never went. *I never went out at all*" (74 emphasis mine). Her godmother's authority stunts Esther's emotional development, which will greatly affect how she interacts with her female friends as an adult. Indeed, her godmother prevented her from ever going "out at all," thus further inscribing trauma upon her.

Due to her childhood and traumatic background, her eventual relationship with Ada is rendered more affectionate and blurs the lines of intimacy. When Esther meets Ada she notes that Ada "came to meet me

with a smile of welcome and her hand extended, but seemed to change her mind in a moment, and kissed me. In short, she had such a natural, captivating, winning manner, that in a few minutes we were sitting in the window-seat, with the light of the fire upon us, talking together, as free and happy as could be" (Dickens 85). Ada's very smile is the first thing that Esther notes as an expression, which she interprets as "welcoming." Consequently, the foundation is being laid for Esther to find an emotional outlet in her companionship with Ada and feel the warmth of a female bond. Indeed, Esther's notation of the "light of the fire" figures not just as visual imagery of the scene but as a symbol of the emotional warmth and tenderness that Ada stirs within Esther. Carolyn Oulton states "romantic friendship...depended on both strong feeling and what might now seem startlingly rhetorical expression... romantic friendship can be identified by its intense, sometimes exclusive, focus" (157-58). Certainly the novel has several textual references to the affection between these characters, but it is most intensely vivid during Esther's illness when Esther and Ada are physically separated. In her confinement, Esther recounts that she "had heard my Ada crying at the door, day and night; I had heard her calling to me that I was cruel and did not love her; I had heard her praying and imploring to be let in to nurse and comfort me, and to leave my bedside no more" (Dickens 449). Such a heightened amount of attention is being synthesized in this passage, thereby corroborating Oulton's assessment of female friendship as romantic and intense. What must be noted are the strong suggestions of romantic sentiments between Esther and Ada. Ada cries at the door incessantly, calls out to Esther with mentions of the love between them, begs Esther to allow her in to Esther's bedroom. Ada's fervent insistence that she "nurse and comfort" Esther speaks to the level of intimacy between them. Had their friendship been simply platonic, Ada's language might not have figured as intensely as it does in this moment. Thus, that Ada is so insistent on removing the material barrier between her and Esther, thereby demonstrating her love for Esther during her illness, attests to the romantic attachment and homoerotic element in their relationship. Additionally, Esther's refusal to see Ada is due to her worry that her physical appearance has been too altered by smallpox and has

stripped her of any beauty. Esther's worry about Ada's reaction to her appearance further substantiates their homoerotic attachment. Further on Esther describes that Ada "ran in, and was running out again when she saw me. Ah, my angel girl! The old dear look, all love, all fondness, all affection. Nothing else in it—oh no, nothing, nothing" (Dickens 471). Elements of romantic feeling are suggested rhetorically as Esther refers to Ada as her "angel girl" thus figuratively implying that Esther believes Ada to belong to her. Ada's look is dear to her as it represents "love" and "affection," which only further heightens a sense that a type of romantic love characterizes their relationship even as that love is both erotically charged yet asexual in terms of actual action.

Esther and Ada's romantic friendship, while physically chaste, is punctuated with moments that suggest a level of homoeroticism. There is a passion and friction between them that contains a powerful suggestion of female intimacy in an erotic way. Holly Furneaux asserts that "a powerful component of such friction has been identified in the eroticism of female friendship. Lisa Moore, for example, identifies an ever present 'tension between romantic friendship and female homosexuality'" (25). Their "romantic" friendship is distinct from female homosexuality, but nonetheless Furneaux's intimation of the eroticism contained within female friendship is textually noted in Esther and Ada's interactions. When Esther is recovering from smallpox, she distances herself from Ada because of fears of contagion but also because she wants to be more comfortable with her altered looks before she "met the eyes of the dear girl [she] longed so much to see" (Dickens 453). Again, there is a longing in Esther that only Ada seems to fulfill. A culmination of Esther and Ada's emotional desires for each other is seen when they finally do reunite. Esther remembers, "O how happy I was, down upon the floor, with my sweet beautiful girl too, holding my scarred face to her lovely cheek, bathing it with tears and kisses, rocking me to and fro like a child, calling me by every tender name that she could think of, and pressing me to her faithful heart" (Dickens 471). Lisa Moore notes that a tension between romantic friendship and female homosexuality existed in novels of the nineteenth-century, which is textually supported in this moment between

Esther and Ada. Their emotional intensity is rather evidently described with both girls clinging to each other. Indeed, Esther refers to Ada as her “sweet beautiful girl” as Ada is holding her face to her own cheek and kissing her. Esther references Ada’s beauty here, as she does often throughout the text. In her regular appreciation of Ada’s physical beauty, Esther is upholding one qualification that designated women as feminine. Sharon Marcus notes that women who reacted to other women in a language that suggested attraction was not seen “as less feminine” but rather “more so” (61). Yet, I would posit that while Esther’s narration of Ada’s beauty is a typical convention of Victorian femininity, Marcus does not assess these actions as moments of possible sexual attraction between women. One cannot read this without getting a sense of a homoeroticism in their relationship. Further, Ada expresses her love for Esther rhetorically with “every tender name” possible as she is literally holding Esther close to her chest. Of course it is true that one could interpret this passage as an extension of Esther’s longing for maternal nurturing, but I would argue that the language is ardent enough for a reading of homoerotic attachment to be valid. However, for women’s sexuality to be sanctioned, it had to fit in to heteronormative boundaries, and one must remember that Ada and Esther both eventually marry men and consummate their marriages.

Esther and Ada both have heteronormative romantic affections for men, and they express these relationships through marriage and children thereby fitting in to acceptable marital conventions of the nineteenth century. However, while this is true, it is necessary to remember that Esther experiences extreme emotional anguish at learning of Ada’s marriage. Ada getting married is hard for Esther because it changes their relationship even though Esther is romantically interested in Mr. Woodcourt. Esther narrates “and when I got down-stairs. O how I cried! It almost seemed to me that I had lost Ada forever. I was so lonely, and so blank without her, and it was so desolate to be going home with no hope of seeing her there, that I could get no comfort for a little while, as I walked up and down a dim corner, sobbing and crying” (Dickens 613). Esther’s memory of the event clearly indicates a strong emotional reaction to Ada’s marriage. Indeed she describes feeling “lonely” and “desolate” to have to return to

Bleak House without Ada. So strong is her reaction that she can only sit in a “dim corner” and cry. Esther’s position in a dim corner substantiates the emotional loss she feels from physically separating from Ada. Her life at Bleak House is metaphorically dimmed without their bond. Further, her home at Bleak House feels desolate without Ada there, thus intimating that her physical residence ceases to be a true home without Ada’s presence, a problem that will eventually be solved by Richard’s death. Here it is important to remember that patriarchal authority and the heteronormative conventions that patriarchy necessitates is what separates Ada and Esther, both physically and emotionally, as Ada’s marriage to Richard altered the level of intimacy with Esther.

Since the home assumes such an important role for Victorian England, gender roles are culturally transcribed so as to make marriage and family the chief goals for women. Esther and Ada both must assume heteronormative identities as wives and mothers. Yet, their friendship had been so important for them that their transition from being girlhood friends to married women is pronouncedly difficult. In many ways their relationship has been a precursor to their eventual assumption of married identities; it is in the intensity of their romantic friendship that they have been preparing for the moment when they would experience a transition to adult married life. Furneaux writes that Esther experiences a strong psychological trauma-like reaction to Ada’s marriage because it means a transformation of their friendship. She contends, “Dickens portrayal of Esther’s emotional reaction to Ada’s marriage registers, in a distinctly gothic mode, the problems women faced in becoming reconciled to this utter transformation of their prior relationship” (28-9). While Esther does experience a strong reaction to Ada’s marriage, it is clear that Ada also experiences emotional trauma at this transition. Esther remembers Ada’s reaction when they parted ways “when that time arrived it was the worst of all, for then my darling completely broke down. She clung round my neck, calling me by every dear name she could think of, and saying what she could do without me” (Dickens 612). So strongly have these two been connected to each other that they both have reactions that seemingly break them down. Ada clings to Esther and is effusive in the

“dear” names that she calls her by, which further substantiates just how important their relationship has been for their emotional development. Furneaux does contend that Esther experiences psychological trauma, which is valid and easily supported by the text. Yet, I would extend Furneaux’s insinuation of psychological trauma and say that for emotional trauma to exist, it must be repeated. For it to be repeated, there must be a force with enough power to reinscribe the trauma, which connects the traumatic experience more broadly to Victorian patriarchy and gendered social hierarchy as patriarchal power is a strong force to sustain trauma. Thus, patriarchy is immanently present and affective enough that the trauma, a trauma due to rigidly defined gender roles and heteronormativity, perpetually repeats itself. While it is clear that Ada and Esther experience emotional turmoil and psychological trauma at the transition from single girls to married women, they still do make that transition, thereby fitting into patriarchal conventions of heteronormative marriage. Further, the often emphatic and romantic manner in which Ada and Esther related to each other could be seen as a way for them to express sexuality and a female agency that patriarchy would not permit them to express in their heterosexual relationships.

Victorian conventions of femininity insisted on chastity and sexual purity for women, an insistence that affected how women could interact with their heterosexual romantic interests. For example, Esther’s attraction to Mr. Woodcourt cannot be overt or contain any enactment of sexuality or agency. Yet, her interactions with Ada, are very obviously physical and romantic. Sharon Marcus writes:

Female friendship provided women with a sanctioned realm of erotic choice, agency, and indulgence, in contrast to the sharp restrictions that middle-class gender codes placed on female flirtation with men. A woman who wrote of spending time alone with a man in his bedroom...without being engaged to him would have transgressed the rules governing heterosexual gender. (62)

With Marcus’ claims in mind, Esther and Ada’s romantic friendship is normative because it allows them to express desire in private, domestic

spaces so that they may retain their respectability. The physical affection that they might crave can be expressed to each other, thereby granting them a sexual agency typically reserved for men. However, this agency must be shed once they do assume marital roles so that gender conventions may be sustained. Further, their friendships could function as a physical substitute for their heterosexual longings. When Esther decides to marry Jarndyce, she has a moment where she finds the flowers that Mr. Woodcourt had given her which were in the sitting room that “divided Ada’s chamber” from her own, a division that is further defined by their marriages. Esther finds the flowers and narrates, “I saw my beautiful darling, through the open door, lying asleep, and I stole in to kiss her. It was weak in me...but I dropped a tear upon her dear face...took the withered flowers out, and put them for a moment to her lips” (Dickens 546). Ada and her bedchamber are substitutes for Mr. Woodcourt and his bedchamber. Gender codes sharply restrict women’s behavior so that they cannot express their longings too effusively. Thus, when Esther cries over Ada, while holding Mr. Woodcourt’s flowers, she is expressing her emotionality for Mr. Woodcourt. Since she cannot kiss him or exercise sexual agency, she kisses Ada instead. Yet, while this is a moment of repressed heterosexual longing being expressed in romantic female friendship, it is still yet an example of the intimacy between Esther and Ada. That the flowers are located in a room that divides them implies that heteronormative marriages must eventually divide them. Even as they willingly enter into marriage, they do still experience emotional trauma at the transition from their friendship at Bleak House (a friendship tinged with homoerotic longing) to their married lives.

Esther eventually marries Mr. Woodcourt and moves in to a new version of Bleak House with him. Here they experience marital felicity and happiness, with Esther finally able to make that transition from girlhood romantic friendship to womanly married life. This transition is marked by an inclusion of Ada and her son after Richard’s death. Esther recounts “they gave my darling into my arms, and through many weeks I never left her. The little child who was to have done so much, was born before the turf was planted on its father’s grave” (Dickens 750). Even

as Esther is now a married woman with a family of her own, she still sees Ada as her “little darling” therefore suggesting that even as their relationship has changed, it is still just as emotionally powerful. Further, for a brief time Esther and Ada are reunited under the same roof, which reconceptualizes domestic space and affects their relationship. Yet, Jarndyce, the patriarchal figure of the novel, insists that Ada move in with him saying “both houses are your home...but the older Bleak House claims priority” (Dickens 750). His actions physically separate Ada and Esther once again and positions patriarchy as the definitive authority of their lives. Heteronormative space must be preserved, but Ada moving into the old Bleak House with Jarndyce renders them all as a family, albeit a queer one since it is not a traditional nuclear family. He is Ada’s guardian now and has been Esther’s guardian and surrogate father for a good portion of the text, which connects him to Ada and Esther and allows for a reimagining of family relationships, relationships not linked by blood but by choice. Catherine Waters writes of the evolution of domesticity and says, “accompanying these changes, earlier understandings of the family as blood-related ‘kin’...gave way to the idea that those who inhabited the home...now constituted the family” (351). While Jarndyce and Ada are living in the old Bleak House and Esther is living in the new Bleak House, those physical spaces are inextricably intertwined due to Jarndyce’s role as guardian and the patriarchal figure who connects them all. The Bleak Houses expand to imagine a space that can include new familial possibilities. It must not be forgotten that this new configuration, one that allows Esther and Ada to both be mamas to little Richard, would not be possible without Jarndyce as it is he who gives Esther to Mr. Woodcourt and opens up the possibility that the new Bleak House could be a space of fecundity and progressive domesticity. He has to sanction the marriage, which just further authenticates the totalizing power of patriarchy in nineteenth century values. Thus, men mediate marriage, and if friendships are to be sanctioned, they must uphold heteronormativity.

Esther and Ada’s relationship is a complicated example of romantic friendship. Female friendship was historically encouraged and was im-

portant as it allowed girls to emotionally express themselves and both learn and practice femininity. Dickens' portrayal of Esther and Ada's relationship is part of that historical tradition, but theirs is an example of an erotically punctuated friendship that blurs the lines of intimacy. Even though it is not a homosexual lesbian attachment, it is still narrated by moments of extreme emotion, romantic language, and longing. Moreover, Esther's longing manifests itself in an ardency that is affected by Esther's own traumatic background. Yet, her erotic desire is not simply a result of trauma; rather, it is influenced by her background and symptomatically presents itself in an overtly passionate manner. Further, their friendship speaks to the power of patriarchy and gender roles since it both grants them agency that rigidly defined gender codes does not allow as well as functioning as a precursor to their eventual marriages, thereby positioning female friendship, and all the possibilities that those friendships allow, as normative. Friendships such as Esther and Ada's are allowed to exist so long as they do not subvert gender and uphold heteronormative values.

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**“Queering the Dark Side”:
Interrogating Anguish in
“A Story of Rats” and
“The Terrible Sonnets”**

MERRY DEATH

I laughed, I laughed alone. I got up hissing and let myself fall to the floor, as if, at one go, I had hissed away the little strength that I have left. And I wept on the carpet.

– Georges Bataille

At present, much of queer theory and queer literature bases their concern on the vitality that resides within a perpetual state of a particular kind of negativity—or negativity, generally speaking. The affective embrace of negativity or anguish of one’s emotions is essential to core queer texts, such as Judith (Jack) Halberstam’s *The Queer Art of Failure*. Upon reading the text, it is conspicuously unequivocal that to embrace negativity or darkness, a newfound platform to survive life surfaces from beneath the trenches of anguish—or a deepened state of alleged suffering of the self. For Halberstam, low-theory, the application of popular culture to queer theoretical insights, not only calls out systematic issues inherent of society, “but it also makes its peace with the possibility that alternatives dwell in the murky waters of a counterintuitive, often impossibly dark and negative realm of critique and refusal” (3). Thusly, to move into the “dark side” or the darker image juxtaposed to that of its lighter counterpart, this “negative realm” provides an alternative, special kind of knowledge. The embrace of anguish invariably heaves an individual into an imposed fallacy of failure, particularly in the Western sense. Queerness, for purposes of

this essay, denotes a certain realm, wherein an individual's sexuality may or may not be at stake—a realm where the embrace of the “dark side” has always-already been representative of a queer existence—one that defies emphatic expectations of the body. In other words, the disruption of queerness is then reapplied to feelings that transform into the “dark side” insofar as one rejects hegemonic models of success and happiness.

Furthermore, queer theory, in the context of this essay is used in an all-encompassing sense, transgressing alternative modes of sexuality. Queering qua queer theory thus “is not the theory *of* anything in particular, and has no precise bibliographic shape” (Berlant & Warner 344). That is, despite sexuality, individuals begin to identify with a negative realm of existence; this acts as a critique for the definition of a successful life in the context of the Western world. For instance, Georges Bataille challenges Western notions of heteronormative romance in the prose *A Story of Rats*, found in the text *The Impossible*, to be sure. He does this in two distinct ways. First, the narrator remains in a numb, helpless state merely long enough to allude to how the impossibility of hegemonic romantic satiation leads to the conclusion that truth lives on when “we accede only by forgetting the truth of all these rights, only by accepting disappearance” (10). Second, the story challenges the reader to closely examine an unknown gender of a broken-hearted lover. Ultimately, the obscurity of gender leaves the narrative queerly open for a myriad of interpretations concerning heartache from a multitude of lenses. Therefore, the narrative implies that no longer does there exist a male-bodied individual—one shortsightedly expects upon fingering the text—but an unknown individual anew as glory rises from the deepest anguishes.

Then to further name anguish as a core component of queer existence, Gerard Manley Hopkins comprised six sonnets collectively known as *The Terrible Sonnets*, which contextualize how anguish is *rightfully-already-always-queer*. The image that Hopkins aims to illustrate represents a world of abysmal loneliness, frigid isolation, and disgusting self-hatred; “in which the ecstasies of religious devotion give way to an aching horror of existence...” (Fox 15). I contend that the six “abhorrent” sonnets shed a rather dim light onto queer existence, wherein this

existence thrives on pain and dejection, especially as queer culture ceases to reach full acknowledgement by Western society. In other words, the application of a queer lens to *The Terrible Sonnets*, elucidates that acknowledging anguish makes it barefaced; that the realm of the “dark side” provides a certain kind of knowledge into the depths of the human condition—but at first, one must be willing to avail oneself of this agony. The queer community, one where isolating and ravaging ache has been emphatically imposed upon, challenges hegemonic devotion; both *A Story of Rats* and *The Terrible Sonnets* seem to illuminate that when humans remain attached to a certain way of being—in this case, devotion to a lover as well as religious faith, especially when read alongside Halberstam’s ideas of failure.

Delving further into the text, the process of queering and undoing complicates *A Story of Rats*. Bataille’s narrative conjures a peculiar negativity that closely resembles, as we could only possibly name considering our limited lexicon, an emasculated lover whose heart of anguish has been torn out and emotionally disgorge time and time again—contingent on an agonizing, unbearable love that can never be fully grasped with the beloved, “B.” Bataille’s narrative, in every sense of the word, fails to align with Western expectations of the masculine-male through his work on an ever-deprecating love as he delves deeply into a bone-shattering narrative of anguish, and dwells here. For instance, during a fleeting absence of “B.” Bataille narrates dejectedly:

My temples are still throbbing. Outside, the snow is falling. It’s been falling for several days apparently. I’m feverish and I hate this blaze; for several days my loneliness has been truly insane. Now even the room lies: as long as it was cold and without a fire I kept my hands under the covers and I was less harried, my temples throbbed less. In a half-sleep, I dreamed I was dead: the coldness of the room was my casket, the houses of the town other tombs. I got used to it. I felt a certain pride in being unhappy. I trembled, without hope, undone like flowing sound. (43)

It is clear that the narrative's environmental surroundings, whether actual or metaphorical, give way to a certain pleasure in the darkly dejected corners devouring this home from inside out. The narrative gives way to a particular openness into the invitation of death—*la petite mort*—sensual deaths worth nurturing despite throes of adoration.

Again, the narrative challenges hegemonic ideals of blissful romance and love as a destructive bond. How does the narrative do so and what are the implications of this destructiveness? It seems to exist in Western notions of love that when a romance or love affair between individuals (two, three, or however many are involved) withers, especially couples of straightness, this relation represents an unfulfilling one hence an alleged lack of consistency or happiness. This unfulfilling love is whereupon the story rewrites what it means to have relations with the other and also where alternate modes of experiencing the other relationally, come to bear. For instance, in the beginning of the story, the reader immediately becomes acquainted with a newfound anguish of love, an “incredible nervous state, trepidation beyond words: to be this much in love is to be sick [and I love to be sick]” (15). Now, pointing back to Halberstam's queer writing on failure, society's insistent perpetuation of systematic dominance over one's being engulfs any sense of reality.

In accordance with Halberstam, “queer studies offer us one method for imagining, not some fantasy of an elsewhere, but existing alternatives to hegemonic systems” (89). With this in mind, the questions to ponder are: does this love, wherein the result is an adored yet excruciating suffering, penetrate beyond the status quo of Western tales of romance? To some extent, alternative images of love and relationship, challenge hegemony without necessarily eradicating the systems of hegemony completely. These Western tales of romance impart upon society that a happy and fulfilling relationship is: heterosexual, cisgendered, white, monetarily sound, and incessantly forever—only if the relationship is emotionally healthy, to be sure. However, “B.'s” nameless lover embraces a dejected love that which suffering stands as the centerpiece of the affair and more importantly, this violent depiction evokes anguished love as one step closer to fulfillment of the self. That is, in *A Story of Rats*, the narrative fails to ad-

here to hegemonic modes of love and fulfillment, but rather, flourishes at detailing the contradictions that are ignored and denoted as unloving. As follows in this un-love, there dwells what is *rightfully-always-already-queer*.

What is *rightfully-always-already-queer* then? Aforementioned, queerness is not subject only to sexualities that challenge heteronormative relations *par excellence*, but rather, queerness interrogates an imperialist, capitalist, and colonialist intention, especially when the appeal is to "... give [me] more anguish..." (Bataille 28). This then begs the question: is there value in inconsistency and anguish in relations with the other? If so, then what does it closely resemble? Why would anyone want to be given anguish? Well, the answer may be unfortunately simpler than expected. For instance, thinking in terms of intersectionality—race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age, nationality, etc.—implies that the narrator pleads for anguish, whereas, I contend, self-proclaimed members of the queer community are already borne into a particular agony.

As one example, an unnamed barrier of sorts separates "B." and her lover into isolation. This separation from one another is deeply queer. Hence the two lovers, despite their unknown sexual identities, have fallen into a painful love of inconsistency as "B." continuously comes and goes *whilst* her lover dwells in a beautiful anguish to conserve the love affair. However, for instance, isolation of lovers and the imposition of agony is indubitably a coerced component of love for undocumented queers in today's society. Eithne Luibheid and Sasha Khokha note that in United States history, exclusion of undocumented queers relies on a specific family structure that is "...heterosexual and patriarchal" (78). At present, during President Barack Obama's second term, undocumented queer advocates actively seek deportation protection, especially when lovers are separated and consistently gashed apart from one another (Dinan). To carve beyond the barrier more deeply, the queer undocumented experience is *rightfully-always-already-queer* based on the forced subjugation, marginalization, and ongoing *invisible-lization* in the Western world. A broken relationship and inconsistency are not new to the undocumented queer experience, but hastily ignored and forgotten by those whose relations align with what is socially accepted as *right*. Bataille's narrative,

when read through a queer lens, takes on new meaning and direction, especially for what it means to dwell in anguish. The point is to provide eyes of difference to be given a platform in order to rethink interpretations of all literature and the implications of this.

Lastly, a discussion of the unknown gender of the narrator is necessary to further situate anguish as an aspect of queerness. It cannot be determined whether the story is autobiographical or an essay on poetry and of poetry insofar this is never explicitly stated. Conversely, the reader is left subject to a multitude of interpretations and intricate modes of reading this particular story. Whereas, on the other hand, it is made clear that “B.” resembles a female-bodied individual as the narrator expresses, “I would like always to move her to *anguish* and for her to faint from it...” (16). Does “B.” run from anguish? Does she seek hegemonic happiness in her devotion to a lover and more importantly, who is this lover desiring her to faint from anguish? Even “B.” remains nameless herself throughout the story. In other words, her namelessness along with her lover’s unknown identity leave an ambiguous space wide-open. The ambiguity in the story leaves room for multiple identities to surface as this provides deeper insight into what it means to experience anguish in devotion to a lover.

Between and between the quasi-spaces of gender unknown, Bataille supplies the capacity for relatability of the subject. More particularly, “B.” resembles the supposed unstable lover whose back-and-forth disposition in the relationship, quite possibly acts as the point where multiple identities surface. To leave “B.” genderless is to impart, in our relationships with the Other or simply another, gender separates us from fully being. An unnamable gender identity—biopolitically monitored—as metaphor, implies the fluidity that one has potential to embrace to create alternate worlds away from the platform of hegemony, doubtless.

In the same manner that *A Story of Rats* illuminates the need to scurry from light for some, wherein for others, light has never been necessarily shined down upon, *The Terrible Sonnets* enable a modern day queering of the “dark side” of a different type of devotee—the religious devotee whose devotion begins to travel down an ever-winding path—similar to that of the queer experience in contemporary society. According to

Dominic Fox, “The Terrible Sonnets are commonly viewed as a type of confessional poetry or autobiographical self-portrait: they are read as depicting a state of mind of which they are also a by-product” (15). However, when read from a queer perspective, I contend, a state of anguish extracted from the sonnets is not necessarily a by-product of a mental state of the mind or emotion, but rather, derivative of an imposed marginalization of an enforced, reinforced, and mandated anguish of life as death for the queer body. For Hopkins, this queer body challenges and recognizes the fallacy in a particular faith, leading to a strange alienation. In other words, queer anguish vows for the pain Hopkins allegorizes, but queer anguish can and does challenge the spring of misery—pushing against the Western notion that depression or other modes of suffering originate from within the individual, placing the blame back onto the individual yet again. A queer lens resituates anguish outside of the platform of hegemony. The reader, without hesitation, is removed from happy and joyous images of adulation and made subject to images of agony, anguish, and torture; at which point, an explored fulfillment of the “dark side” arises.

Next, an in-depth examination of three specific sonnets of Hopkins is vital in order to make sense of the queerness dwelling throughout each line. First, recall that the sonnets are “...portraying a scarcely imaginable extremity of spiritual abjection” (Fox 15). *Id est*, whereas Bataille’s narrative exposes abjection of hegemonic romance tales, Hopkins denudes a sudden realization that faith in God has failed him and in a way, he has failed religious faith by opposing it in place of residing in the “cold world.” This evokes a certain kind of queerness insofar that he rejects optimistic devotion in God. Instead, Hopkins comes to terms with a counter knowledge abiding to his failure to cling to hegemonic faith, which moves him into a peculiar faith—faith in the “dark side.”

The first sonnet worth dissecting, *To Seem the Stranger*, implies two types of being-lost, or losing one’s former self. First, the image of anguish is found “to seem the stranger lies my lot, my life;” which grasps that his life is not one of consistency, but rather one of confusion, as his life has now become unknown to his own image and understanding

of self. In other words, to seemingly be the stranger in one's own life indicates a sense of undoing all that he has known up to this unrecognizable point of disorientation. Second, he loses himself through his former beliefs in God, which have left God's image and the image of his once life estranged:

To seem the stranger lies my lot, my life
Among strangers. Father and mother dear,
Brothers and sisters are in Christ not near,
And he my peace parting, sword and strife. (1-4)

Not only is a sense of self now disoriented, but also more importantly, identification with a system of religion is an even greater loss of the self. As Halberstam reminds us, "...subordinate, queer, or counterhegemonic modes of common sense lead to the association of failure with nonconformity, capitalist practices, non-reproductive lifestyles, negativity, and critique" (89). To add to the ideas of Halberstam, Hopkins marinates in an anguished solace in his association of failure with Western dominant religion and familial ties. To remove one's self from a particular religion, heaves one into a place of disorientation where all has now turned strange—intriguing despite the agony that comes with loss. The process of becoming the stranger or already having been the stranger denotes a peculiar kind of queerness—one that refuses living well and embraces the "dark side."

The second sonnet that embraces negativity and darkness, *I Wake and Feel*, pulls the subject deeper into anguish, particularly when one realizes his place in the world is on the outside. A sense of horror and self-hatred spews:

I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most deep decree.
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.
Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse. (9-14)

As Fox points out, Hopkins does not declare that the experience is the *worst*, but rather, "...it doesn't get any worse than this" (17). For him,

to be him, is far worse than any expression of the *worst*. In other words, Hopkins transgresses the *worst* into a distinct kind of lost, wherein to be him—a strange him—reflects a curse of yet again, sorrowed anguish. The sufferer, “God’s most deep decree” elucidates a deepened hate of the self that relies on an image of failure insofar that this hate derives from defying God’s rules. This “dark side” is not meant to cause anguish or dejection, but this “dark side” is pain contingent on shattering dramatized and hegemonic modes of being. To cross this far into the abyss potentially removes an individual from leading a “successful life.” That is, to live within darkness, any given person who resides there, while challenging the “American laborer” in means of capitalist production has failed, in every sense of the word. If an individual loses, then there is no capital to profit from which is similar to the “queer struggle.” Remaining in-tune with Halberstam, “the queer art of failure turns on the impossible, the improbable, the unlikely, and the unremarkable” (88). In this realm of being worse than the *worst*, the imagination begins to conjure alternative modes of being. The state of being that Hopkins exudes ultimately deviates from any structured norm; therefore, queering not only poetry, but also a new way of being, in which where does such the dejected one turn to in a world that demands insistent happiness and one-dimensional success?

In the third and final sonnet examined, *My Own Heart*, the subject is forced to feel comfort in the loneliness of an insatiable state of being. As Hopkins dreadfully lures the subject in, the dejected becomes darker:

I cast for comfort I can no more get
By groping round my comfortless, than blind
Eyes in their dark can day or thirst can find
Thirst’s all-in-all in all a world of wet. (5-8)

A wet world—an inundated world—implies a thirst that can never be quenched. The wet world signifies the platform of hegemony, constraining modes of being. To reach for comfort, a comfort that no longer exists may very well be the deepest anguish of all. The queer experience, one that can never be made possible by a hegemonic social order, does not need its thirst quenched, but rather, radical spaces to carve anew, distant from social order—a space of its own to dejectedly thrive. Hegemonic so-

cial order aims for societal members to remain cheery, to pull it together, and to move past it. Queerness defies this design for living and realizes the beauty of the “dark side” and creates new modes of being through anguish—as merely *one* critical component of queer existence for contemporary society.

Reflecting upon the ideas presented here, in perpetual modes of a lover’s devotion and religious worship, queerness must be applied to literature, old and new, to extract what is *rightfully-always-already-queer*. By applying queerness in an interdisciplinary manner, the questions: who is the term ‘queer’ meant for and what are the implications of queerness, become clearer. *A Story of Rats* and *The Terrible Sonnets*, when analyzed apace with Halberstam’s queer writing on modern ideas that counter dominant paradigms of failure, detail the myriad of ways anguish carves a space to remove oneself from contemporary society. The queer body has a special advantage in removing itself from contemporary society rather than buying into concepts of sameness and conformity. The analysis of the narrative and sonnets, when reexamined through the application of a queer lens, places the subject in the position of the queer body where anguish already rests—the queer body is the “dark side.”

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An Ecocritical Look at Mythic Spaces and Nationalistic Sentiment in Bill Willingham's Jack of Fables: Americana

AMY DESUZA

Jack of Fables is a spin-off of Willingham's award winning series *Fables* and it functions in the same diegesis, which consists of multiple worlds. The magical worlds, or Homelands, are the worlds that are the setting for familiar fairy tales, folklore, nursery rhymes, and other fantasy stories that most of today's American audience would be familiar with. There is also a nonmagical world that the Fables call the mundane world. This mundane world is meant to represent the current world of the reader. The Fables are able to move between the various Homelands and the mundane world through hidden portals regardless of where the Fable originates from. In *Peter and Max a Fables Novel*, Willingham describes the relationship between the worlds saying, "Our world seemed to contain miniature versions of every Homeland world [Fables] had originally come from. Here was...England that mirrored the entire world they once knew as Albion... infant America slowly grew into an approximation of Americana" (24). America transforming into a version of Americana points to the idea that the Homeland serves as a prophecy about how America forms its national identity through myth or folklore. Most American myth is connected to the idea of Nature. Reading Bill Willingham's *Jack of Fables: Americana* ecocritically reveals the comic to be more than a reinterpretation of

American folklore and myth. It exposes the dangers of the idealized space and how it is connected to the stereotyping and reification of nature, race, and even time in the case of American myth.

According to *Myth: A Very Short Introduction* by Robert Segal, this is an example of myth functioning as a response to social issues. He summarizes Rene Girard by saying, “Myth and ritual are ways of coping not with nature but with human nature-- with human aggression” (Segal 129). Segal’s distinction between nature and human nature is an important binary for ecocritics as well. In *The Ecological Thought*, Timothy Morton’s main points break down the socially constructed ideas of nature in favor of the interconnectedness of things, which he calls the “mesh,” and in dark ecology, which embraces not just the pristine nature but the ugly and weird as well. These concepts translate into the Sublime and the Traumatic in Paul Outka’s book, *Race and Nature From Transcendentalism to the Harlem Renaissance*, where he combines ecocriticism and race studies. Outka examines how space affects race and the idea of the Other. These are important ideas for comics to get involved with since the medium functions through reification and stereotypes. Derek Royal addresses this issue in “Coloring America: Multi-Ethnic Engagements with Graphic Narrative.” Royal feels that in order for comics to be taken seriously, they need to be actively involved with America’s racial issues. Reading Bill Willingham’s *Jack of Fables: Americana* ecocritically reveals the comic to be more than a reinterpretation of American folklore and myth. It exposes the dangers of the idealized space and how it is connected to the stereotyping and reification of nature, race, and even time in the case of American myth.

In *Understanding Comics*, Scott McCloud defines the comic book as “juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence” (*Understanding Comics* 9). McCloud breaks down the complexities of reading a text that is both words and images. One of the most important chapters for an ecocritic to understand this argument is chapter six which McCloud calls “Show and Tell.” He

demonstrates that our brains are already open to the idea of blending words and images with his example of a little boy presenting his show and tell to a class (138-139). The boy switches between using his words and pointing to parts of his robot. The point is that the ratio of words and pictures in a comics can emphasize different things. Understanding how this is effective, ecocritics can examine this balance between words and pictures to analyze the ecological message of the text. The book lays out the critical terminology needed to talk about comics in an academic way such as how to read a panel, and the role of the gutter space. Recognizing when a comic breaks from the natural pattern helps the reader recognize the significance of the change.

In *The Ecological Thought*, Timothy Morton states that “in the name of ecology, we must scrutinize Nature with all the suspicion a modern person can muster” (101). Morton is making a distinction about the socially constructed ideas of nature. The fact that nature is sometimes capitalized within the text helps the reader differentiate between various ways of thinking about nature. Morton says he “shall sometimes use a capital N to highlight its “unnatural” qualities, namely (but not limited to), hierarchy, authority, harmony, purity, neutrality, and mystery” (56). All of these concepts and terms have been applied to nature in various forms, and this is what Morton would like readers to scrutinize because they create an artificial binary that divides human and the non-human elements. Instead of thinking in these binaries, Morton would like his readers to focus on the interconnectedness of everything. Morton calls this interconnectedness the mesh (208). The last point of Morton’s argument that will be used is the concept of dark ecology. As he puts it, “The ecological thought is intrinsically dark, mysterious, and open, like an empty city square at dusk, a half-open door, or an unresolved chord” (Morton 224). Morton is pushing to embrace the ugly or unsettling aspects of nature.

Paul Outka’s *Race and Nature From Transcendentalism to the Harlem Renaissance* “Introduction: The Sublime and the Traumat-

ic” demonstrates the need to integrate race studies into ecocriticism. Outka states, “That the intersection of nature and race-- perhaps the two most perniciously reified constructions in American culture-- has yet to be thoroughly examined underscores the long-standing, often normative, whiteness of ecocriticism” (3). The fact that nature and race share in that they are both social constructs also means that they share in some of the same struggles. Nature in this case would refer to what Timothy Morton refers to as capital N “Nature.” Outka’s primary focus is on the deep South, narrowing his analysis to the tensions around the black/white binary, and linking it with land degradation (7). He focus on the idea of “wilderness” which seems to be a white space and the contradictory black identity as “savage.” He sees there is a direct link between how nature is used to describe race by way of metaphor and how certain spaces become racially charged. In his chapter titled “Migrations,” he goes into detail on how black culture shifts from being identified as rural to urban (Outka 172). These concepts of rural and urban are confined within arbitrarily defined boundaries much in the same way that comics are constructed with a wide variety of panel construction that restricts the action within designated borders.

In the same light, Derek Royal’s “Coloring America: Multi-Ethnic Engagements with Graphic Narrative,” sets to breakdown the potential problem that comes with visual narrative “compressing” time and/or identities with the use of stereotypes. Royal’s introduction claims that in order for comics to be taken seriously they need to address current American racial issues. He states that “Authors may expose, either overtly or through tacit implication, certain recognized or even unconscious prejudices held by them and/or their reader” (Royal 8). The author’s choice of how realistically the characters are drawn will help to construct the racial issues being addressed in the comic. Willingham’s collaboration with a variety of artists on the entire *Fables* series allows a character’s image to shift between very realistic to more simple or iconic versions of

themselves which adds another layer when reading the comics.

For *Americana*, Willingham, along with artists Russ Braun and Andrew Pepoy design, both the characters and the space they inhabit on the realistic side of the spectrum. It is interesting that the level of detail in the characters and their environment is fairly balanced but will shift subtly to alert the reader where to focus. When Hillary is talking to Paul Bunyan at the side of a dirt road, the forest and the characters have about the same amount of detail (Willingham 22). While Morton might appreciate the balance in detail, what he would focus on is that Nature (in its rich shades of green) is separated from the characters by a fence. The fence turns nature into a sacred space that needs to be protected. Just a few pages away, as the two characters move further into the wilderness, they are drawn in less detail and the tall grass at their feet is pulled into focus with more detail (Willingham 25). The story begins with two separate parties trying to enter the fable world of *Americana*. Jack and his group are searching for a way to the Lost City of Cibola looking for treasure, while Hillary and her group are searching for the Head Librarian in the town of Idyll. Each team plans to enter *Americana* from two different points. Jack's group heads out to the desert in New Mexico and Hillary's group heads to the forests of Montana. Both of these locations are isolated areas that Morton would describe as Nature. The desert and the forest hold the image of the "wilderness" which becomes idealized for their pureness. Outka talks about how by embracing these descriptions of nature, we forget the violence that was required to create these non-human spaces.

Outka writes, "Wilderness' functions in almost definitionally ideological terms. It marks a dehistoricized space which the erasure of the histories of human habitation, ecological alteration, and native genocide that proceed it 'wild' valorization is, literally, naturalized" (2). This can be seen by the sidekicks in each party. Hillary, in Montana, needs the help of Paul Bunyan to find where the mundane world and *Americana* meet because it is his Home-

land (Willingham 22). The irony of Paul helping Hillary is that his legend is centered around the destruction of forests as he was a symbolic hero of the lumberjacks and lumber industries. Paul represents those that dominated over nature, and he is the key to returning to the fabled Americana. While Jack is a Fable, he is not from the Americana Homeland, but his buddy Raven, a Native American Trickster, is. Where Paul is rooted in the forest, Raven's Native American status links him to the desert or open planes of Americana. The other difference is that Paul's link to the forest, as mentioned earlier, is about domination over the land. Raven's link to the land is as an oppressed Other. The desert represents a violent time in Americana where, during the Western expansion, the Native American population was removed from the land. In both instances these legendary characters represent two sides of Outka's argument about the dehistoricizing that happens when viewing this mythic space of Americana.

The link between these two diverse landscapes is that The Great Train, representing the rapid expansion and move West, traversed both locations. As both groups prepare to board The Great Train to cross over into Americana, they modify their appearance to fit the role of the traveling hobo. The stereotypical imagery of the hobo has the parties holding their belongings in a small bundle attached to a stick. The complexities of what it means to be a hobo has, in modern times, been reduced to a single icon. This one feature changes the character enough for the Great Train to come into view. As the two parties board the Great Train, the natural space begins to blur together. On page 27, the top and bottom panels mirror each other with the silhouette of the train acting as a barrier between them. The top is green Montana landscape and the bottom is the New Mexican desert. Each space gets three panels: the train coming into view, the parties running toward the train, and the parties getting ready to jump. All of the panels are evenly spaced and the top and bottom panels stay an equal distance apart. The borders between Montana and New Mexico stay the same which grounds this scene

in the Mundy world. On the next two pages, the boundaries begin to break down. What is presented is one large splash page taking up two pages. The desert is on the right and the grass is on the left, and running right down the middle of the pages is the train. There are five vertical panels representing an action-to-action sequence as the characters make their jump into the train (28-29). Both parties enter the train at seemingly the same time from two very different locations, and it becomes clear that they have entered the exact same space. On page 30, the reader is given one more splash page and this time all seven characters are lying in a pile on the floor of the box car.

The division of land in the fable world of Americana is unique to the comic book and works on several levels. The first time a map of Americana is seen is as a tattoo on the rump of Humpty Dumpty, who has just recently been glued back together. In one panel the reader gets a close look at Humpty Dumpty's rear end while he explains that it was tattooed on him by a forgotten legendary hobo named A-Number-One (39). There are no clear borders or labels to designate where the map begins or ends. From the ecological standpoint of Outka, this would be an ideal map. Without borders there can be no nationalistic sense of place. However, since the map is on Humpty's rear end and not accessible for public viewing, the only person who benefits from this eco-friendly map are the intimate few who have access to his posterior.

The next level of map is a physical/political hybrid map that acts to track the progress of the heroes of the story. As a physical map it shows easily identifiable bodies of water that align with American geography. Lake Superior is easily identifiable in the panel, showing that there is a connection to the fabled Americana and the modern United States. There are no state lines that are recognizable, but instead there are general territories and towns placed on the map which are identified by stereotypical ideas of certain geological locations. Some of the familiar areas include The Frontier, The Steamboat, The Colonies, Gangland, Idyll, and

Speakeasy (Willingham 63). These areas will be discussed in detail later on, but for now the focus is on the map itself. The map exists in two ways; first, it occupies a single panel and shows a selected portion based on the heroes' location, and second, the map breaks free of the panels and becomes the gutter space. As a panel, the map either stands alone or as a small insert of an action panel. For example, in a large splash panel that shows Jack and his fellow travelers surrounded by Native Americans, the map at the top shows that this is happening in the Lone Star area (77). On the previous page, the map becomes the gutter space as Jack and his friends move from Salem to the Antebellum (76). The map as the gutter space helps show that time is condensed in this moment, as if the reader were experiencing a traveling montage. In this way, the physical/political map works more to denote time than it does to denote space.

It is how Willingham, along with the artists, depicts the specifics of the individual areas that shows how space becomes nationalistic when linked with myth or folklore. These mythic spaces are both rural and urban spaces. One way to approach the areas of Americana would be to divide them into one of these two categories. In addition to rural and urban classification, as it is about to be shown, many of these mythic spaces are linked to time as well. The first space of Americana that Jack and the others arrive at is Steamboat and, they are greeted by Jim and Huck Finn. Named after the ships that were popular along the Mississippi River during the nineteenth century in America. The area of Steamboat is a mix of open space with the center of the town located next to a large river (Willingham 37). The artwork offers minimal detail compared to other areas of Americana in a way that deemphasizes the space and the time period it originated from. The areas of Salem and Antebellum are given even less detail as the two areas are forced to share the same space (Willingham 76). Another area that also receives a brief treatment is The Great White North. Here the travelers walk down the dirt street while the local residents come outside to greet them,

including an Eskimo and a Yeti. This follows the stereotype of the overly friendly people. Jack documents the experiences noting, “It was okay, but everyone was way nicer than they should have been, and they talked funny, and what they called ‘bacon’ was like no bacon I’ve had before” (Willingham 72). In the same panel, one of the locals watching a hockey game is cheering for both teams as he is seen waiving a pennant for each team. This may be a funny stereotype, but some of the others are a bit more serious.

The last rural space to explore is the Frontier. The first image of the Frontier is of Jack and company surrounded by Native Americans in full head-dress (Willingham 77). All of the men are drawn to look similar and the only identifiable Native American is Raven; who, in true trickster fashion, abandons the travelers to save his own skin. Willingham references the Lone Ranger and Tonto when Raven says, “What you mean *we* paleface” (77). Up to this point, Raven has had a normal speech pattern and the sudden switch is noticeably stereotypical. In the following scene, Raven has rejoined the group while they are all fleeing on horseback from the calvary (Willingham 78). These rural spaces are marked in history by racial hatred and religious persecution. To draw attention to these details in relatively few frames, the artists rely heavily on stereotypes. The only racial diversity seen within Americana is seen within these rural spaces. Jim represents the only black man and he is seen shirtless, when most illustrations have him fully clothed. His only words are, “We bes’ be going now” (Willingham 37). His speech is stereotypical of an uneducated black man from the South, but at least he has a voice. The Eskimo and the Native Americans have no voice and therefore no agency. The myths centered around these rural spaces feed the ideologies that lead to what Outka speaks against, “Racism... almost always asserts the supposedly subhuman or “animal” qualities of its object in contradiction to white/human supremacy, and thus its violence resonates both ecocritically and intersubjectively” (6-7). Willingham draws attention to these negative rural spaces with the runaway slave, the voiceless, and the faceless. This is

important and Royal summarizes Scott McCloud's idea from *Reinventing Comics* that "in order to be taken seriously as a creative art form and stand along side more traditional forms of literary narrative, contemporary comics should not only directly address the current state of race relations in the United States, but also reclaim the history of minority participation in the comic book industry" (8). Willingham does this through not only the rural spaces, but the urban spaces as well.

The urban spaces in *Americana* have much more detail than their rural counterparts. In *Gangland* each brick of the building behind Jack is drawn out (67), compared to the less detailed wall behind Babe in *Steamboat* (41). Even the details in the clothing the characters wear is much more elaborate; the checker pattern on the stranger (67) and the fringes on Hillary's dress (69) are just two examples of this. On the timeline, the urban areas mirror time periods closer to the current time. *Gangland* is representative of the Prohibition era in America. While racial issues were still prevalent in the 1920s in America, that time frame is most recognized and portrayed by organized crime and the open battles between law enforcement and criminals. Willingham shows how the era was romanticized by showing Jack and the group setting up a speakeasy. They are seen on one page smoking, drinking, and playing cards; they are thoroughly enjoying themselves just before the cops show up to raid the joint (69). One of the few times it is actually shown how the group escapes their predicament is in *Gangland* as they shoot their way out of the club (70). An interesting thing happens to Jack and his friends when they get to *The Big City*. While the city landmarks are drawn realistically and very detailed, compared to previous locations, the characters are drawn with less detail than in any other space (73, 75). This change is most notable in *Raven*. In previous spaces his features were drawn to emphasize that he is Native American; from his hair to his chiseled facial features, he was much more stereotypical (40, 77). In *The Big City*, *Raven's* facial features are softened and he could eas-

ily get lost in the crowd (73, 75). Raven has been absorbed by the hegemony of the urban space. The most interesting urban space is the town of Idyll.

The name of the town is important. Idyll is usually used to describe the pastoral. One of the most notable references is *Idylls of the King* by Alfred, Lord Tennyson which tells the epic tale of King Arthur and Camelot. By naming the town with a word associated with one of the more well-known pastoral myths of Great Britain, it sets a certain image in the reader's mind. When Hillary, Jack and Gary first set foot in Idyll, all the reader can see is the sign for the town on the train platform (Willingham 43). When they turn the page, the reader sees a two page spread of a town from the 1950s: there is a diner on the corner, a movie theater just behind it, across the street there is the family owned grocery, and an authentic car from the fifties. What is most notable though is that all of the citizens are zombies. Gary comments that "They used to be *so* nice and not *dead!* I mean... I think they were" (Willingham 44). In fact, Gary is right. Even in their zombie form, the citizens of Idyll are nice. One of the zombie women offers Hillary some food, saying, "I have made a casserole. Would you like to try eating it?" (Willingham 46). The nostalgia for the 1950s has probably become one of America's most current examples of an idealized space that has been dehistoricized of the racial tensions of the time, as Outka discusses, in favor of the myth of "a more simple time." The closer one gets to examining this ideological time and space, the stranger it becomes. This is what Morton was talking about when he described his idea of the strange stranger. The closer anyone gets to understanding nature, the stranger it becomes. This would count in urban environments as well, since for Morton all things are interconnected. The strange stranger in the town of Idyll is represented by the zombies as the closer one looks at the idealized decade of the fifties the more strange the people of Idyll become. The only person that is not a zombie in Idyll is the head librarian of Americana, named Bookburner. He is the personification of literary censorship. Idyll is the

perfect space within Americana for Bookburner to live since the citizens in their zombie state offer no resistance toward him. Willingham is making a strong statement against the unquestioning belief in the need to hang on to the nostalgia of the 1950s era as our ideal time in America. The Bookburner serves as a reminder that even the most sought out spaces come at a cost. The reader gets to see Bookburner in action as he tosses Paul Bunyan's book into his fire and says, "I'm afraid I've had to remove you from circulation, Paul. It is for the *good* of the community that I do this" (Willingham 84). By purging Americana of a book that might be construed as a threat to the standard way of life, Bookburner dehistoricizes American myth. As Paul lays colorless on the floor with a look of pain, Burner says "Don't be afraid old man. You won't be gone *entirely*, I'm adding you to my... private collection" (Willingham 85). The idea that these unsuitable aspects of the past can never be fully removed from our myth is important in the same way that nature can never truly be purified. The ugly and strange are equally important aspects of nature, and this is Morton's dark ecology.

In the earlier sections of his book, Morton examines how ecocriticism responds to ecological literature. He notes that this is mostly happening as a response to Romantic literature, but says that "this brand of criticism, however, restricts the radical openness the ecological thought implies, employing a prepackaged conceptual container labeled 'Nature'" (154). He wants ecocriticism to break away from the limited scope of viewing these obviously "green" environments found in literature. Instead, he would prefer to look outside of this space. The examples he gives are of art and poetry, stating that even their forms are ecological. Morton says "the poem organizes space. Seen like this, all texts--artworks, indeed-- have an irreducibly ecological form" (163). While he never explicitly states it, comics would be a perfect example of this. The inherent form forces the reader to change their reading from a passive act into an active act as they process both visual and textual elements to fully understand the comic book. The background that a character is

drawn into becomes just as important as the character, the ultimate interconnected text.

It is with the combined efforts of comic theory and ecocriticism that Bill Willingham's *Jack of Fables: Americana* can be seen as more than a reinterpretation of American folklore and myth. It allows for an ecological reading of myth that exposes the dangers of the idealized space and how it is connected to the stereotyping and reification of nature, race, and even time in the case of American myth. The combination of picture and words in the comic force the reader to transform from a passive reader to an active reader. In *The Power of Comics*, Duncan and Smith state that "the comic book reading experience is the result of the interaction between what is on the page and the life experience and even the emotional state of each reader" (153). As such the reader, with the right tool, can find that even without a clear ecological message rooted in the plot of the story, comics offer a unique way to think ecologically. That is not to say that this technique could not be used on other mediums as well. American pop culture is constantly reimagining myth, folklore, and fairy tales. How these texts are reimagined and the spaces these new myths inhabit can be analyzed in an ecological way as well with some potentially interesting results.

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“Wash my fierce hand in’s heart”: The Language of Contagion, Duality, and the Body in Coriolanus

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Readings of William Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus* often raise questions about early modern concepts of the body’s role in society. Critics often interpret Coriolanus as a solitary figure standing in opposition to the larger, public body of the state—one who promotes an individualized, enclosed persona and whose body literalizes his experiences on the battlefield. While Coriolanus’ social influence as a politician is at the heart of critical debate, it is still ambiguous in the text whether or not Coriolanus stands as a public politician or a figure that belongs to the public. The ambiguity in reading Coriolanus’ status is critical to any commentary that might occur about the body, but through examination of contagion language used in the play, we can gain insight into the dueling social positions that Coriolanus is forced to reconcile. Moreover, because Coriolanus is contentiously positioned between two social roles, contact with Aufidius, General of the Volscian army and Coriolanus’ enemy, becomes a focal point for “infection” to infiltrate the external and internal aspects of Coriolanus’ body. While contagion is brought up in the text through explicit language about disease, Adrian Poole also addresses the workings of contagion as air, breath, blood, violence, and touch in his essay

“Shakespeare and the Risk of Contagion,” and observes these as methods by which individuals come into contact with each other or with crowds of others. In this paper I will argue that by viewing the body through the lens of contagion, we can see how Shakespeare uses Coriolanus’ body as a site of anxiety and tension to dismantle perceptions of a seemingly impenetrable hierarchical social order.

Whether Coriolanus belongs to the public of Rome or exists as a solitary figure is a question continuously flushed out in the text. Coriolanus’ resistance in his language—“Would you have me / False to my nature?” (*Cor.* 3.2.13-14)—presses against his mother Volumnia’s beliefs, and ultimately the whole of Rome’s social structure, by questioning his function in relation to others. Coriolanus is not ignorant of Volumnia’s political desires being projected onto him: “Rather say I play / The man I am” (*Cor.* 3.2.14-15). Coriolanus’ abhorrence toward transforming or becoming anything other than what he is causes a tension in the social order which I believe essentially stems from two existing perspectives about the body in the text: a body that seeks to contain and remain isolated and one susceptible to outside infiltration.

Shakespeare addresses anxieties over dualism early on in his works. In *The Comedy of Errors* the audience is consistently forced to reconcile the existence of twins with the notion that there seems to be a single plot line pertaining to “Antipholus.” This tension in the text raises the question of doubling the body and is significant because it highlights how one identity *can* actually turn out to belong to two people. A perceived desire for early modern audiences watching this body doubling occur on stage was to assign a single social role to a single body, limiting mobility within the social structure.¹ Because the twinning in *Errors* disrupts this desire, the body becomes a point of disruption in the social order. Similarly,

1 Douglas Lanier addresses this anxiety in his essay, “‘Stigmatical in Making’: The Material Character of *The Comedy of Errors*,” by highlighting the early modern anxieties about actors portraying aristocrats on stage. The fear was that the actors were transgressing their own social classes and encouraging the acceptance of social mobility from the lower classes to the higher classes. The crux of his argument is that actors would dress like the nobles and therefore access a social privilege that should have been inherently unavailable to them being born into the lower classes (84-85).

in *Twelfth Night* when Sebastian recognizes Cesario/Viola's vocals as his sister's and apologizes to Olivia for her betrothal to both a maid and a man, so again is the body a site that disrupts the social order. Olivia's own desire for Cesario is split in that moment, causing the play to suggest the existence of a dual body (i.e., that Cesario is actually Sebastian *and* Viola) while also highlighting the early modern anxieties of needing to project a single social role onto a single body. The duality, one conjured by a single identity possessing two bodies, is a common trope Shakespeare reworks in his plays, and yet its implications remain ambiguous. In *Errors*, the Antipholi are still somewhat conflated, an observation highlighted by the Duke's response, "Stay, stand apart. I know not which is which" (5.1.365), and the brief moments of identity confusion that ensue. The same confusion rings true for *Twelfth Night*, as the dual nature of Cesario is not resolved by the marital union of Sebastian and Olivia, but instead continues with Viola, never again to embody her femininity in the play, walking off-stage with Orsino *as* Cesario. This concept of a dual (and dueling) body brings up anxiety in relation to social order, and addresses the larger question of whether or not a single identity needs to adhere to a single social role. It would appear that by underscoring duality, Shakespeare not only addresses the anxieties of social roles and order, but also encourages a displacement of those roles.

Coriolanus' persona then can be understood as a duality: the individual warrior that he claims to be and the politician that the public and his social circle want him to be. As the individual warrior, Coriolanus presents what Lisa S. Starks-Estes refers to as the enclosed body: a body that, at all costs, seeks to preserve an individualized status and existence as a solitary figure, neither affected by nor responsible to an external force or influence (85). Openness of the body is a disruption of what has attempted to remain enclosed and therefore represents the existence of not just dual presence, but the susceptibility of invasion by that other (external) presence. Claudia Corti remarks in her essay, "The Iconic Body: *Coriolanus* and Renaissance Corporeality," that *Coriolanus* moves beyond a point of language into a mode of physicality (57). Emphasizing early modern thought on corporeality, Corti claims the body becomes problematized

when moving “from a static view of the body to one of the body as *mechanism*” (59), observing that the enclosed body challenged Galen’s work on the humorous body and perceptions of contagion as a product of imbalance (59). The body as incapable of being affected by any external influence was slowly shifting to an understanding that Starks-Estes identifies as an early modern anxiety with tensions between the enclosed and open/wounded body (88). Rachele Sanders, in her essay, “The Body of the Actor in *Coriolanus*,” argues, too, that Coriolanus’ primary concern is with his own body and its need to be enclosed from public display (388). Coriolanus’ desire to withhold his body from display is complicated as he eventually acknowledges “possibilities and constraints that contradict his initial conception of performance as inherently debasing” (388). Sanders’ point mirrors Corti’s, claiming Coriolanus’ conception of his body “bears the double imprint of this dual phenomenon, in the manipulation of both the exterior and the interior body” (60). In looking at how critics have interpreted Coriolanus’ attempts to reconcile his dual roles, we begin to see a visceral conflict that manifests through and on the body.

The body as a site of potential openness signifies a perception of susceptibility. Jonathan Sawday also discusses the Renaissance body, but instead labels enclosure as the *mechanical body*: one that seeks to remain contained (29). By calling attention to a natural role of the mechanical body, a body that fulfills a more utilitarian purpose, Sawday acknowledges “the marginal, the low, the anti-rationalistic,” as alternative social perspectives produced when the natural role of the body is not fulfilled (19, 20). Given that early modern thought was slowly coming to terms with a body not entirely devoid of external influence, perspectives about the body and how it should function in a social order were also susceptible to revision. Janet Adelman addresses some of this anxiety in her work, “Escaping the Matrix: The Construction of Masculinity in *Coriolanus*,” when she recognizes Coriolanus as a “self-sufficient creature” who “refuses to acknowledge any neediness and dependency” (26). Though her work takes a significant turn towards psychoanalyzing Coriolanus’s relationship with his mother and its effects on his masculinity, her argument is relevant to a discussion of *Coriolanus* in that she focuses on

the anxieties produced by susceptibility and is concerned with what goes into and is produced by his body (27). Coriolanus' body becomes a site of vulnerability and therefore susceptible not only to invasion but also potentially liable for spreading this vulnerability.

In his work on foreign bodies and social pathology, Jonathan Gil Harris examines early modern concepts of disease and its effects on social structures. Harris' exploration highlights concepts of the body as "natural," insinuating alignment with an assigned social role, and the body as marginal, implicitly being on the outskirts of the social order (20). Harris' analysis of the diseased body specifically draws from the writings of Thomas Starkey, an early modern theorist, who concluded disease intrinsically originated in the plagued body. Starkey's "constituted" (or enclosed) body is one that holds significance in that the only way to justify a "cleanliness" or redemption of a diseased body is to assign a curative from within the body. A single, enclosed body then becomes not only the location of contraction but also of remedy (Harris 3). While Harris notes that Starkey attributes curative powers to the head of state, we can also glean from Starkey an understanding that a single body produces anxieties both about containment and infiltration (25). Adrian Poole comments on this anxiety through several modes of "disease contraction" within Shakespeare's writings: breath and touch (in terms of proximity), violence and love. When Olivia in *Twelfth Night* reminisces about Cesario's body, she remarks, "Even so quickly may one catch the plague?" (1.5.240). Olivia is instantly afflicted with the lingering presence of Cesario and attributes his/her body as a plague that can be caught. Poole's commentary on the risks involved with the plague requires looking at these instances in terms of vicinity/proximity (95, 97). Foreign bodies not only allude to the idea that disease can exist elsewhere, but also that they can contaminate a naturally healthy body. Poole's focus on cursing and violence are two very distinct ways in which contraction of disease occurs (95). In Starks-Estes' examination of cultural commentary on the body and its susceptibility to external influence, she presents Coriolanus as a wounded body—one almost naturally made to be in the throes of battle (92). The wounds, however, are what keep Coriolanus separated

from the public, but they also make him susceptible to the public's perceived right to stake claim over his body (Starks-Estes 92). In looking at the conflict between the public display of Coriolanus' body to the instances in which he attempts to contain his body, we can see how disease becomes a primary way he begins to negotiate his social role.

Viewing the openness of the body as a susceptibility to disease and infiltration, Coriolanus' wounds collectively become a site of anxiety closely tied to the roles he plays within the social order. There is an early instance in the play in which Coriolanus expresses his own observation of a divided nature: "Would you have me / False to my nature? Rather say I play / The man I am" (3.2.13-15). While this passage explores Coriolanus' anxieties in having to perform a part for the public as politician, it speaks also to the dual roles that exist in the play. As much as Coriolanus wants to fight against his own accountability to his mother and the Roman public, he cannot completely eradicate his public politician role from the social structure. The anxiety is not that Coriolanus dismisses his responsibility as a politician, but rather that he does not consider himself affected by it or able to affect others. In Act 2, Scene 1, Menenius, Coriolanus' friend, acts surprised to have received a letter from Coriolanus, to which he replies:

It gives me an estate of seven years' health, in which time
I will make a lip at the physician. The most sovereign
prescription in Galen is but empiricitic and, to this preservative,
of no better report than a horse-drench. Is he not wounded?
He was wont to come home wounded.
(2.1.102-06)

In this scene, Menenius ridicules the Galenic way of diagnosing and curing a patient. Returning to Harris' understanding of the body and the way that early modern pathology worked, a "constitution" required that the body be closed off to any external forces (22). Disease and health were not ascribed to any entity or force outside of the body. What Menenius does, however, is dismiss the physicians who would diagnose based on Galen's model, and he instead institutes a model in which the source of health comes from an external force. That external component in this scene is

the knowledge that Coriolanus' wounds are "wont to come home" soon. Conflating Coriolanus with his wounds puts him on display as politician rather than an individual who seeks enclosure, attributing Coriolanus with the capacity for affecting another's body in a simultaneously diseased and non-diseased way. Because Coriolanus does not acknowledge that there are two roles that he has to embody, Coriolanus' ignorance of his own diseased impact serves as a rupture in the social structure.

This type of dualism is rooted in Coriolanus' belief that he possesses ownership of his body and can act in a way that most establishes his own individualism. In an attempt to engage with the public, Coriolanus speaks to the First Citizen saying "I have wounds to show you which shall be yours in private" (2.3.70-71), he clearly wants to avoid putting his body on public display. But what is also apparent in this instance is that Coriolanus comes into close proximity and contact with the plebeians. When it comes to disease, proximity is a dangerous factor, and in this moment, Coriolanus' dual role as displayed politician and enclosed individual festers tension for the social order: the individual Coriolanus vs. the political Coriolanus. Coriolanus as individual becomes a threat to the public's conceptions of who he should be and what role he should be playing.

What Coriolanus does in this moment with the First Citizen is attempt to spread his own agenda and beliefs about his role in the social structure. Adrian Poole examines similar instances of proximity by acknowledging "Elizabethans thought that you caught the plague from breathing bad air" (95). While it is questionable if Coriolanus' intentions are to bring ill-will to the Citizens in that moment, including the First Citizen he wishes to show his wounds to, Coriolanus' treatment of the Roman public as a whole colors our reading of his "wounds to show you" passage. Coriolanus' one-line responses of "Let them hang" and "Let go" show his refusal to consciously consider what the implications of his social roles are (3.2.17, 23). Even the fact that these two responses of Coriolanus' interrupt other lines in the text gives the impression that Coriolanus' responses are meant to penetrate the public and political persona Volumnia presents of her son. Coriolanus' words to the public are

constantly riddled with language suggesting the spread of disease that is simultaneously meant to dismiss their desires for his publicity. Coriolanus spews pestilence toward the public, calling their opinions a “poor itch” with which they make themselves “scabs” (*Cor.* 1.1.153-54). The public’s hunger to get rid of Coriolanus is akin to the pestilence he spits out at them—both attest to purging the city of the threat of disease.

This purging of filth is a primary concern for Coriolanus, but he consistently fails to acknowledge the ways in which he is producing the disease. At the end of Act 1, Scene 4, Coriolanus leads a troop of men into Corioles to face the Volscian army. In this scene, Coriolanus is a warrior on the battlefield, and after returning from the interior of Corioles but before he begins spewing disease-ridden language again, the stage directions read, “*Enter [Roman SOLDIERS, in retreat, followed by] MARTIUS cursing*” (1.5.1 s.d.). Cursing evokes the concept of contagion being contracted by breath and the air (Poole 95). So we are faced again with an instance of Coriolanus in close proximity to the Roman people, a crowd of men, to whom he is spilling pestilence. While the motivation for Coriolanus’ cursing cannot be deduced definitively, we can speculate that his cursing is because the Romans were beat back by the Volscians in combat. This observation that Coriolanus would be upset with the potential defeat marks a divide in the individual warrior that he claims to be and the political figure that the people want him to be.

In this battle, Coriolanus fails to win the fight and therefore has to resort to addressing the people in a very public manner: by speaking out. But instead of publicizing a perspective that would be helpful to beating the Volscians, one that might resonate with the Roman soldiers, he disease language and projects it back onto the soldiers: “All the contagion of the south light on you, / You shames of Rome!” (1.5.1-2). Coriolanus’ proclamation is not only riddled with disease language, but it also establishes an agenda he deems vital to the survival of Rome. By shaming the soldiers Coriolanus promotes his own ideals of what a Roman soldier should look like. And because these soldiers have not met Coriolanus’ ideals, they become subject to contagion. This stems from Coriolanus’ belief that he is an individual warrior set apart from the political figure

that Rome wants him to be. In his desire to reproduce his own individualism, he adopts an ideology of disease in order to shame the men.

The tension of Coriolanus' two social roles allows contagion to be present in the text, and as Coriolanus continues to grapple with this tension, we see how it begins to manifest in relation to Aufidius. In Act 1, Scene 1, Coriolanus acknowledges that there is potential for a dual identity: "And were I anything but what I am," (1.1.222). But the tension resides in Coriolanus' inability to see that he does not dictate this separate existence. The illusion of control in this statement causes Coriolanus to project a "second" or dual existence onto another entity. In this case, that entity happens to be Aufidius: "I would wish me only he," (1.1.223). The initial reading of these lines would grant Coriolanus grace in the sense that he wishes to align himself with the nobility that Aufidius represents. But what also occurs is a conflation of sorts. Since Coriolanus is already grappling at the outset of the play with the concept of having two social roles to fulfill, it follows that Coriolanus would project his own existence onto another body in order to rectify the tension of the dual existence, allowing him to still exercise an individualized existence.

By conflating his own existence with Aufidius', Coriolanus can rest assured that his own individualism remains intact. This conclusion is reiterated, and somewhat complicated, by Coriolanus a few lines later: "Were half to half the world by th' ears and he / Upon my party, I'd revolt to make / Only my wars with him" (1.1.224-26). Coriolanus concedes that if he and Aufidius happened to be fighting on the same side of the war, then in fact he would rebel just so that he could fight against Aufidius. The meaning of these lines seems to contradict Coriolanus' previous statement regarding Aufidius and him being the same person, but it only progresses Coriolanus' logic in dealing with the dual-existence. If in conflating their existences together Coriolanus is able to project his own social anxieties onto another body, then the desire to be in opposition to that body indicates an establishment of individualism. Furthermore, by then defeating Aufidius in war, Coriolanus' own agenda for an enclosed, individualized body would remain triumphant. Coriolanus furthers his projection of the dual self onto Aufidius only to debase

him from nobility to an animal, particularly “a lion / That I am proud to hunt” (1.1.226-227). By debasing Aufidius to a lion, Coriolanus perceives his own agenda as victorious and destabilizes the hierarchy with which he continuously wrestles. This animal imagery prefigures the later scenes in which Aufidius’ men recognize Coriolanus as “the grace fore meat, / Their talk at table and their thanks at end” (4.7.3-4). In this scene Coriolanus is found in proximity to a group of men and is accused of having a victorious effective influence over them.

Because Aufidius and Coriolanus have become somewhat conflated in social role and in body, it is significant that Aufidius is consistently seen penetrating Coriolanus’ body. Coriolanus’ body is exposed to Aufidius often, and in these moments the transference of disease occurs. Harris observes that disease began to be frequently thought of as “originating not in the ‘fundamental constitution’ of the body, but in an external, invading pathogen to which the body has been ‘accidentally’ exposed” (8). This claim about the origins of disease prompts a question of what this “accidental” catalyst of disease might be. In Act 1, Scene 9 Coriolanus and Aufidius stand off in hand-to-hand combat. While the stage direction for the opening of the scene is an editorial insertion, the note to the reader that the audience should see the blood of Coriolanus’ numerous fighting scenes is significant: “*Enter MARTIUS [bloody]*” (1.9.1 s.d.). This particular stage direction works to indicate that Coriolanus enters the scene having been stained or tainted by the fluids of other people. And not just anyone else, but the enemy’s blood, which Coriolanus confirms with “‘Tis not my blood / Wherein thou seest me masked” (1.9.10). Being covered in another person’s blood signifies that penetration has occurred. Starks-Estes expands on this observation, viewing the body’s skin “as a protective shell that seals off the body’s interior” (89). If Coriolanus’ protective shell is now covered in the blood of those in opposition to him, then this blood can represent an invading force being pressed onto Coriolanus’ body.

His proximity to Aufidius has already been described as consisting of a conflated nature, and so viewing Aufidius as his “other” makes the Act 1, Scene 9 fight scene an example in which Coriolanus faces the dual

identity of his social roles. There is an element to their language consistently melds Coriolanus and Aufidius together: “I’ll fight with none but thee” (1.9.1); “We hate alike” (1.9.3); “Let the first budger die the other’s slave” (1.9.5); “If I fly, Martius, / Holla me like a hare” (1.9.7-8). Again, we first see the conflation of the two men into a single voice or existence in that they will possess none other than each other—their expressed “We hate alike” is of the same substance. But what is more interesting is that Aufidius relegates himself to the slavish, animal position. It is Aufidius who speaks the lines about the budger and about wanting to be pursued like an animal. This imagery evokes Coriolanus as the triumphant one and even incenses their standoff with an air of death from Aufidius in that as an animal he would be hunted, killed and potentially eaten. Coriolanus’ bloodied body at the beginning of the scene suggests a “negative sense of being trapped inside one’s own polluted covering” (Starks-Estes 89), but as Coriolanus becomes conflated with Aufidius, the susceptibility to penetration becomes more apparent. Starks-Estes also notes “the tearing open, bleeding of the body through the skin’s surface indicates the return of the idea of the skin as porous and penetrable” (89). In this fight with Aufidius, Coriolanus has not only tainted himself with the blood of other men, but is now conceding his body to be infiltrated by Aufidius.

At the end of the skirmish, the stage direction indicates that Coriolanus beats Aufidius back until Aufidius and his men are “*driven in breathless*” (1.9.13 s.d.). This breathlessness introduces the idea of contagion being spread between the men. Since Coriolanus is already accustomed to being in proximity to a crowd of soldiers in which contagion is passed through language, the breathlessness they experience is not just from the lack of air, but a way for contagion to be spread through the use of violence. Adrian Poole remarks on this idea when he observes “Violence is contagious because it is not just a matter of the killer and killed” (103). What Poole insinuates here is that violence necessitates vicinity, which is a primary issue for contagion. While acts of violence occur specifically between two people, the rippling effects of violence are still felt by those who are not necessarily actively participating in that particular moment. That the other men with Aufidius rescue him from Coriolanus’ grasp

is a sign that they are not only affected by the spread of violence and contagion, but that they also come into contact with the blood that has permeated Coriolanus' exterior. The bloodshed is contagious and this particular scene sets forth a dynamic between Coriolanus and Aufidius (and his men) in which they become susceptible to contagion.

We see this dynamic unfold further in Act 1, Scene 11 as Aufidius walks onto the scene "*bloody*" (1.11.1 s.d.). Again, the penetrability of the body is brought to the surface as Aufidius is now covered in what is presumably Coriolanus' blood. The transition between Scenes 9 and 11 of Act 1 leads us to believe that it could in fact be Coriolanus' blood on his body and so the contagion continues to spread. Aufidius continues the violent, contagious dynamic by recognizing Coriolanus has left himself open to penetration and subject to the wounds and disease that Aufidius can inflict upon him. In the height of his hatred, Aufidius remarks, "Where I find him, were it / At home upon my brother's guard, even there, / Against the hospitable canon, would I / Wash my fierce hand in's heart" (1.11.24-27). In the image that Aufidius conjures, Coriolanus becomes a manifestation of disease that penetrates Aufidius' space. Aufidius, however, takes the penetrating language further and remarks that he would actually enact a breach by crossing the physical boundaries of Coriolanus' enclosed body. By washing in blood rather than washing it away, Aufidius is rejecting any curative effect that cleansing, or washing, would have. Instead, Aufidius actively participates in putting Coriolanus' bodily fluids onto his own body. It is clear that through this imagery Aufidius is conflating his own physical body with Coriolanus', but also, Aufidius is participating in the spread of disease.

Given that the violence from the previous scene serves as a way for contagion to be exchanged between the two men and between Coriolanus and Aufidius' men, it follows that the presence of bloodied bodies leaves them both vulnerable to penetration and infiltration. It is in this mode that Coriolanus becomes breached by Aufidius' fist. The fierce nature in which Aufidius does this fisting also reanimates the violence that they partake in together—not only the commingling of blood, but also the physicality of touch that is involved in penetrating the body.

This dynamic of contagion continues on between the two men as they consistently acknowledge the moments in which violence is exchanged between them. Aufidius unabashedly reveals that he “dreamt of encounters ‘twixt thyself and me— / We have been down together in my sleep, / Unbuckling helms, fisting each other’s throat” (4.5.122-24). This moment of touch that Aufidius dreams of is another picture of violence and another way in which his hands are again penetrating Coriolanus’ body.

While the scene at the end of Act 1, Scene 9 indicates that Aufidius’ men seem to be within closest vicinity to the spread of violence, Aufidius’ speech shows the contagion’s momentum and “pour[s] war / Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome” (4.5.128-29). Their violence is now a contagion that is spread into the filth and dregs of Rome’s own penetrable walls. The melding of characters, as noted earlier, in which Coriolanus sees himself and Aufidius as nearly one entity, or at least two bodies possessing the same substance and existence, has now completely conflated and is the force or external existence that will penetrate Rome. In this image from Aufidius we picture that Rome will soon be breached and its warrior left behind incapacitated to stop the invasion.

Examining conspiracy as a contagion, we see that it is this mode that ultimately ends up killing Coriolanus thus truly leaving Rome open to infiltration. In the last scene of the play Aufidius has successfully convinced the people of Corioles that Coriolanus is untrustworthy. While attributing the deaths of their family members to have been at the hands of Coriolanus, they shout, “Tear him to pieces!” (5.6.121). These claims against Coriolanus displace the violence that was inflicted onto these people back onto the body of Coriolanus. His body must suffer and be torn to pieces in the same way these families were torn apart by violence. This brief moment recollects the words of Sicinius, a tribune of Rome, who disparages Coriolanus as “a disease that must be cut away” (3.1.296). The people of Rome sought to do away with Coriolanus for not becoming the political figure they wanted him to be, and so here, at the feet of the Lords of Corioles, Coriolanus is subject to a similar fate of being torn to pieces—of being “a limb that but has a disease” (3.1.297). Coriolanus’ true loyalties lie in the violence that he has shared with the

crowds, the men, and with Aufidius, but this violence at best is a disease that ultimately utters the final words of “Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill” (5.6.130), terminating Coriolanus’ dual existence as the public’s political figure and the warrior who would defend her.

As Aufidius stands on top of Coriolanus’ dead body at the close of the play, we are again faced with the question of Shakespeare’s ambiguous ending revolving around a dead body, one who was of extreme importance to the welfare of the state and whose existence raised questions of the importance of adhering to assigned social roles. Coriolanus’ attempts to reconcile his dueled identities only leads to bodily exposure and perpetuates contagion throughout the text. The existence of these two social roles for Coriolanus only begs the question further of which social role would have been the right or better role for Coriolanus to fulfill. In complicating this answer, Shakespeare points to a dismantling of the larger social structure and its rigid roles and pressures placed upon single individuals. In the way King Lear succumbs to madness, Coriolanus succumbs to disease and fragmentation of the body. Rome’s attempts to purge the disease that is Coriolanus ironically only leaves them susceptible to an external infiltrating entity. Perhaps it is this cyclical nature of the social order that is impenetrable.

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Whig Ideology, Predestination, and “Monstrous Generation”: Rowe’s Tamerlane as a Key to Defoe’s Roxana

OMAR HUSSEIN

Why, says I to her, this was no Persian Dress; only, I suppose, your Lady was some French Comedian, that is to say, a Stage Amazon, that put on a counterfeit Dress to please the Company, such as they us’d in the Play of Tamerlane, at Paris or some such.

-Daniel Defoe

This pivotal moment in Daniel Defoe’s *Roxana*, representing the eponymous heroine’s nervous attempt to deflect the attention of her noisomely-probing daughter Susan, contains an interesting allusion, noted in David Blewett’s footnote to the *Penguin Classics* edition of the novel: “Roxana appears to confuse Nicholas Rowe’s *Tamerlane* (1701) with Racine’s *Bajazet* (1672)... Rowe’s play has a Bajazet but not a Roxana” (403). Blewett does not expound further on the point, and few scholars make more than a passing reference to this allusion, regarding it, as Blewett seems to, as a probable error. I will argue that, on the contrary, this seemingly-incidental reference to *Tamerlane* is in fact a highly-charged, coded reference to Defoe’s published thought on three of the main issues pervading the novel—politics, religion, and economics—and that unlocking the meaning of this coded reference might help explain why the novel ends on such an unsatisfyingly abrupt, and bleak, note. More generally, I claim that the Oriental persona of “Roxana” adopted by (or perhaps, more aptly,

imposed upon) Defoe's "fortunate mistress" of a heroine reflects not only upon religious concerns of moral dissoluteness, but also upon anxieties created by the political-economic realities of emergent capitalism; these anxieties, in turn, are evident in the novel's terse conclusion. I believe that these claims are significant because concerns like those reflected in the novel regarding Orientalism, East-West conflict, and the consequences of unchecked capital accumulation remain pressing today, both in scholarly and political senses. The *Tamerlane* incident serves as an illuminating point of entry into this inter-lacing web of concerns as they are presented in the novel, and thus offers a telling glimpse at how these concerns were sometimes dealt with in Western culture (in this case, the incipient genre of the novel) during their historical "infancy."

My first claim regarding the *Tamerlane* allusion relies on the assumption that Roxana's¹ confusing of Rowe's *Tamerlane* with Racine's *Bajazet* is an intentional gesture by Defoe, rather than a simple authorial oversight. While acknowledging that an assumption of this nature may lead to highly speculative, and therefore uncertain analyses, I believe that this assumption will seem reasonable after its consequences are fully worked out, as I attempt to do below.

For decades it has been common knowledge among scholars of the period that Rowe's *Tamerlane* contains topical and highly partisan political allegory, with the play's protagonist, Tamerlane, representing the English King William III, and its villain, Bajazet, representing the French King Louis XIV.² In fact, Rowe all but admitted as much in his 1702 "Epistle Dedicatory" to the play, which expends several lines praising King William (Wilson 842). The topicality was not lost on contemporary audiences either, as Wilson notes: "...between 1716 and 1784 it [*Tamerlane*] was shown twice a year—often at two or more of the major London theaters—in conjunction with festivities commemorating the Glorious Revolution and the exposure of the Gunpowder Plot, typically celebrated on 4 and 5 November" (Wilson 842). Intriguingly, Defoe was

1 I will follow the convention of most scholars in referring to the heroine of Defoe's novel as "Roxana," rather than "Mme de Beleau" or other alternatives occasionally used.

2 See, for example, Thorp (1940), Clark (1950), and Wilson (2005).

also a literary defender of William III and his accession to the throne during the Glorious Revolution. As K. R. P. Clark has discussed in great detail, in spite of his own and others' recent work to de-attribute from Defoe certain pro-William III Whig polemics traditionally attributed to Defoe, it remains undeniable that Defoe did support William III's accession. Indeed, Defoe states so explicitly in his *Jure Divino*, published in 1706, a political work whose authorship by Defoe is not in question (K. R. P. Clark 600-604).

The relevance of Defoe's published political comments to an understanding of *Roxana* becomes evident when we consider, as Blewett notes in his introduction to the novel, that "several times elsewhere in his writings Defoe contrasts the 'vile debauch'd Taste of King Charles the Second's Reign' with the moral probity of the courts of King William, one of Defoe's heroes" (Defoe 13). By erroneously insinuating a Roxana character into Rowe's *Tamerlane*, associated as it was with the reign of William, Defoe's Roxana seems to imagine that the Roxana archetype of the Orientalized courtesan belongs in the respectable milieu of William's court; the reader, complicit with Defoe, understands that a Roxana—Defoe's or otherwise—is rightfully situated in the morally dissolute England of Charles II (or that of George I, monarch at the time of *Roxana's* publication in 1724, whom Defoe is, according to Blewett, satirically comparing to Charles II). Such a reading fits neatly with Alison Conway's compelling analysis of Roxana's "yet I was a Protestant Whore" remark (104-5), which recalls the near-identical comment by Charles II's mistress, Nell Gwyn, spoken in 1681 to "Oxford mobs agitating against the king's stubborn refusal to bar his brother from the throne": "Pray, good people, be civil; I am the Protestant whore" (Conway 215). Conway convincingly establishes that Defoe consciously echoed Nell Gwyn in Roxana's self-assessment in order to "forge powerful links between two apparently opposing discourses: that of the Protestant conversion narrative, and that of the courtesan work and identity eloquently articulated in the figure of Nell Gwyn" (216). Of course, Nell Gwyn, for her part, was also appealing to the pro-Protestant bias of her Anglican popular audience, who were much more distrustful of King Charles's other, Catholic,

mistresses. In any case, since Nell Gwyn's comments and *Tamerlane's* political allegory were both well-known, that Defoe is making a subtle joke out of Roxana's misplacement of the Roxana figure into the *Tamerlane* narrative seems somewhat less improbable.³

Furthermore, as Conway successfully argues, these near-identical quotes by the fictional Roxana and her real-life counterpart Nell do not only aid Defoe's satire by relating the fictional "whore" to the libertinism of Charles, as discussed above, but also highlight the key moral-religious questions of the novel. Roxana invokes her Protestantism when she mulls over her simultaneous desire to confess her crimes and her inability to actually do so; while she admits to "a strong Inclination to try" confession, she insists that the "Devil put this into" her head, maintaining that she would only compound her sin if she, a Protestant "Hugonot," were to act as if she "was Popish [Roman Catholic]" (Defoe 104). Two features stand out here. The first, as Conway points out, is that *Roxana* seems to be a failed conversion narrative, in which the protagonist is unable to confess her sins and achieve moral absolution. The second is that, while Roxana takes some responsibility for her actions, she also blames much of her bad behavior on the Devil's "games" and deceptions, preventing her from taking full responsibility and, ipso facto, fully confessing and repenting. Both of these features relate to what Conway calls "the darkness of Calvinism and the predestinarian fantasies it upholds" (230). As Brett C. McNelly and David Paxman similarly note, "Robinson Crusoe and Moll Flanders find God and mend their lives, however arguably" (438); Roxana, as far as we can judge given the abrupt ending, never really does. Her failure in this area points to the notion of humanity's predestination, a concept in which Defoe averred his firm belief in his *Political History of the Devil*, published, only two years after *Roxana*, in 1726 (McNelly and Paxman 441). Under the terms of this doctrine, repenters like Robinson Crusoe and Moll Flanders are able to fully absolve themselves of sin because they were predestined to do so all along. The Roxanas of the world, on the other hand, are simply incapable of such true absolution. This point has some bearing on the novel's conclusion, to which I will turn later.

3 If for no other reason than that it belongs to the same category of subtle, and arguably comic, allusions as the "protestant whore" remark.

At this point, however, I will simply remark that it is not too far-fetched to suggest that the *Tamerlane* allusion points to Defoe's predestinarian attitudes as well. In the first place, Roxana's misattribution points to her self-deception and lack of clarity. Just as she seems⁴ to mistake "Roxana" for a character in *Tamerlane*, with all the aforementioned moral and political ramifications this move entails, she insists that "the Devil" deceives her, rather than consistently accepting full responsibility for her weakness. Notably, although both she and her handmaid-accomplice Amy seem very "penitent for former sins" during the storm and near-shipwreck ordeal they experience after leaving France, Roxana admits to her readers that she is never truly penitent:

"I had no Sence of Repentance, from the true Motive of Repentance... I had only such a Repentance as a Criminal has at the Place of Execution, who is sorry, not that he has committed the Crime, as it is a Crime, but sorry *that he is to be Hanged for it*" (167; italics in original).

Such halfhearted instances of repentance pepper the narrative, and suggest the same lack of moral and mental clarity that the *Tamerlane* reference implies.⁵ In addition, there may be an additional subtle joke being played by Defoe, one that makes sense in light of the above comments on his other novels. Roxana, it seems, finds herself in the wrong story; she "believes" it (metaphorically, in her mental slip-up) to be analogous to *Tamerlane*, when it is more likely akin to *Bajazet*; more concretely, she believes she can repent for her actions (that is, she is in a conversion narrative, like *Robinson Crusoe* or *Moll Flanders*), when in reality she is predestined to damnation (she is in a kind of morality play).

This latter claim—that the significance of the *Tamerlane* allusion may derive from an almost self-referential meta-awareness of the didactic purposes of different narrative genres—is, necessarily, highly speculative.⁶ After all, the novel as a genre was in its infancy in the period, and ascrib-

4 I should acknowledge that she never explicitly states that Roxana is a character in *Tamerlane*, although it is implied that she thinks so; she specifically relates the *dress only* to Rowe's play.

5 Specifically in light of the earlier-discussed satire on the court of Charles II.

6 Although it is not much more radical than Conway's assertion that Defoe is toying with, and pushing at the boundaries of, conversion narratives.

ing such meta-awareness to an eighteenth-century novel may reasonably be regarded as an anachronistic backwards extrapolation of contemporary literary theories. However, just such an argument is strongly suggested by Susanna Scholz's careful reading of the Turkish dance scene in *Roxana*. A careful consideration of her argument will make this point clear.

The reference to Rowe's *Tamerlane* occurs during a conversation in which Roxana's daughter Susan recalls one of Roxana's dances in Turkish dress, years after it occurred. Whether Defoe (or his fictionalized Roxana) deliberately gestures toward *Tamerlane*, or whether another play, such as Racine's *Bajazet*, was intended, the allusion nevertheless makes a conscious connection between Roxana's dancing in Turkish dress and the antics of eighteenth-century commercial theater. Susanne Scholz brilliantly argues that the entire performance is an exercise in "self-commodification":

The dress is genuinely Eastern, the product of a martial rather than an economic exchange between East and West. Roxana appropriates it together with a Turkish princess-made-slave and includes it—as an exotic prop which speaks of the subjection of the East by the West—into her self-fashioning at court, which in turn stages the availability of the 'other body' to the British male. The association with slavery is calculated: by displaying herself in the position of the subaltern, Roxana veils her own agency in this process of self-commodification. Her performance in this dress is carefully staged as a spectacle: in her own apartments, she first gives the Ladies 'a full view' of her dress, then encounters a masked gentleman who leads her into the room where the rest of the company waits for her, who are, as she proudly relates 'under the greatest Surprise imaginable; the very Musick stopp'd a-while to gaze; for the Dress was indeed, exceedingly surprising, perfectly new, very agreeable, and wonderful rich.' This is of course exactly what Roxana claims to be herself: the dress metonymically stands in for its wearer. Indeed, the performance in Turkish dress

marks the apex of Roxana's self-commodification in this novel. At this point in the narrative, she is just over 40 years old, has been mistress to a dozen men and has had ten children. Yet she is, as she self-congratulatorily comments when checking on the state of her 'marketable goods', still beautiful and desirable. (Scholz 94)

Scholz correctly observes that Roxana mounts a performative "spectacle" which is calculated to increase her perceived value as a social and sexual "commodity"; in fact, Roxana has been clear to her readers that her interests in performing the role of mistress have always been primarily financial. As her handmaid Amy aptly sums up the moral predicament early on, "Honesty is out of the Question when Starving is the Case" (62). Although Roxana at first vehemently rejects Amy's argument, she eventually comes around—so much so that, by the time of her relationship with the Dutch merchant, she has concocted a sophisticated defense, on economic grounds, of the courtesan lifestyle:

"while I was a Mistress, it is customary for the Person kept, to receive from them that keep; but if I shou'd be a Wife, all I had then, was given up to the Husband, and I was thenceforth under his Authority only." (183)

Scholz's reading is helpful in seeing the connections between the Turkish clothing and jewels as exotic "Oriental" commodities and the presentation/performance of both Roxana and her purchased Turkish slave as commodities as well. In fact, this performative self-commodification is the logical outcome of Roxana's realization that she must sell herself to make a living. All of these observations accord nicely with the *Tamerlane* interlude, not only because they similarly evoke representations of an exoticized East as a playground of moral dissoluteness and sexual libertinism—a trope to which Scholz alludes—but also because they further reify the presence of market economics. Roxana's performance is being likened to that in an actual play, a "spectacle" put on by a professional company in order to earn legitimate profits. As Scholz observes, masquerade balls were a common form of social diversion in the period, and the popularity of Oriental attire at these events spiked

after the defeat of the Ottoman forces at Vienna in 1683 (95). Such events, it should also be noted, were predominantly private, rather than commercial, affairs. Yet, by likening her own performance to that of a professional actor in a stage production, Roxana reminds us that her performance has genuine economic, rather than merely private (or social-sexual), significance.

In fact, representations of the East, as in *Bajazet* and *Tamerlane*, were inseparable from economic considerations and anxieties. For starters, the Ottoman Turks were powerful military and economic rivals of Europe at the time; in fact, as Judith Still has noted in her work on Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the Ottomans as a military force in the mid-eighteenth century were “at least equal to the European powers of the period” (Still 95). Even in light of the European victory in Vienna, then, Orientalist depictions could easily stir up unease regarding European-Ottoman military and economic tensions, a continuing source of fear for many Europeans at the time (Heffernan and O’Quinn 23). Furthermore, Ellen T. Harris, in her work on Orientalist operas put on by London’s Royal Academy of Music from 1719-1728, has shown that wealthy investors with holdings in the East India Company and similar ventures were careful to fund numerous productions of Asia-related stage shows. These served two valuable purposes: to promote the notion of “England’s cultural supremacy,” and as “lobbying or marketing tools to keep the image of the East in front of those who might assist them [the shows’ directors] politically,” given that many of the directors had “personal connections to the East Indian trade—through investments, naval operations, or direct management” (Harris 419). With all of this historical background in mind, it seems that the novel is toying with the existing tropes of Orientalist imagery that would have been familiar to readers of the time—in other words, the novel possesses the very kind of self-reflexive awareness of genre conventions required by my earlier claim that *Roxana* is a failed conversion narrative. Furthermore, it becomes clear that Roxana’s evocation of the Orient through her dance performance relates unequivocally to economic issues, whether in terms of the personal self-commodification discussed by Scholz or in terms of the greater issues

of political economy and foreign affairs.

Defoe, based on his economic writings, was almost certainly cognizant of this economic side to Roxana's performance. In this discussion, I have tried to steer away from the fallacy of authorial intent,⁷ a difficult balancing act when drawing from a writer's fictional and nonfictional corpus simultaneously. However, regardless of Defoe's unknowable "intentions," the novel itself seems to direct attention to economic issues. First off, Roxana seems quite capable with money and financial transactions,⁸ in stark contrast to her first "fool" of a husband who is "not fit to be trusted with it [money]" (42). When she does eventually amass a fortune back in England, she wisely entrusts its management to the capable Robert Clayton, a fictionalization of an actual historical merchant banker who served as financial adviser to Nell Gwyn (Conway 225). Furthermore, the novel frequently includes itemized lists of Roxana's financial losses and (more frequently) gains—none more stunning than the dramatic scene in which she and the Dutch banker lay out their "Accounts" before each other in anticipation of their marriage:

So we open'd the Box; There was in it indeed what I did not expect, for I thought he had sunk his Estate rather than rais'd it; but he produced me in Goldsmith's Bills, and stock in the *English East India Company*, about sixteen thousand Pounds sterling; then he gave into my Hands, nine assignments upon the Bank of *Lyons* in France, and two upon the Rents of the Town-House in Paris, amounting in the whole to 5,800 Crowns *per Annum*, or annual Rent, *as 'tis called there*; and lastly, the sum of 30000 *Rixdollars* in the Bank of *Amsterdam*,

7 Perhaps with limited efficacy, although I hope to have provided enough textual support from the novel to provide plausibility to my claims, with or without references to Defoe's other work (as cited by scholars).

8 Although I might add that Christopher D. Gabbard argues that Roxana lacks "financial literacy," being unable to read "Accompts" and relying on the hired assistance of men like Clayton. While Gabbard's point is well-argued, I would counter that, whether through individual acumen or hired male assistance, Roxana has no problem out-earning most of the men in the novel (not to mention continually re-investing and growing her wealth).

besides some Jewels and Gold in the Box, to the value of about 15 or 1600 *l.* among which was a very good Necklace of Pearl, of about 200 *l.* value... (Defoe 302)

All of these features point strongly to the importance of economics as a key to understanding the novel.

Defoe's own writings on the economy provide another important entry into the text. As Kimberly Latta explains in her discussion of Defoe's *Review of the State of the English Nation*, Defoe satirizes the incipient capitalism taking hold in England with the figure of "Lady Credit," whose "teeming womb" gives birth to countless children, who breed in turn to produce such charming figures as "Trade," "Monopoly," "Patent," "Charter," "Stockjobber," "Lottery," and "Wager," among others. As Latta asserts, Defoe's allegory draws "upon a trope already long familiar in the anxious literature of the culture of credit: the figure of usury as an uncontrollably breeding mother" (Latta 359-360). This figure, dating back to the Medieval Period, likens the generation of profit from investment—using interest to generate money from other money, or "usury"—to the monstrous image of an endlessly breeding womb. The parallel to Roxana, with her panoply of orphaned children being the necessary precondition to her amassing a sizable fortune, is quite clear. That she chooses Clayton, the financial adviser to the historical "Protestant Whore," to manage her money further solidifies this point. Roxana is both "whore" and business woman, becoming "from a Lady of Pleasure, a Woman of Business, and of great Business too" (Defoe 169).

Writing on the same topic nearly a decade before Latta, Ann Louise Kibbie refers to the trope of "monstrous generation" of capital, and its connections to female fertility in both *Roxana* and *Moll Flanders*. Kibbie makes several important points that are relevant to this discussion. Notably, she highlights the paradoxical relationship drawn by anti-usury writers between usury and, simultaneously, both unfettered breeding and barrenness/sterility. The connection is sodomy, the "unnatural" use of the body for non-procreative purposes. Since usury is a perversion of nature—it "non-procreatively" generates commodities ("goods that one purchases") from "nothing" (the money or credit used to make said pur-

chases, itself the product of money)⁹—it is connected in the Medieval and Early Modern anti-usurer’s mind with sodomy, that is, verboten, non-procreative sex (Kibbie 17). Interestingly, Roxana seems to experience both sterility and wanton fecundity at various points in her “history.” Early in her first affair with the jewel trader, Amy confronts her with the question: “what, a’n’t you with-Child yet?” (Defoe 80). This episode suggests the barrenness Roxana morally “deserves” by virtue of being engaged in an “unnatural” (unmarried) relationship, while at the same time pointing symbolically to the sterility of capitalist “reproduction” (i.e. “usury”). There is also the hint that sodomy occurs in her final courtesan relationship with the unnamed lord when Roxana “complains of the lord’s ‘nauseous’ vices, ‘not fit to write of,’ and of his ‘capricious Humours’ and ‘Rubs’” (Kibbie 18). At the same time, we know that, in other relationships, Roxana can be quite fecund, as the five children she birthed (and later abandoned) in her first marriage attest to—an echoing of the monstrous breeding trope. Finally, as uncomfortable as it may be to some contemporary readers to acknowledge, Defoe may be further nodding to Medieval and Early Modern dialogue on usury with his arguably quite anti-Semitic depiction of the avaricious Jew character,¹⁰ who attempts to swindle Roxana out of her inherited jewels.

As Kibbie notes, “No name has loomed larger than Defoe’s in discussions of the triumph of capitalism in the eighteenth century. Indeed, some critics have made Defoe a personification of capitalism itself” (10). This observation seems to contradict his serious engagement with the conventions of anti-usury discourse in *Roxana*. While this issue is too vast to fully address in this short treatment, I am suggesting that Kibbie and Latta’s work implies that, contrary to conventional views, Defoe is deeply ambivalent about capitalism, particularly its character as “a self-enclosed, self-generating, and ultimately self-devouring” system—as the

9 Money as a commodity that can generate other commodities is likened to “nothing” since, unlike more concrete commodities like wood or corn or gin, it possesses no inherent use value—it is merely a stand-in, or trading piece, for other commodities.

10 The prevalence of anti-Semitism in Medieval and Early Modern European literature is well-known. See Frassetto (2006) or Shapiro (1996) for two excellent introductions to the subject.

discussion of “monstrous generation” reveals it to be (Kibbie 19).

Coming full circle to the issues that began this discussion of economics, Roxana’s misattribution of an eponymous “Roxana” character in Rowe’s *Tamerlane* is one of several key items linking her Orientalist performance to economic anxieties. On the one hand, her performance allows her to achieve personal agency by commodifying herself in a way that will buy her independence and wealth, as Scholz discusses. On the other hand, as a courtesan seeking the attention of “those who keep,” she is leasing her “honesty” for material pelf, an unforgivable sin in the predestinarian Puritan moral universe that Defoe seemingly constructs in his novel, ending as it does with a retributive “Blast from Heaven.” This latter point relates back to the earlier discussion of moral dissoluteness, Whig ideology, and the satirization of the reign of George I (by way of Charles II), as well as to the trope of “monstrous generation.” Whether the *Tamerlane* passage was a deliberate witticism, as I earlier argued, or a mere authorial oversight, I am suggesting that it can act as an intriguing entry point into the novel and the historical, political, religious, and economic themes that the novel addresses. In fact, one might see it as evidence for an almost fractal character of *Roxana*, whereby little details—*Tamerlane*, the “protestant whore” remark, Robert Clayton, Nell Gwyn, the itemized lists, Roxana’s inability to confess—lead inexorably back into the interlacing web of the novel’s big themes.

With this last point in mind, I will return briefly to the question of the novel’s abrupt ending, specifically the terse statement that “a dreadful Course” of unelaborated “Calamities” befalls our hitherto-“fortunate” heroine. That this ending is somehow unsatisfying seems to have been considered as early as the 1730s. In his detailed study of the text’s post-publication evolution, Robert J. Griffin points out that “after Defoe’s death in 1731, several different editions [of *Roxana*] were published with continuations of varying lengths spliced on at the end” (Griffin 390). A similar perspective, that the ending calls for a *modern critical explanation*, has been taken seriously since at least the 1970s. In fact, as Jesse Molesworth dryly notes, scholars were so critical of the ending in 1970 that “Robert D. Hume could seriously pose the question “The Conclusion of

Defoe's *Roxana: Fiasco or Tour de Force?*' and expect an overwhelming majority of his readers to choose the former" (Molesworth 493). Molesworth goes on to remark that subsequent critics have made much more generous evaluations of the novel's conclusion, and he maintains in his own study that the novel could not logically end any other way. In fact, he sees it as the most fitting conclusion to a novel that explores the "concept of noise¹¹ within narrative" (504). Molesworth's work is compelling, although a full discussion of it is outside the scope of this study. Suffice it to say that, while Molesworth provides a laudable entry point into contemporary scholarship on *Roxana's* conclusion, I want to suggest that my reading may offer some other possibilities.

One of these possibilities is suggested by Defoe's earlier-discussed predestinarian views. Specifically, the novel's conclusion is abrupt because there is no need to elaborate the damnation Roxana falls into—she was destined for it, indeed living in it, from the beginning. Another possibility suggested by the discussion here is that the novel contains a forewarning about the dangers brought on by the unmitigated growth of capitalism. Roxana and Amy have "monstrously" generated a great deal of "unnatural" wealth. There will be dark consequences, the novel may be implying, for people who enrich themselves in this way, even though it is impossible to precisely prefigure exactly what these consequences might look like. It is difficult not to read such a critique of capitalism into the subtle anti-usury gestures in the novel, although I acknowledge that this reading may seem anachronistic. However, such a reading is not completely without critical precedent. As David Wallace Spielman states: "Whatever we think of Roxana as a person, two things are clearly true: she becomes outstandingly wealthy, and she comes to a bad end" (Spielman 81-2). While Spielman suggests that this duality is didactic, that "the moral and monetary strands of the narrative exist in tension," I suspect that Roxana's achievement of monetary victories simultaneous with moral failings points to the above-mentioned ambivalence toward capitalism in Defoe's works (that is, *Roxana* implies that moral failings

11 By "noise" he means chaos and multiplicity, as opposed to the linearity and rationality we usually associate with Enlightenment texts.

may actually result from unchecked private wealth accumulation). This ambivalence is perhaps most evident in the self-commodification to which the *Tamerlane* allusion points. In light of the present discussion, it does not seem completely implausible that the novel's sudden, dark conclusion reflects these anxieties about the market.

In summary, I hope to have illuminated the interlacing web of tensions and anxieties that might have been evoked in the minds of Defoe's contemporary readers by the reference to Rowe's *Tamerlane*. The political implications of Rowe's play connect to politics, a topic reinforced by Roxana's echoing of Nell Gwyn. This latter point leads inexorably to religious concerns, which in turn relate to Defoe's predestinarianism. Since the predestinarian position suggests an awareness of genre conventions (like the popular conversion narratives), it is plausible that the novel also deliberately evokes prevalent anxieties regarding the Ottoman East (conjured in part by the oriental setting of *Tamerlane*), as reflected in both contemporary politics and literary-dramatic works. Finally, the political-economic ramifications of these concerns are reflected in Roxana's self-commodification as an Orientalized object of desire, and in the novel's potentially anti-capitalist conclusion. None of these issues taken alone provides a definitive reading of the text, but taken together they present a snapshot of some historical-contextual background that is not likely to be obvious to the modern reader. Hopefully such contextual "excavation" enriches our understanding of the period and potentially, by extension, our own.

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Cannibalism, Currencies, and Consumption in Christopher Marlowe's The Jew of Malta

ANDRES LARA

The 16th century was a period of economic, political, and literary flourishing for England: it was the beginning of the modern world as we know it. Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593) wrote many plays during this time that would go on to inspire Shakespeare and the English stage for hundreds of years. In *The Jew of Malta* (1592) he engages critical social issues such as the breeding of corruption and hypocrisy in religion, politics, law, and the economic base that supports these institutions. This paper is interested in studying *The Jew of Malta* as a truthful account of the English Renaissance's social, political, and economic climate, and understanding how drama is a fitting vehicle for this interrogation of power and ideology: through drama, Marlowe can anticipate a viewer's reaction and implicate the audience, for theater grants viewers the unique ability to co-author the play. While Barabas, the play's eponymous character, is a Renaissance development of the vice trope, he translates into the victim of and scapegoat for capitalism's crimes. Ferneze, the governor of Malta, and the play's ostensible hero, on the other hand, is a mirror of Queen Elizabeth, and he remains the Medieval Vice. Through Ferneze, Marlowe exposes and attacks the hypocrisy and corruption of the joint administration of institutions like the church and state in Elizabethan England.

To continue, one must understand the historical moment that produced *The Jew of Malta*: England had just defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588, Thomas Kyd had ushered in revenge tragedy with the widely-inspirational *The Spanish Tragedy*, and the “merchant class in England was growing rapidly in size and economic power... Englishmen [were] establishing lucrative markets all over the globe.... [It was] the beginning of England’s most exciting era of exploration, colonization, and trading” (Masinton 67). Why is it that revenge tragedy’s rise and proliferation is concomitant with the emergence of early capitalism in an early modern world? If tragedy is the downfall of people greater than ourselves, the dramatic reversal of a character’s circumstances intended to strike pity and fear into the viewer’s heart, then who are the criminals and victims in a capitalist society? Furthermore, who are the criminals and victims in Marlowe’s Malta, “where material order compromises the whole of existence” (Mahood 44).

Because the play implicates the audience, that is, invites them to interrogate the same institutions that Marlowe targets, through, as we will see later, an exploration of the experience of the supposed villain, the viewer realizes the purpose for the playwright’s employment of drama; for Marlowe, drama is the opportunity for social critique: on stage, characters can act one way, while believing/plotting a different idea, and the audience can see it all. This is dramatic irony. One of the play’s earliest disclosures is that everyone in the play, despite what they claim, lusts for money, or as Molly M. Mahood points out, all of the characters are Mammon-worshippers: the church, the politicians, and of course the working-class pimp and hooker are chasing ducats. Marlowe illustrates, to draw from Marx’s economic theories, how money is the driving force, the “base,” the underlying truth beneath every “superstructure” or institution (law, religion, art). In *The Jew of Malta*, money is a God, or as Marx says in *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, an omnipotent “pimp between man’s need and the object” (Marx 136), and “the true agent of divorce, the true binding agent” (138). Marlowe’s pre-modern England, therefore, was a corrupt time where institutions, such as the state and the Catholic Church, were incorporated and invested in

acquiring gold above anything else, and drama presents itself as an appropriate vehicle for Marlowe to question the supposed claims and hidden agendas of these institutions.

Ferneze, an icon for the trinity of religion, capitalism, and political power, emerges victorious because he escapes the poisonous narrative that the other Maltese subscribe to. For their endless necessity to consume, Marlowe sees the institutions that Ferneze embodies as fundamentally flawed: while they offer an intoxicating concoction, an ideological poison to its subscribers, they present themselves publicly as flawless, offering sustenance in the form of principles, or a narrative, with which loyal followers can inject their experience with meaning, and thus these subscribers “prevent themselves from a true knowledge of society as a whole” (Eagleton 17). This means whoever consumes the beliefs of these institutions also consumes and benefits from the corruption and cannibalism, which will be discussed later, that are the result of capitalist ventures, which nobody is free from. After Ferneze robs Barabas, he says “Yet Barabas we will not banish thee, / But here in Malta, where thou got’st thy wealth, / Live still; and if thou canst, get more” (I.II.100-103). Here capitalism, in the form of Ferneze, encourages Barabas to amass new wealth again as the system reveals itself an unstable/precarious playing field, and the crimes usually reserved for the international other are here committed against the domestic other. While capitalism advocates the possibility of social advancement, Ferneze reveals the inherent corruption of capitalism, its necessity for the very rich and the very poor and its unequal distribution of resources. After his loss, Barabas asks Ferneze to “bereave his life,” Ferneze replies with “No, Barabas, to stain our hands with blood / Is far from us and our profession” (I.II.145-146). While here it is unclear which profession Ferneze is assuming—is he speaking from a capitalist perspective? A Christian one? Or a position of legislative power?—all three reveal themselves to have no interest in outright murdering Barabas. If we consider the capitalistic perspective here, Marlowe illustrates how capitalism does not want to murder its subscribers, it is interested in a systematic oppression and soul-crushing, which is arguably far more cruel than to kill someone outright. Shortly after this

scene, Barabas is devastated and pleads to the “Primus Motor” and begs for retribution, which is ironic because a popular Christian belief is that “the poor are very close to God’s heart,” that “God...loves the alien, giving him food and clothing” (Deuteronomy 10:18), and that “God saves the needy from the sword in their mouth; he saves them from the clutches of the powerful. So the poor have hope, and injustice shuts its mouth” (Job 5:15-16). Thus Ferneze reveals himself as a nominal Christian and a hypocrite, one who contradicts himself as capitalist and ruler, the one who is supposed to protect his subjects. Barabas loses; however, Ferneze, because he employs a religious facade, wins and thus he is “the play’s true Machiavel” (Masinton 62).

Ferneze’s domestic plundering of Barabas highlights the ‘looting’ of treasures and disenfranchisement that imperialistic ventures pursue in the name of capitalism and religion. These crimes typically find an ‘other’ as victim, but because Barabas is a racialized other, on the home front, he serves as a victim and scapegoat of these crimes, which he both embodies and performs. In her article “Grotesque Imperialists, Alien Scapegoats, and Feasting in Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta* and Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*,” Jennifer C. Vaught explains the ramifications of capitalism’s voracious appetite:

The drive for power and wealth... results in a perversion of more genuine signs of communal goodwill like honor and integrity. In this way, Marlowe presents imperialism as well as baser, savage passions underlying it, and slavery, as debilitating diseases for the body politic. (38)

Here, Vaught helps to show how in *The Jew of Malta* no consumption is nourishment; on the contrary, beliefs in these totalizing systems that organize the world are poisonous. Moreover, the play illustrates how Machiavellianism, or an individual’s belief in herself and her priorities, leads to victory. While subscribers of ideologies, such as religion and politics, ingest poison with every bite, those citizens that operate upon their own designs and navigate individually by their own wits emerge victorious. In other words, those that do not assume individual responsibility for changing their material worlds will find a fatal indigestion because they

accept whatever is fed to them: ideology always disenfranchises believers and only benefits the elite ruling class. Additionally, it is interesting to note how, in the play capitalism creates the poor and then religion arrives as a solution. While Barabas believes that he can make amass new wealth again, he fails to realize that in Malta, as in Renaissance England, “everything must be understood as under revision and contingent on the practical, political, and economic needs of the moment and both framed and fractured by those needs” (Bartels 319). Barabas can lose everything again at a moment’s notice in this “civil society [that] is governed by the relentless pursuit of money” (Greenblatt 297), a “marketplace where men are turned into alienable, saleable objects” (Greenblatt 298).

Not only do they view it as poisonous, but some anti-capitalists also define capitalism as cannibalistic. Ferneze’s consumption, or plundering, of Barabas, which leaves him, in his own terms, almost lifeless, is one illustration of the disenfranchisement that imperialistic ventures pursue in the name of capitalism and religion. Barabas, displayed as a grotesque image of the usurious, ruthless Jew, thus becomes the domestic scapegoat of international economic exploitation, which he himself both embodies and performs: he is aggressor and scapegoat, without any facade. In “Cannibalism Qua Capitalism,” Jerry Phillips discusses how capitalism is cannibalism:

The human adventure (‘progress’) is here imagined as a savage God, whose power derives from derives from ritual sacrifice.... Capitalism is viewed as a bloody and barbarous system, which gives succor to all that is base in the human animal, greediness, selfishness, ruthlessness, the predatory virtues of the jungle, of all-out war. (186-187)

While also a victim of Ferneze, Barabas, a capitalist merchant, becomes the symbol of the bloody, barbarous, and exploitive capitalist system in the opening scene where he stacks “infinite riches in a little room,” fortunes that “trowl in by land and sea.” Phillips defines this bloody, vampiric, or cannibalistic aspect of capitalism as “primitive accumulation”: the process of “treasures captured outside Europe by undisguised loot-

ing, enslavement and murder [flowing] back to the mother country and [turning] into capital there” (186). Barabas, therefore, like the blossoming economic system he represents, is ruthless in his international trading policy, as is Ferneze in his misapplied domestic policy.

Later, Barabas gives Ithamore, his slave and conspirator, insight on capitalistic morals and how to navigate this blooming capitalist economy: “First be thou void of these affections, / Compassion, love, vain hope, and heartless fear, / Be moved at nothing, see thou pity none, / But to thyself smile when the Christians moan” (II.III.168-170). Here Barabas illustrates the “policy” or program/approach/perspective that capitalists must employ in order to survive: the new economy is an individualistic pursuit with an absent regard for the needs of others. Vaught also expands on this when she says, “in the Maltese carnivalesque economy, grotesque excessive drive to consume material commodities is often divorced from ethics (37). Therefore, a philosophy like that of Machiavelli’s, which promotes artifice to secure one’s individual needs and wants, where ends justify means, is the best practice in Malta and, by extension, in pre-modern England, which, according to Marx, is when “world trade and the world market date, and from then on, the modern history of capital starts to unfold” (Phillips 194). Phillips goes on to say that Marx believes the Middle Ages hand down to the early modern period two distinct forms of capital: usurer’s capital and merchant’s capital (194). Yet aside from this distinction of forms of capital, the medieval period also begets another offering to Marlowe: the vice figure.

The vice figure of medieval tragedy gives birth to offspring on the Renaissance stage, and Barabas is a continuation of the vice figures in morality plays, though he is a development/departure from the medieval vice trope. For the viewer, Barabas’s criminality is a result of his victimage. Barabas is a vice figure whose experience interests the viewer, and his transformation into villainous revenger, as a result of the violation of his rights, is a new dramatic development. In his book “The Origins of English Tragedy,” J.M.R. Margeson defines the medieval vice figure as one who represents “disorder and fundamental enmity against the good.... [He is] tempter, seducer from the path of virtue or duty, accuser, some-

times satiric moralist... He carries on with guile, though often an opportunist with an eye for mischief" (130), and he "delight[s] in cunning and a gleeful acceptance of evil" (131).

Here we could identify a vice figure such as Aaron from Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* (ca. 1594). Aaron, for example, is one whose motive for evil and mayhem the audience never understands; Barabas's motive, however, is available to the audience. Continuing his discussion of the Vice, Margeson notes a key development in Renaissance drama, which becomes more versatile in this period, employing more historical material, and its depiction of these "concrete images of evil" from history: "dramatists were as much interested in the colour and excitement of violence in the lives of large characters from history or legend as they were in the moral pattern.... The central characters of these plays are set up for our admiration as well as for our condemnation," (132). If Barabas is intended to strike pity and fear into the viewer's heart, then is *The Jew of Malta* cathartic in the Aristotelian sense? No, not if the audience fails to realize Marlowe's dramatic innovations. While Barabas is faithful to his role as a descendant of medieval Vice, and "remains the driving force behind a network of intrigue, the destroyer of order, the mocker of the good, and frequently retain[s] his function as a cynical commentator on the actions of other characters" (132), he is also a "carnavalesque" character, one which displays the "disastrous results of imperialism and prejudicial alienation of strangers for the commonwealth" (Vaught 39). Marlowe addresses contemporary concerns through Barabas, a victim and aggressor, a 'Machiavellian' Jew and vice. The playwright uses this popular characterization to set up a plot twist: as Machiavel introduces Barabas as a pupil in the play's prologue, and the ostensible avatar of evil, activating the audience's prejudices, the viewer is distracted from the workings of Ferneze. As a result, the vice figure that survives into the Renaissance is attributed new crimes: he is the racialized other and his victimization is justified via the state, religion, and economics.

The Renaissance, according to some critics, is when an excluded "black" race emerges, and this demographic creation is the child of official political, religious, and economic prejudices. Emily C. Bartels finds

Elizabeth I's official decrees dated 1596 that request the deportation of recently captured blacks on a voyage to Spanish territories. Her majesty requests the deportation of blacks because there are already a lot of this "kind of people" and those kinds are taking up the jobs of the right, deserving Christians:

[This] kind of people [of which] there are already here to manie, considering howe God hath blessed this land with great increase of popele of our own nation as anie countrie of the world, whereof manie for want of service and meanes to sett them on worck fall to idlenesse and to great extremitie. Her Majesty's pleasure therefore ys that those kinde of people should be sent forth of the lande. (308)

Here we see that Queen Elizabeth wanted to deport the captured blacks because they posed an economic threat to the English workforce and that they were excluded from God's blessing and the Christian community. We can see how economics are the basis of the Queen's decree, how this "kind of people" threatened British order, but Bartels exposes the hypocrisy in this statement when she states that removing the 80 slaves who were stealing the jobs reserved for the right, deserving Christians would not have done anything to save the English economy. Additionally, Bartels finds that this is the first instance of race in letters/literature (306), and it is used on a religious and economic basis. Bartels suggests that "Elizabeth's letters map out... a color-based racist discourse in the making...a discourse shaped, complicated, and compromised by political and economic circumstances" (307). Thus Marlowe criticizes this intertwining of the religious, political, economic prejudices that creates the excluded, Godless alien in the 16th-century England, and I would argue that they influence the revision of the Vice in drama.

The medieval vice, which Margeson describes as the embodiment of evil, is a jumping off point for Marlowe. He argues:

The [Vice is] the demonic force of evil, an unmotivated destructive impulse, opposed to all order, goodness, and harmony in the world, attaining his ends by flattery, de-

ception, mockery and clever manipulation of the passions. With his fellow vices, he represents also the degenerate part of fallen human nature in its hatred of the good and its blasphemous defiance of divine law. In this aspect the vices may often be rude, vulgar, and comic in their boisterous animality. None of these [medieval] moralities shows much sign of the Vice as a potentially tragic character. He is rather a source of contagion or disease, the disease of evil. (45)

Marlowe foregrounds this Vice figure in *The Jew of Malta's* Barabas, but also in Ferneze, who similarly embodies these categorical definitions of the Vice. Interestingly, Queen Elizabeth mirrors Ferneze: both wield religious, political, and economic power, and both enact hypocritical, racist decrees. Marlowe, arguably, exposes and attacks this injustice and corruption in his time period, and drama allows him to anticipate reactions and implicate the audience and their unique ability to co-author the play via their own subscription to ideology. Through Ferneze, Marlowe criticizes Elizabeth's mis-rule, religious hypocrisy and bloodthirsty capitalist lust.

For our purposes, Ferneze is one example of Renaissance revisions to the Vice: he is the characterization of capitalistic lust, yet society scapegoats Barabas for capitalism's crimes, i.e. how "entrepreneurial adventurers and company traders... tear treasure out of the bowels of the land, with no more moral purpose at the back of it than there is in burglars breaking into a safe" (Phillips 188-9). Furthermore, Elizabethan audiences would, as Marlowe would have it, applaud Ferneze—the play's true Machiavellian whose ends always justify his means—for exterminating the rich, Jewish merchant, and saving Malta from the Turks. At the play's beginning, for instance, Ferneze's idle, heartless consumption, i.e. public usury, or seizure of Barabas's wealth and property is sanctioned because it is for the public good. David H. Thurn discusses Ferneze's domestic theft of Barabas, a theft sanctioned by the joint administration of religion, politics, and economics:

The governor, forced to raise tribute monies for the Turks...authorizes the seizure by a decree based upon

theological and ethnic categories. The play may be seen as symptomatic of the structure of economic relations in the early modern era, which depended upon the Jew both because his assets provided fiscal security and because his difference made him readily available as scapegoat for domestic anxieties over the excesses of trade and venture capitalism: he enabled a rather specious legal discrimination between legitimate and illegitimate business practices. (162-163)

Here we see how an explanation of the Jew's positions in Elizabethan England sanctions their abuse. While the Jews are expelled from England in 1290, they exist in the public imagination as an evil villain and thus they suffer religious and political exclusion. Ferneze, therefore, justifies the seizure of Barabas's assets via religious scripture: "through our sufferance of your hateful lives, / Who stand accursed in the sight of heaven, / These taxes and afflictions are befallen" (I.II.62-66). Later a knight expands on the seizure as not only justified but to do otherwise would to violate the scourge of God: "If your first curse fall heavy on thy head, / And make thee poor and scorned of all the world, / 'Tis not our fault, but thy inherent sin" (I.II.108-110). If Barabas's victimization has religious justification, this crime is legitimized by the state, as it is for the common good: "No, Jew, we take particularly thine / To save the ruin of a multitude: / And better one want for a common good, / Than many perish for a private man" (I.II.97-100). Thus we can see two charges against Barabas: his othered race and religion.

While the Elizabethan letters that Bartels finds are dated after the supposed date of *The Jew of Malta's* composition, this sentiment of preserving the interests of Christian English at the risk of a certain "kind of person" echoes Elizabeth's argument to deport the racialized other because of their threat to order and the multitude. Because we see the violation of Barabas's rights, and his transformation into villainous revenger, can it be argued that Barabas's unfortunate reversal of circumstances, and his own participation in his destruction is tragic? I assert that the revision of the medieval vice, to show his experience, makes Barabas a monstrous

kind of figure: a tragic vice figure, but the same cannot be said for Ferneze; he is not a tragic vice. These revisions to the dramatic tradition allow Marlowe to investigate the cruelty of the intolerant English state and Elizabeth's official, racist decrees.

Additionally, Marlowe's interest in portraying a "tragic" other on stage might stem from his own experience as an atheist, and therefore 'other,' in Elizabeth's England. Because Barabas possessed the despised categories of contemporary imagination (Jewishness, Machiavellianism), audiences perhaps did not feel pity or catharsis for him, and given the play's popularity, it seems audiences missed Marlowe's criticisms completely, evidence of his ingenuity. Though perhaps pity could be felt for the *other* Jew of Malta: Abigail. If Abigail's treatment in the play is foregrounded, then tragedy might be an appropriate genre for the play; if not, *The Jew of Malta* remains a black comedy.

The Jew of Malta is a coded critique of early modern England's capitalistic, political, and religious practices, and Marlowe demonstrates the experience of a demonized, racialized other in a historical moment when religion is coupled with wealth and political power. Through Ferneze, Marlowe, an atheist transgressive, criticizes misrule, religious hypocrisy and bloodthirsty capitalist lust. Notwithstanding these points, *The Jew of Malta*'s popularity at the time of its publication highlights the fact that perhaps Renaissance audiences did not understand Marlowe's critiques of England, Queen Elizabeth, and contemporary views of the Jew; additionally, perhaps the text still reifies the hierarchy and enforces the prevailing ideology. Through the two vice figures of Barabas and Ferneze, Marlowe illustrates the victims (the marginalized) and criminals (the system itself) in a capitalist society. Often, the winners are those who put on a pleasing public performance and pretend to act in the community's interest yet perform differently. Here is one benefit of drama as a genre. To use Machiavelli's words: "There is nothing more important than appearing to be religious."

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Daguerreotype: Mirror and Record in an Age of Consumption

MICHAEL PALOMAREZ

Nathaniel Hawthorne's romance, *The House of the Seven Gables*, portrays a nineteenth-century social and cultural struggle to reconcile the old traditions of austerity and privilege with the wave of modernity brought on by consumerism, free enterprise, and technology. The romance depicts this struggle by highlighting the changes of the characters' situations from old to new worlds. For example, there is the movement from the decay and stagnation of the antique gabled house to the development of "spiritualized travel" (Hawthorne 183) by way of the railroad, the opening of Hephzibah's unpromising cent-shop to her vision of a "thoroughfare of a city, all astir with customers" (Hawthorne 37), young Phoebe's move from a New England village to an urban town, and the faded, foreboding portrait of the Puritan Pyncheon patriarch to the innovation of the daguerreotype. In contrast, the fairy-tale ending, in which a centuries-old curse is lifted, two families are united by marriage, and prosperity and patricianhood is restored to both lineages, seems to make a movement back to caste-based village life. Alan Trachtenberg, in "Seeing and Believing: Hawthorne's Reflections on the Daguerreotype in *The House of the Seven Gables*," however, states, "Whatever authorial purposes account for the novel's odd ending, it reflects in part on daguerrean visibility, on photography's cultural work within a society rapidly undergo-

ing unsettling change toward market-centered urban capitalism” (463). In this instance, Trachtenberg’s assertion disregards the conclusion of the narrative by focusing on the daguerreotype’s contribution to a developing consumer-based society. Indeed, the daguerreotype is depicted as an emblem of the “new” and a harbinger of change because it was a consumer product that challenged the validity and need for portrait painting and sculpture. But, to disregard the retrospective ending is to ignore the underlying commentary on the folly of forgetting the past. Thus it can be argued that the romance draws on aspects of capitalism to characterize the evolving nineteenth-century and the daguerreotype, as a symbol of modern production, is used as a means to mirror, record, and neutralize the ill effects of this unbridled consumption and lack of hindsight.

First, a discussion between the romance and its connection to the daguerreotype is necessary. Trachtenberg initially remarks on Hawthorne’s distinction between “novel” and “romance” in the story’s preface by stating that the superior mark of the Romance is its ambiguity. The daguerreotype, Trachtenberg asserts, is significant to the narrative in that it shares the Romance’s ambiguous nature. But, the images of the daguerreotype are, in fact, stark in nature. For example, Gregory Wickliff, in “The Daguerreotype and the Rhetoric of Photographic Technology,” concurs with this association when he asserts, “. . .examination of a daguerreotype image with a magnifier revealed no distortions, but only more levels of detail, as in investigations of nature itself” (421). Thus the daguerreotype seems to align with Hawthorne’s definition of a novel in that it is “presumed to aim at a very minute fidelity” (3). It would seem that Trachtenberg is contradicting an explicit statement made on the novel on the first page of the preface and the third page of the romance. The point being that Hawthorne’s narrative may be a romance in its ambiguity, the daguerreotype is exact in its depiction of nature. Or, the image that is mirrored and recorded is not ambiguous, but is meticulous. It is the scrupulous nature of the photographic device that changes the course of the Pyncheon family.

However, Trachtenberg acknowledges that this form of “faithful” mimesis seems to correspond with the novel form, but employs the idea of

artistic influence of daguerreotypists as a way of reestablishing his claim (461). He points out that there is a difference between “mechanical” and “self-consciously artistic” use of the photographic medium at the time (461). For example, Richard Rudisill points out that several well-known “operators” such as Marcus Aurelius Root, Anson Clark, and Abraham Bogardus took much consideration in producing their portraits (204-5). Root states the following:

In order to get a good picture...it is also necessary to dress in colors that do not reflect too much light. For a lady, a good dress is of some dark or figured material... A gentleman should wear a dark vest and cravat. For children, a plaid or dark-striped or figured dress is preferred by most daguerreotypists. (qtd. in Rudisill 205)

Indeed, there does seem to be a self-conscious effort of operators to produce an acceptable product. Bogardus adds, “We always had sticking-wax by us to keep wing-shaped ears from standing out from the head, and we often placed a wad of cotton in hollow cheeks to fill them out” (qtd. in Rudisill 205). Though these “tricks of the trade” are meant to avoid overexposure and unflattering physical quirks of the subject, there seems to be little evidence that a “freer,” “atmospheric,” or ambiguous quality is achieved in a daguerreotype (Trachtenberg 461). This makes Trachtenberg’s association between the daguerreotype and romance hard to understand. In fact, Rudisill notes that Mathew Brady became famous for his daguerreotypes because he chose to light the sitter and employ a dark background, rather than using painted backgrounds found in European daguerreotypes, to achieve an effect of “bold relief” (208). The preference of American consumers for an emphasis on the “truth of the individual sitter” rather than pictorial composition seems to indicate that the subjects were seeking accurate depictions of themselves (Rudisill 308). Again, there is a self-conscious manipulation by the daguerreotypist, but the desired effect is quite the opposite of ambiguity. Thus it is difficult to reconcile Trachtenberg’s statement that “the preface subtly recruits the daguerreotype for a key role in the definition of Romance” (461). The daguerreotype does play a key role in the romance, but not in its ambiguity.

For instance, the daguerreotype, or what Oliver Wendell Holmes labels a “mirror with a memory” (qtd in Wickliff 421), is important to *The House of the Seven Gables* in that it faithfully performs its function as reflector and recorder of nature. Eric Sundquist states, “The mirror on the one hand offers the capacity for exact duplication, the means to fix the image in a lasting way; but on the other, it is precisely because the image is lasting and so perfectly a double that the daguerreotype is most unnerving” (347). Therefore, if the daguerreotype is an unnerving reflector and recorder of its subjects, it can be used as a tool to unveil the depravedness or virtue of the changing culture and its people. For example, it is the mirroring and recording of the ravenous Judge Jaffery Pyncheon that is pivotal to the romance. For we find that the doubling of his image by the daguerreotype leads to the realization that he is the facsimile of the Puritan patriarch Colonel Pyncheon in feature and appetite.

At the beginning of the romance the Colonel is portrayed as a consumer of land and life when he sets his eyes on Matthew Maule’s property and applies his “iron energy of purpose” to acquire his desires (Hawthorne 6). Maule is unjustly accused of “witchcraft” and is subsequently put to death while the Colonel sets himself to build a mansion over the grave of his adversary. But, before his death Maule declares, “God will give him blood to drink” (Hawthorne 7).

Furthermore, upon the completion of the House of the Seven Gables, a party is held, but the Colonel is nowhere to be found. The door to the Colonel’s chamber opens and the first example of doubling is revealed. The patriarch is found sitting at his table while his double, a large painted portrait, looms above him. The Colonel is described to have an odd stare and blood on his ruff and beard. The narrator states, “The iron-hearted Puritan—the relentless persecutor—the grasping and strong-willed man—was dead” (Hawthorne 13). Certainly it would seem that Colonel Pyncheon had been given blood to drink. However, the narrator goes on to mention that there is much speculation as to the cause of the Puritan’s death. Rumors say that there were finger marks about his throat, that a bloody print was on his ruff, and that his beard appeared to be disheveled. There was even talk of a person sighted jump-

ing over a fence in the garden at the time of the incident. Foul play or no, the coroner ruled the Puritan's passing as "Sudden Death" (Hawthorne 13-4). The narrator goes on to say that the "rank, wealth, and eminent character" of the fallen patriarch would have warranted a full investigation if murder was suspected (Hawthorne 14). Interestingly, the only bit that the Colonel could not fully consume was an unmeasured tract of land that is now known as Waldo County in Maine (Hawthorne 14-5). The elder Pyncheon died before he could secure the land and for a hundred years subsequent, the Pyncheons have whet their appetite on the prospect of finding the lost parchment so that they could devour and reap the monetary rewards the Puritan had failed to obtain. In this instance, the two families are intertwined by a curse that supposedly takes the life of multiple generations of greedy Pyncheon men. The portrait of Colonel Pyncheon becomes a looming symbol of this curse. Interestingly the portrait is purported to have eyes that followed passersby and at times seemed to have the impression of a bas-relief (Hawthorne 84). Rather than the daguerreotype being a symbol of romance, it would seem that the portrait of the Puritan Pyncheon is a more appropriate to describe the ambiguity of the narrative. It is important to note that the daguerreotype does not play a role in this part of the narrative, but is a look into the past, which is an important motif to the romance. Also, the portrait is being set up to act as a parallel to the daguerreotype.

Now, the narrator highlights a small bridge between the Puritan past and the romance's present in the form of Ned Higgins. This urchin is one of the first customers to engage with old Hepzibah's newly re-opened cent-shop (a past male Pyncheon had tried the same idea). The difference is that she is impoverished and, more importantly, the move into commerce marks her descent from "patrician lady" to "plebian woman" (Hawthorne 29). Previously relying on her privilege of ancestry, Hepzibah is reduced to the subjectivity of patrons. In *The Genuine Article: Race, Mass Culture, and American Literary Manhood*, Paul Gilmore mentions that several critics have claimed that the old Pyncheon's cent-shop places the marketplace in a central position in the romance (128). Gilmore's assertion is that some critics may be in agreement with the centrality of the

marketplace, but few focus on the commodities sold at the cent-shop. In particular is the focus on a Jim Crow gingerbread man that Higgins has come to purchase. Gilmore states that Jim Crow is a, “representation of black slavery and mass cultural commodification” (128). Thus, the selling and buying of the Jim Crow gingerbread can be seen as a racially charged issue of slavery and objectification. In this sense, Higgins’s biting the head off of Jim Crow can be seen as “cannibalistic” (Hawthorne 28) and a devouring of racial identity. The focus here, however, is that Higgins eats his free gingerbread and immediately returns insatiate. Hepzibah’s insistence that Higgins pay for the second gingerbread initiates her into the marketplace (Gilmore 130) and the Urchin’s appetite resembles the Colonel’s need to consume. Hepzibah’s cent-shop of customer is meant to establish society’s move from austerity and tradition to one of a centralized marketplace based on consumerism.

Also, later in the day, Hepzibah spots an old man from her window who has taken interest in the gabled house. This man, whose visage minutely moves from frown to smile, is none other than Hepzibah’s cousin and descendent of the puritan patriarch, Judge Jaffery Pyncheon. Thus the cent-shop is not only central to the narrative, it is also the space in which the bridge from Colonel to Judge is situated. Much like the Colonel, who was described as exuding aspects of rank, wealth, and eminent character, the narrator describes Jaffery as follows:

One perceived him to be a personage of mark, influence, and authority; and especially, you could feel just as certain he was opulent, as if he had exhibited his bank account—or as if you had seen him touching the twigs of the Pyncheon-elm, and, Midas-like, transmuting them to gold. (43)

In this light, it would seem that Judge and Colonel are in the least parallels of each other in the sense that they are both ambitiously wealthy and overtly privileged. The judge, however, is portrayed as having a great hunger for multiple types of consumables. For example the narrator states, “It was [Jaffery], you know, of whom it used to be said, in reference to his ogre-like appetite, that his Creator made him a great animal,

but that the dinner-hour made him a great beast” (194). It is this reference of a consuming appetite, not only for food, but for wealth, land, and power that makes Jaffery more than a parallel to the Puritan patriarch, but a double. For Jaffery, it is later revealed, continues to hunt for the missing deed of his ancestors. But the true connection between judge and colonel is realized by the daguerreotypist and descendant of Matthew Maule, Holgrave Maule.

Holgrave is Hepzibah’s first customer in her new capitalist endeavor. And though he is not initially identified as a successor of the Maule family at this point, he seems to represent modernity in the decaying house in his interest and use of the daguerreotype. The rapid advancement of technology during the 1900s brought multiple new devices to the marketplace and the daguerreotype was one of the most popular items of the time. The daguerreotype was initially intended to replace hand sketches made by scholars and scientists who wanted to accurately represent and record the natural world. Wickliff expands on this idea when he states, “[N]o technology so fundamentally changed the ability to communicate with credibility as did the invention of the photograph” (414). Though the invention was intended for the professional community, its capacity to accurately capture the likeness of family members during a time of high mortality rates, the photographic device quickly became a popular product. It was also prevalent in the market because of its inexpensive buy-in cost and ease of use. One did not need to be an expert or a specialist to operate the device and set up a business around the invention. Interestingly, there were 30 million daguerreotypes generated between 1839 and 1860, which then developed into an industry that generated 8 to 12 million dollars per year by 1850 (qtd. in Wickliff). The daguerreotype was the symbol of capitalism in that it was a consumer product (the photographic box) that generated a consumer product (the picture) which propagated its own market. Thus, it stands to reason that the daguerreotype is an emblem of modernity in the narrative. But, the daguerreotype is also used as a means to correct the trend of consumption of the Pyncheon past as well.

In particular, the mirroring and recording aspect of the daguerreo-

type leads to the breaking of the Maule-Pyncheon curse. First, it is Holgrave's daguerreotype that offers the insight to the connection between the Judge and the Colonel. Holgrave shows Phoebe Pyncheon a daguerreotype miniature and she replies as follows:

I know the face...for its stern eye has been following me all day. It is my puritan ancestor, who hangs yonder in the parlor. To be sure, you have found some way of copying the portrait without its black velvet cap and grey beard, and have given him a coat and satin cravat, instead of his cloak and band. I don't think him improved by your alterations. (67)

Phoebe makes the same assumption Trachtenberg does in that Holgrave has made a self-consciously artistic move by copying the countenance of the colonel in the photograph of the judge. Phoebe is duped into believing she is gazing on a manipulated version of the painted portrait. In effect, Holgrave has created an ambiguity of identity. However, the recorded mirror image of the Judge apparently posits that his features are not a "precious heirloom" (86) as Phoebe observes, but what Sundquist would call a doubling of the original ancestor, the Colonel. Trachtenberg concurs on this point in that he speculates that Jaffery is a copy and that if this is true, then the truth may be hidden from the copy (467-8). The truth being that the family line is based off of "illegitimate class privilege," "abrogated power," and abuse of established authority (Trachtenberg 468). In other words, the Puritan, Colonel Pyncheon, falsely accused his adversary Matthew Maule in order to consume his land. Similarly, the Judge is attempting to appropriate the gabled house in hopes of finding lost deeds to lands in the north that his ancestor could not fully acquire. The Judge dies before making his acquisition. The daguerreotype's ability to mirror the judge's countenance, which reveals the connection to the colonel, and its capability to record the death of the judge alleviates any suspicion of foul play that haunted the ancient Pyncheon's death. For it was believed that the Maule family may have been involved with the death. The same accusation could have been leveled at Holgrave Maule when the judge died. In effect, the daguerreo-

type corrects the digressions of the past by ending the Pyncheon cycle of consumption and false accusation.

However, there is still the issue of the ending. There seems to be a constant movement from decay to progress, old to new, but then there is a regression to the old. Though Holgrave represented the “new suit of society,” a trait that aligned him with the opportunistic nature of Jaffery the Judge, Trachtenberg suggests that Hawthorne allows Holgrave to change his character (476). For example, Holgrave has an opportunity to mesmerize Phoebe and ultimately consume her as the urchin consumes the Jim Crow cookie. Holgrave chooses not to do so due to the presence of an “innermost man” (Trachtenberg 476). In the end, Holgrave seems to abandon the daguerreotype, which may be a symbol of the casting away of capitalism and allows for a regression to village life where patricianhood is restored. This is due to the fact that the lost deed is found and the gable house family is restored to wealth and privilege. Rather than stay in the house, the family moves to the country and to a life disassociated from the centralized market of capitalism. In this fairy-tale ending it would seem that the old, which had become new, has regressed to the old, but is improved. Why? Perhaps Hepzibah’s brother’s notion of an “ascending spiral curve” can explain. Clifford says the following:

[A]ll human process is a circle; or, to use a more accurate and beautiful figure, in an ascending curve. While we fancy ourselves going straight forward, and attaining, at every step, an entirely new position of affairs, we do actually return to something long tried and abandoned, but which we now find etherealized, refined, and perfected to its ideal. (183)

The straight-forward, constantly redefining path alludes to Holgrave’s “new suit” of free-market and opportunity. The ascending curve is the push of the decaying past into some modern present, but there is an inevitable return to a redefined past, which in this case is the now affluent and aristocratic family.

Thus, the daguerreotype is an emblem consumerism as well as a tool to sharpen societal hindsight. As listed above, the imagery of the move-

ment from decay to modernity is a predominant motif throughout the romance and the daguerreotype is part of this association. It is used to mirror and record the visage of an insatiable consumer who is the double of a manipulative and murderous original. Plus, the recording of the Judge's corpse is lasting, credible evidence that the death was due to a family predisposition which neutralizes the cycle of unadulterated consumption of the Pyncheon family. The disappearance of the daguerreotype and return to village life casts away capitalism and asserts Clifford's philosophy of an ascending spiral curve. More pointedly, the narrative is not meant to praise the modern future, but a commentary on the folly of the capitalist present and call for a refined past.

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A Price to Pay: Gender, Rape and Power in J.M. Coetzee's Disgrace

LAURA PICKLESIMER

J.M. Coetzee's novel *Disgrace* follows privileged, white Cape Town professor David Lurie, using his story to explore issues of race and gender relations in contemporary South Africa. From the novel's opening, the reader is witness to a variety of sexual encounters, all screened through Lurie's point of view. Lurie is forced to confront his sexual indiscretions when Melanie Isaacs, a young student in his class, reports their affair to campus officials. Lurie resigns and ventures out to the country, taking up residence with his daughter Lucy, and it is there that what appears to be a story solely about Lurie coming to terms with his affair abruptly shifts its focus. Lucy's brutal rape on the farm comes as a shock and forces the reader to re-examine much of the sexual content presented earlier in the novel. Coetzee chronicles Lurie's loss of sexual potency throughout the novel in order to represent Lurie's equal loss of political and social power to the younger, more diverse members of South Africa. The many mythological and literary references Lurie makes during moments of passion and sexual violence further align his character with the past and are reflective of the shift from Western white dominance to a non-Western, post-apartheid South African order. Mythology and South African reality are joined, however, with the resulting pregnancy from Lucy's rape. Scholars and readers alike have fiercely debated whether Lucy's rape

serves any redemptive purpose. Interpretations vary, but some feminist scholars like Lianne Barnard view Lucy's silence as the result of an equally restrictive patriarchal South African society, while others like Sue Kossew believe that Lucy's refusal to speak about her rape constitutes a unique form of diplomacy and cultural assimilation.

I argue that interpreting Lucy's silence after her rape as an indictment of white South African culture fails to consider the fact that Coetzee brings up several similar problems with the emerging black post-apartheid order, particularly its practice of commodifying its female inhabitants. Many of the men coming to power, such as Lucy's foreman Petrus, heavily borrow from Western colonial habits in the manner that they subjugate women and deny them full ownership independent of men. The novel raises important questions about both gender and society, continually evading any one clear interpretation. Readers sustain a similarly shaky trajectory with Lurie's narration, since he at times recognizes how he has wronged the women in his life and at other times, remains unaware and unwilling to learn. By closely following a controversial figure like Lurie, Coetzee never shirks away from the complexities of South Africa and its many deep-rooted gender issues.

Disgrace is a novel in which the sexual encounters of David Lurie inform the larger sociopolitical issues at stake in South Africa. Therefore, much of the novel revolves around Lurie's sexual desires, observations and acts. Pamela Cooper supports this idea in her article, "Metamorphosis and Sexuality: Reading the Strange Passions of *Disgrace*," stating that "Coetzee articulates change through sexuality, which becomes a kind of flexible but ambiguous trope for the wider historical changes he registers" (23). The novel's opening sexual encounter with his weekly prostitute Soraya illustrates Lurie's need for control and places him at the height of his power sexually, since he will soon run into several complications with his next lover. Cooper describes Lurie as "broadly representative of an older social order: the officially defunct South Africa of Afrikaner dominance, statutory racial oppression, and the uneasy pleasures of white privilege" (22). If we look at Lurie as symbolic of traditional Western power, Lurie gets to act as the colonizer when he visits Soraya. He sets clear parameters that

she must adhere to during their time together and remarks on Soraya's obedience, calling her "a ready learner, compliant, pliant" (5).

For Lurie, relentless obedience is needed more than ever, since he notices his sexual control slipping with each passing year. Lurie remarks of his advent into middle age, "Then one day it all ended. Without warning his powers fled. Glances that would once have responded to his slid over, past, through him. Overnight he became a ghost" (5). If Lurie's sexual encounters are linked to his sense of power as a white male, this quotation shows how the white colonial forces of apartheid are losing their power, lurking as a "ghost" amid a younger, developing post-apartheid society. Lurie asks early in the narrative, "At what age...did Origen castrate himself?" (9). His more obscure allusion to a Christian theologian is just one of many literary and mythological references of the novel, which help to further ground the narrative in Lurie's educated, Western perspective. Lurie arrives at only one conclusion about his advancing age: "If he wanted a woman he had to learn to pursue, often, in one way or another, to buy her" (5). The word "pursue" here comes to mean much more than simply "follow." The word choice contains a predatory aspect to it, especially when coupled with the fact that Lurie feels he must now "buy" his women. Nowhere is this dangerous type of pursuit more evident than with his student, Melanie.

When first attempting to seduce Melanie, Lurie employs several Romantic literary allusions, which not only show his Westernized attitude, but also serve to dehumanize Melanie, turning her from a woman into a commodity, to be bought and sold like Lurie believes he has a right to do with Soraya. Cooper observes, "Coetzee's fascination with sexuality in *Disgrace* is deeply shaped by language and the various symbolic forms it gives to instinct and desire. In particular, the paradigms for erotic feeling and behavior offered by literature and art preoccupy him" (23). Lurie tells Melanie, "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" (16). He denies Melanie the right to her own body, objectifying and sexually coercing her through his elevated language. According to Cooper, Melanie "registers more decisively as an emblem or metaphor of 'beauty's rose'

than as fully human” (27). The scene also sets up an important parallel that highlights Lurie’s hypocrisy when he is later irate over the trespassing of Lucy’s body. Lurie goes on in this scene to quote Shakespeare to Melanie, employing another literary allusion, but he feels her pulling away, and Coetzee writes, “He has become a teacher again” (16). Lurie misses the point: he has remained her instructor from the very beginning of his advances, and his assertions that Melanie has a duty to share her body with him could function as an implicit threat given by a figure in power. Melanie’s decision to later meet with Lurie could easily be construed as acting in accordance with his assertions that she carries the obligation to service his desires.

Furthermore, Lurie’s mastery of the English language allows him to rewrite his encounter with Melanie, creating a narrative in which Melanie was a willing participant. Barnard demonstrates in her article “The Politics of Rape: Traces of Radical Feminism in *Disgrace*” how Lurie actively modifies his language on their first meeting, rejecting words that denote Melanie’s reticence toward him in favor of more encouraging euphemisms. When Lurie chances upon her in the rain, he describes her smile as “sly rather than shy,” as if she might be purposefully tempting his passions (11). As his advances grow bolder and he insists she come to his home for a drink, “she lowers her eyes, offering the same evasive and perhaps even coquettish little smile as before” (12). Lurie first supplies the most likely adjective that describes Melanie’s reluctance – “evasive” – but he quickly dismisses her body language as an attempt to appear instead as “coquettish,” another way he purposefully interprets her passivity as flirtatious and inviting. By offering readers both versions of the story through Lurie’s opposing language choices, we see how Lurie chooses to reject the misgivings that enter his head during her seduction. Lurie’s actions represent the larger system of Western entitlement. His justifications for his treatment of Melanie mirror the reasoning used to promote colonial conquest in South Africa.

The sexual liaison between Lurie and Melanie serves as a foreshadowing of the later rape of Lucy, highlighting the parallels between Lurie and the three rapists. Melanie remains completely passive during their

first sexual encounter, and as if Coetzee wishes to make no mistake on the ethical complications to their relationship, he paints their second sexual act in extremely violent imagery, with diction that troublingly shows an extreme amount of self-awareness from Lurie. Barnard notes, “Their next sexual encounter is described using the vocabulary of conquest and violent subjugation” (22). Lurie arrives at her doorstep, describing himself as an “intruder who thrusts himself upon her” (24). Lurie’s very language is presented as a tool of subjugation: “Words heavy as clubs thud into the delicate whorl of ear. ‘No, not now!’ she says, struggling” (24-5). It’s interesting to note that it is Lurie’s words rather than any physical actions that are likened to the clubs striking Melanie, since in the novel, words often carry just as much weight as physical actions and can be used to justify atrocities in the name of civilization and progress. Like a caveman, Lurie carries Melanie to the bedroom, calling her the goddess Aphrodite, a mythological allusion that prompts familiar excuses about his passionate needs. He tells himself, “Not rape, not quite that,” as if the slight negation “not quite” is justification enough for his behavior (25).

Still, Lurie is aware of the severity of his actions toward Melanie when he returns back to his car: “At this moment, he has no doubt, she, Melanie, is trying to cleanse himself of it, of him. He sees her running a bath, stepping into the water, eyes closed like a sleepwalker’s” (25). Again, this provides an eerie foreshadowing of Lucy’s reaction to her rape, since she similarly cleans herself directly after her assault. Readers might further compare Lurie’s deep concern for Lucy with his disregard for Melanie’s health. Lucy Graham notes in her article, “Reading the Unspeakable: Rape in J.M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace*” that “[i]n reading Coetzee’s novel, 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 Isaacs, upon whom he forces himself after he has had sex with Soraya, a prostitute” (259). Lurie urges his daughter multiple times to receive treatment after her sexual assault with the black robbers, but toward his “exotic” student, he spends no time worrying about the potential harms he, a white man, might have spread. In this way, Lurie cannot recognize

that he is any different than the men who conquered his daughter and fled with no thought of the lasting consequences.

Melanie later arrives at Lurie's house, requesting to stay over, a choice that Coetzee includes to further distort and explore the lines between rape and consent, showing how even those who might appear as participants in certain sexual situations still remain victims, especially when an imbalance of economic or social power is involved. With Melanie in his home, Lurie's obsession with control is exacerbated. In a moment of paranoia, he worries about how her failure to wash her dishes might be a way to test his limits. He thinks, "She is behaving badly, getting away with too much, she is learning to exploit him and will probably exploit him further" (28). To place Melanie in the role of the exploiter verges on the absurd, but it also illustrates Lurie's view that he must always remain in a place of clear dominance. Cooper expands on this, writing, "Lurie's seduction of Melanie is an attempt not only to reclaim sexual privilege, but to emphasize the traditional patriarchal procedures of the European culture in which such privilege, like Lurie himself, is embedded" (25). Lurie's relationship with Melanie becomes about much more than sex, but rather another opportunity to exert power over a woman of a different race, to have someone fill Soraya's place as an obedient trophy at his disposal.

When it comes to the university committee meeting regarding his actions, Lurie refuses to hear Melanie's statement. One might interpret his actions as a wish to expedite the process, but Graham points out how this is an effective silencing, a refusal to allow Melanie to articulate the circumstances of their relationship. Graham notes, "The central incidents in both narrative settings of *Disgrace* are acts of sexual violation, but notably, in each case the experience of the violated body is absent, hidden from the reader" (255). Since the novel is clearly focused on Lurie, readers must take in every event through the biased lens of Lurie's own opinions and justifications. When warned to give some sort of reasoning behind his actions, he finally responds in familiar Western thinking, by calling to mind the following mythological allusion: "I was no longer a fifty-year-old divorcee at a loose end. I became a servant of Eros" (52). Lurie refuses to engage in a mature, contemporary

examination of his actions, instead likening his situation to a sexually dated mythological love story. He further denies his elevated status in the matter, arguing that when passion entered, he became a “servant,” which places him in the subordinate position. His attempt to deny his dominant position in the affair understandably angers the committee members, since he is there precisely because of the imbalance of power held between Melanie and him. Graham states that “in *Disgrace* Coetzee self-consciously performs a subversion of such ‘black peril’ narratives by simultaneously scripting what Plaatje referred to as ‘the white peril,’ the hidden sexual exploitation of black women by white men that has existed for centuries” (256). Melanie’s narrative stays hidden, since Lurie doesn’t undergo any criminal punishment and even receives the chance to retain his position. Lurie ultimately refuses to listen to Melanie’s story and in a moment of privileged stubbornness, agrees to resign rather than offer a contrite apology.

After Lurie journeys out to his daughter’s land holding away from the city, he encounters a different system quite apart from the white university mechanism, one he cannot navigate through with his Western education and privilege. Although Lucy’s rape inspires a direct comparison to Melanie’s experience, the two women themselves are quite different. Graham explores the entomologies behind their names. Lucy’s name translates to “light bringer” and also “light-appearing,” while the name Melanie means “dark” or “black.” Lurie describes Melanie as slight and almost ethereal, while Lucy is grounded in reality, a substantial figure who is fittingly always in Lurie’s mind. Lucy and Lurie are connected, daughter and father, and he is unable to dispose of her as he did with Melanie. Lurie envisions how “Lucy’s bare toes grip the red earth, leaving clear prints. A solid woman, embedded in her new life” (62). Lucy has “embedded” herself in the land and committed herself to a “new life,” which shows her connection to the “new” diverse South Africa. She may be white, but she has firmly rooted herself on the farm amid the post-apartheid restructuring of her township, possibly to her detriment. Lucy opens Lurie’s eyes to this younger system. He describes her as “taking him on an outing, showing him life, showing him this other, unfamiliar

world" (71). This new world does not fit with Lurie's academic realm of mythology and literature.

Lurie's Western upbringing proves entirely useless in this new land, and when emergency strikes, he is unable to defend Lucy from sexual attack. He cannot understand the rapists, literally and figuratively: "He speaks Italian, he speaks French, but Italian and French will not save him here in darkest Africa. He is helpless ... a missionary in cassock and topi waiting with clasped hands and upcast eyes while the savages jaw away in their own lingo...Mission work: what has it left behind, that huge enterprise of upliftment. Nothing that he can see" (95). Lurie draws a direct comparison to missionaries, noting the complete failure colonization has had in South Africa. The missionary's lie of "upliftment" has instead left crime, theft and rape in its wake. Cooper remarks of this transition, "South Africa is shedding the skins of both colonialism and the hybrid neocolonialism of the apartheid era; the vocabularies of Western art seem both brittle and clumsy" (26). Lurie may be a communications professor, but he fails utterly at communication in this reach of Africa. His disconnect only grows stronger as he fails to read the needs of Lucy or properly get his points across to Petrus, one of the new emerging leaders in the settlements. Later, Lurie remarks that he would be interested in learning Petrus' story, but recognizes that he would not fully understand it: "More and more he is convinced that English is an unfit medium for the truth of South Africa. Stretches of English code whole sentences long have thickened, lost their articulations, their articulateness, their articulatedness" (117). Lurie recognizes that he cannot arrive at the new country's "truth" through old means of communication, through his endless comparisons to Western traditions and history. He searches through and tries three versions of "articulate" before finally giving up. A new history is forcing its way forward, and he is unable to exist within and unwilling to try to learn as Lucy does. This new world revolves also around sexual virility and strength, but not the kind that can be represented through Shakespeare or Byron. Coetzee writes of the deadening of Western language, "Like a dinosaur expiring and settling in the mud, the language has stiffened" (117). Lurie's power in the country also diminishes day by

day, and Coetzee illustrates this through the connection between Western language's expiration and the weakening of Lurie's sexual abilities.

Of all the sexual acts in the book, Lucy's rape emerges as the central and most palpable deliberation on the shifting power structure in post-apartheid South Africa. She refuses to implicate her black attackers in the assault, letting Lurie tell his version of the robbery, but not allowing him to voice the crime committed against her. Whether this demonstrates the effective silencing of a female victim or shows a moment of resolute strength has been open to great conversation. Coetzee makes Lurie's stance clear: "They will read that they are being sought for robbery and assault and nothing else. It will dawn on them that over the body of the woman silence is being drawn like a blanket" (110). However, Lucy explains her position, "If I leave the farm now I will leave defeated, and will taste that defeat for the rest of my life... you are not the guide I need, not at this time" (161). In this way, it is a form of battle, a fierce stalemate in which Lucy must wager her very being against forces more formidable than herself. She chooses to align herself with Petrus over Lurie, selecting him as the new male guide in her life. Cooper describes how Petrus emerges as a sort of apostle Peter, the "rock" from which the church was built and a patriarchal figure coming to power in contemporary South Africa. In this sense, Lucy's potential alliance brings with it the prospect of a new beginning.

This idea of creation amid the destructive act of sexual assault is most evident in the eventual outcome of Lucy's rape: a pregnancy that Lucy decides to carry to term. Her pregnancy can be connected to the mythological rape that occurred in Yeats' poem, "Leda and the Swan." Before Lurie is aware of her pregnancy, he contemplates that "raping a lesbian [might be] worse than raping a virgin: more of a blow" (105). Cooper connects this sentence to Yeats' poem, arguing, "There are resonances of 'Leda and the Swan' - with its 'sudden blow' of seizure, its inscription of penetration as historical necessity, and of transgressive intercourse as the act which ushers in a new age" (32). In Yeats' poem, "the staggering girl" Leda is "helpless" to the sexual advances of Zeus in swan form (2). However, Yeats does not describe the swan in the usual image of lightness,

but rather it contains “dark webs” (3). The swan is “indifferent,” quickly dropping Leda from his beak as soon as the act is over in a similar manner to the way the men perform their assault on Lucy and quickly vacate the farm. However, the act will come with lasting repercussions as an entire empire ultimately results from Leda and Zeus’ union. The narrator of the poem raises the important question: “Did she put on his knowledge with his power?” (14). Similarly, can there be a larger truth that Lucy arrives at through her rape? Readers are not privy to Lucy’s thoughts, only Lurie’s interpretation, so it is hard to know if Lucy learns from the experience. Cooper interprets Lucy’s rape and subsequent pregnancy as a type of sacrifice, explaining, “Like Leda’s, Lucy’s body is given almost sacrificially to myth, to history, and to ‘story:’ the myth of rebirth... Lucy’s ordeal can be seen, then, as a twisted version of the fabulous conception that offers the Western imagination such a powerful figure of originality: the violent entry, through flesh, of newness into a world it alters beyond the borders of anatomy and time” (32). In this way, the fusion of Western mythology and South African post-apartheid reality are realized through the conception of Lucy’s child.

The Leda myth can also extend to other characters in the novel, particularly the youngest rapist, Pollux, who complicates the interpretation of the poem with his name’s clear Western lineage. Pollux emerges as a constant reminder of the rape, and his name carries with it several possible meanings. Lurie notes the Westernized connotation such a name carries, taking care to offer a few racist suggestions to Lucy: “Not Mncedisi? Not Nqabayakhe? Nothing unpronounceable, just Pollux?” (200). Cooper suggests that Pollux is named after one of the sons born from Leda’s rape, which grounds the novel even further in the mythology behind “Leda and the Swan.” However, Paul J.C.M. Franssen argues in the article, “Pollux in Coetzee’s *Disgrace*” that Cooper’s interpretation fails to address Pollux’s culpability in the act, since he is not a product of rape, but rather a perpetrator. Instead, Franssen argues that the name Pollux derives from Ovid’s *Farsi*, a story in which the immortal figure participates in a gang rape. Franssen states, “Ovid recounts how the twin brothers, mortal Castor and immortal Pollux ‘ravished and carried away

Phoebe and Phoebe's sister' Hilaira, the daughters of King Leucippus" (241). Fransen also remarks that "The twin brothers are nowhere disapproved of or punished in Ovid's story," which appears to be a more fitting comparison of Pollux's own role in the novel, since he is welcomed into the family by Petrus soon after the rape (242). Coetzee purposefully gives his character an ancient mythological name, one a studied man like Lurie is sure to recognize. The new patriarchal order of South Africa is not very different from the old, and this is seen through the continuation of certain names, particularly this Western name with multiple linked histories to rape and sexual violence. Cooper remarks on the linkage between the West and Africa, "Coetzee's vision of change is inseparable from the unresolved destiny of Anglo-European traditions in South Africa, as well as from the ghosts of colonialism and the modes of knowledge and representation that it bequeathed" (22). Pollux functions as a constant reminder that the barbaric act committed against Lucy is just as much a product of Western traditions of violence and sexual assault as it is a reflection of current South African culture.

The ramifications of Lucy's choice to bear her rapist's child and live under the dictates of Petrus in order to remain a part of South African contemporary society has engendered great debate among scholars. Some writers have found strength from Lucy's decision. Kossew in her article, "The Politics of Shame and Redemption in J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*," asserts that Lucy's decision is a complex one that comes from much deliberation. She claims that Lucy's ultimate decision is an "assertion, instead, of her pragmatic approach to living in the new South Africa and of the price of sharing the land... by accepting a marriage of convenience with him (Petrus), as his third wife, she is acknowledging the power of African rather than Western tradition and law" (160). Her merging is necessary to join blacks and whites, requiring a sacrifice from the privileged party. Kossew brings up the valid question that if Lurie escapes from Cape Town with only the admonishment to make a convincing apology, why should not Lucy's rape be remedied in a similar fashion through the offering of future protection and the joining of families?

Ultimately, however, Lucy's decision does not function as an effec-

tive form of resistance against white culture because the alternative she seeks to assimilate into is just as problematic. The South African system is built on Western patriarchy, in many ways showing an equally archaic view of women. Petrus supports this sexist viewpoint, resembling Lurie in his commodification of women. He tells Lurie about his impending child, “We are praying for a boy... Then he can show his sisters – show them how to behave” (130). He himself has multiple wives and believes it is the man who must discipline the woman. He also remarks that girls cost more than boys, stating, “Always money, money, money” (130). Capitalism still runs strong in this new society, and women are clearly a currency to men like Petrus. Lurie asks the question in response to Petrus’ growing acquisitions, “Against this new Petrus what chance does Lucy stand?” (151). Her only chance is to play his game and offering up her body as collateral. She finally attempts to explain her silence to her father, stating, “What if that is the price one has to pay for staying on? ... They see me as owing something. They see themselves as debt collectors, tax collectors. Why should I be allowed to live here without paying?” (158). Lucy is reduced to selling her body for economic and physical security in a manner that is quite similar to prostitution. Barnard remarks that Lucy is not only subservient but also takes on the role of martyr in an attempt to remedy the sins of colonization. Barnard reflects on the problems of having a woman bear the brunt of punishment for the misdeeds of a past patriarchal system. She states, “Here white colonialism is followed by a black counter-drive, and yet it is the woman who feels she has to sacrifice herself for peace. Lucy’s body becomes the site of the settlement of scores” (26).

By the close of the novel, Lucy, the young modern woman, ends up offering her farm up as a “dowry” and allowing herself to be called either Petrus’ “third wife” or “his concubine” (204). She does not even earn the more contemporary word “prostitute,” but must take its ancient form. Lucy does, however, require one promise of Petrus: “But then the child becomes his too. The child becomes part of his family” (204). It is possible that Lucy’s choice isn’t a resistance to white society as much as a desperate plea to be included in the new South African society, and most importantly, for her progeny to grow up as a respected member who will

not have to endure Lucy's brutal initiation. Unfortunately, there are no promises in this area of the country. If Lucy bears a girl, Petrus and his family will most likely place the child in an equally subservient role. Lurie rails against this fate for his only daughter, but ultimately must accept that the decision is no longer his; Lucy has placed her trust in a new male guide who understands the language of the land her child will be born on.

By the end of *Disgrace*, David Lurie has assumed the role of "dog man," a title that was once bestowed on Petrus. Lurie must put down the dog he has grown to cherish at the novel's close in a very similar fashion to the way that he must finally give up Lucy to her new life. He passes her on to Petrus, a figure connected to a society of men who amid other changes, have still adopted the violence and patriarchy of the white Western world as their own. Graham and other writers have reflected on the ways that multiple parts of the world still silence rape victims like Lucy. This public ambivalence toward victims of sexual assault is of course not purely a South African matter, just as it is not purely a matter that relates only to one particular race or socioeconomic group. The many unanswered questions about rape, power and gender that *Disgrace* raises at least prompt a dialogue on what it means to be a progressive society that treats its members with dignity and grace.

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“The Forest Closed Upon Her Like a Pair of Jaws”: Lycanthropy and Female Sexuality in Angela Cart- er’s Wolf Trilogy

KAYLEIGH QUARTERMAN

The shepherd drives the wolf from the sheep’s throat, for which the sheep thanks the shepherd as his liberator, while the wolf denounces him for the same act as the destroyer of liberty. Plainly, the sheep and the wolf are not agreed upon a definition of liberty.

—Abraham Lincoln

Long before parents and grandparents bundled up their rosy-cheeked children around the fire to tell them about the legends of the werewolf or the tale of “Little Red Riding Hood,” who braved through the dark forest filled with all kinds of deadly creatures ready to harm her lest she strayed off the path, the ancients were composing their own nightmarish fables. In ancient Rome, Virgil wrote about the first werewolf, Moeris, in his *Ecloga Octava*: “His ego saepe lupum fieri et se condere siluis / Moerim, saepe animas imis excire sepulcris. . . .” [I have often seen Moeris turn into a wolf and hide in the woods, and he frequently summons souls from the bottom of the grave] (VIII.97-98). The wolf was originally believed to have been a “psychopomp, a creature able to conduct the souls of the dead into the next world” (“Werewolf” 322). As different werewolf

legends developed throughout the world, their definition developed, too, such as we see in Charles Perrault's seventeenth-century version, "Le Petit Chaperon Rouge," and the Grimm Brothers's nineteenth-century version, "Rotkäppchen." However, this essay will explore Angela Carter's three alternative twentieth-century feminist versions—in relation and in contrast to the older, more familiar versions—which she renames "The Werewolf," "The Company of Wolves," and "Wolf-Alice."

Angela Carter is an essential author of the British postmodern canon. In *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*, Carter rewrites the fairytales that we have all grown up with, but she brings these familiarized tales into the twentieth-century by composing them through a feminist lens so that we can recognize the phallogocentrism that saturates every past fairytale. What is more, Carter subjectifies the previously objectified female so as to treat female sexuality as a liberation of desire rather than as a condemnation of sin or a commodity for men's desire. This essay will examine these paradigms in Carter's work in three of her retellings of the popular fairytale, "Little Red Riding Hood," where the wolf is usually the salacious beast and antagonist of the fable. However, in Carter's versions, the wolf occupies a role alongside the female protagonist, who uses him to understand her own "bestial" desires that should not be stifled or feared but, rather, embraced.

The characteristics of a wolf or werewolf in any tale usually balance between a frightful, dangerous beast and an overtly sexual predator; in fact, "there's a saying in France that if a girl is a virgin she is said to *n'a jamais vu le loup*, i.e., to have never seen the wolf; the opposite is true for a girl who has lost her virginity" ("Wolf" 299). In "The Company of Wolves," the narrator warns that "before [the werewolf] can become a wolf, the lycanthrope strips stark naked" (145), emphasizing the werewolf as a kind of sexualized weapon against a young girl's chastity, whom she must run away from "as if the Devil were after [her]" if ever she sees him "among the pines" (145).

Although the Perrault and the Grimm tales have their share of differences, their main purpose was to educate young bourgeois children about several of life's obstacles that they would have to inevitably

overcome one day, such as breaking away from the mother or father in order to marry and confront the sexually unknown. Additionally, the stories also served as ruses to indoctrinate children into following the traditions that their social classes demanded of them, as Janet Garton similarly notes: “Fairy tales encapsulate the enduring myths of a culture, encoding the traditions and the moral values by which we like to think we live. . . . they are both a comforting story and a guide to acceptable behavior for children” (289). In *The Uses of Enchantment*, Bruno Bettelheim takes an Oedipal, phallogocentric approach to the Perrault and the Grimm versions, arguing that the genuine aim of these fairy tales is to ease girls into their prescribed gender roles. Bettelheim asserts that “Little Red Cap is very much a child already struggling with pubertal problems for which she is not yet ready emotionally because she has not mastered her oedipal conflicts” (171); that is to say, Little Red Cap, the protagonist from the Brothers Grimm tale, represents a pubescent girl who cannot complete her transformation into womanhood without severing her Electral ties to her father. Once she recognizes that the sexual unknown is not threatening and is, in fact, necessary, she is able to break away from her father and into the arms of another man. Thus begins what Bettelheim calls the “animal groom” or “animal husband” cycle, where the “beast is turned into a magnificent person” (282) once the girl acquiesces to her role as a wife and mother.

According to Aidan Day, Carter was well aware of Bettelheim’s psychoanalytic criticisms, and, although they held her interest, she did not necessarily agree with them, which is why she constructed her own versions of the popular tale to challenge certain gendered molds: “In *The Bloody Chamber* Carter is concerned not simply to point out what is wrong with conventional representations of gender; she is concerned at once to offer different representations, different models” (134). Carter breaks away from the traditional story of “Little Red Riding Hood” by incorporating subjectivity into her protagonist’s character, which differs significantly from the Perrault-esque or Grimm-esque heroines, who are trapped inside an objective identity that has been prescribed by a patriarchally dominated society. Instead, Carter’s protagonists achieve their

subjectivity by discovering and taking control of their sexual identities and by accepting rather than preventing their roles as Other with their counterparts (the wolf in “The Company of Wolves” and the Duke in “Wolf-Alice”). Furthermore, Rosaleen, the protagonist in “The Company of Wolves,” and Alice, from “Wolf-Alice,” use their virginity as a medium for sexual liberation rather than as a commodity that is to be controlled and maintained by the masculine authority.

“The Werewolf” and “The Company of Wolves” begin by stressing the importance of following tradition and listening to one’s elders: “The good child does as her mother bids. . . .” (138); “do not leave *the path* because of the bears, the wild boar, the starving wolves” (138, added emphasis). “The path” serves in both stories as a dualistic route. First, it is the *literal* route where the treads of civilization have attempted to cut through the unpredictability and barbarity of the forest. However, man has less control than he believes because soon it will “snow so thickly that the path and any footsteps, track or spoor that might have been upon on it [will be] obscured” (138). In this way, nature will always reveal civilization’s limits and possible hubris, which is represented in this passage by nature’s paradoxical revelation through “obscur[ing]” man’s “footsteps.” Second, the path is the *figurative* route that every young girl must take on the way to womanhood. Grandmothers and mothers warn young girls not to stray from “the path,” i.e., discover themselves and/or their sexual identities, because the dominant masculine culture depends upon sexual naiveté in order to maintain its rule. That is, the less a girl knows about sex, the least likely she is to “lose” her most valuable commodity: her chastity; therefore, the patriarchal authority suppresses feminine sexuality in order to preserve its possession of such a priceless item.

When Rosaleen happens across the handsome young man in the woods, she is astounded that he carries a compass with him, which signifies a progressive technology that not only steers the young girl away from her traditional “path” but also shows her that there is more than one. Rosaleen, unaware that there is any other existence or “path” besides what she has been taught and shown, does not believe that the young man will make it to her grandmother’s house before she can. So, they make a

wager that, if he does, she will give him a kiss as a reward. As the young man takes leave, Rosaleen “trudge[s] the long way, along the winding path” because “she [knows] she w[ill] be lost instantly” if she “leaves the path on the way through the wood” (147). This “long, winding path” represents the tradition and oppression that has been forced on the girl her entire life; it is long because it leaves no room for progression; it stays in the same stationary austerity that prevents her from exploring the forest (i.e., her sexuality) and the “dangers” that it houses (i.e., the possibility of her seduction by the Other). Although, Rosaleen perhaps recognizes an opportunity for a sexual awakening, for she “dawdle[s] on her way to make sure the handsome gentleman w[ill] win his wager” (147).

Carter’s narrator asserts in the beginning of “The Company of Wolves,” “You are always in danger in the forest, where no people are” (142), making the distinction that to be away from people (and, therefore, societal restrictions), one would be placing themselves in “danger” of being consumed by the wolf. However, the genuine “danger” resides not in the Other, or that which is different, but in the collective identity that suffocates individuality. The collective identity is the sense of self that is learned or, rather, impressed upon an individual so that his/her actual self is subsumed under the collective. Alternatively, Carter’s protagonists insist upon their own personal desires and identification of self and reject the possibility of having their individuality oppressed by society.

This theme is perhaps most evident in “Wolf-Alice,” as Anna Maria Cimitile asserts, “[Alice] is the ‘other’ of the world: men do not recognize her as a human being, not even when she wears a woman’s white dress (they think that she is the spirit of a dead woman)” (105). Not only is Alice’s subjectivity challenged through her being labeled as a spirit, but, from the very start of the story, the narrator also uses zoomorphic descriptions that distance Alice from the norm: “Her panting tongue hangs out. . . . She never walks; she trots or gallops. Her pace is not *our* pace” (153, added emphasis). The distinction of the plural possessive “our” from the narrator suggests the overbearing pressure of society’s collective identity. Furthermore, the narrator’s paralleling a “normal” human behavior (“walk[ing]”) with an animalistic one (“trot[ting]” or “gallop[ing]”)

maintains that Alice is an Other and something less than human.

While “In the Company of Wolves,” Rosaleen *becomes* an Other, what is interesting about Alice is that she *begins* as an Other. After countless attempts at socializing the young, feral girl, the nuns give up and send Alice away to the outskirts of the “cobweb castle,” the Duke’s residence. The Duke is an ambiguous figure, who has the characteristics of a werewolf, a vampire, or even a ghoul. All we know for certain is that his reflection cannot be seen in the mirror—“she bumped against that mirror over whose surface the Duke passed like a wind on ice” (158)—and that he has been Othered by society: “he is *cast* in the *role* of the corpse-eater, the body-snatcher. . . .” (156, added emphasis). Both he and Alice are “cast” into their “role[s]” as Other by the community, but, because of this, Alice can recognize her own sense of self without being oppressed by a patriarchal authority dictating her role as a female.

Alice does not seem to have a self or any grasp of an existence besides an animalistic one until she begins her menses and realizes that her “playmate” in the mirror is her own reflection. In “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function, as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience,” Jacques Lacan makes a distinction between the imago and the ego, arguing that the imago is the “ideal-I” (269) or the objective sense of who we are as understood through the *Umwelt* (environment; i.e., society). Alternatively, the ego is the genuine, subjective self that is understood through the *Innenwelt* (inner world; i.e., one’s being). Lacan refers to the imago as the “ideal-I” because it is what society prescribes; it is the “imag[e]” or mask that one must project in order to receive acceptance. Yet, as Lacan notes, we paradoxically need the imago in order to bring our selves into being, for the ego cannot comprehend its self without the reflection or the object of the mirror. This mirror can function as an actual object, or it can function as a figurative reflection of our selves as seen through society’s lens. Additionally, we understand who we are when we are presented with what we are *not*; thus, our identity is formed through the acknowledging of a lack. And, this lack is paradoxically what makes us whole, or as whole as we can be. For, as Lacan argues, the imago and the ego can never intersect because they only “asymptotically approach”

(270) one another. Therefore, as Lacan's assertion of the "Mirror Stage" dictates, it is only after Alice discerns that the person whom she is staring at in the mirror is herself that she finally acknowledges that she *has* a self: "her relation with the mirror was now far more intimate since she knew she saw herself within it" (160). As a result, a shift takes place in the discovery of Alice's identity: instead of her identity being prescribed by a dominating masculine figure, "the *woman* is creating the image of the *man*, at the end of this story, in order to know him as she has come to know herself through her own image" when "the Duke's face [is] reflected in the mirror" (Roberts 59). Thus, Carter allows her protagonist the option of being liberated by a sense of self that is not tainted by the overbearing insistence of a collective identity or by a masked self that the patriarchal authority prescribes.

Similarly, in "The Company of Wolves," Carter transforms the typical mode of virginity as a sacrifice for phallocentricity into a medium for sexual exploration and liberation. Virginity is used as commodity for men, where a woman's sexuality is suppressed so that it can be controlled; therefore, the woman or girl who remains chaste is objectified as a valuable product waiting to be possessed by the highest bidder. Carter's protagonist fights against that stereotype by learning about her sexuality and embracing it rather than remaining unaware or frightened of venereal acts.

The names that Perrault and the Grimm Brothers give their protagonists strongly allude to the girls' sexual functions in both stories. Little Red Riding Hood, Little Red Cap, and Rosaleen are, as Carter writes, all walking "pentacle[s] of [their] own virginity" (146). In the Perrault and Grimm stories, virginity is a commodity for patriarchal authority, where female sexuality is suppressed in order to preserve the male "product," or as Cimitile similarly argues: "Obedience to the paternal law, ignorance of their sexuality and chastity as their exchange value on the male market are namely the 'qualities' required from women" (98). While Perrault and the Grimm Brothers name their protagonists after *objects* that represent their virginity (the "red hood" or "red cap" as an innuendo for the hymen), Carter gives her protagonists actual names so that her characters cannot be diminished to objective vessels for fecundity. Even though a

name like Rosaleen *does* allude to virginity—considering that rosebuds serve as symbols for maidenhood—it still “change[s] once and for all women’s stereotypes within traditional texts, [causing] an exigency of finally placing ‘woman’ as *subject* of the story, freeing her from her limited role of *object* of it” (Cimitile 97, added emphasis). Therefore, naming her protagonists asserts their identity, subjectivity, and individuality rather than diminishing them to *types*, as we see in traditional fairy tales. Their names also humanize them, forcing the reader to reject an understanding of them as Other or subhuman.

The references to sacrifice throughout “The Company of Wolves” depict the girl’s inevitable fate: the end of her pure state. The wolf’s eyes are like “saucers full of Greek fire” (150), referencing the ancient Greek sacrificing of virgins by throwing them into the fire. The protagonist’s shawl is “red as the blood she must spill” and “the colour of sacrifices” (150), the blood symbolizing the actual loss or “sacrificing” of her virginity. As Sarah Gamble asserts, “the heroine’s menstrual blood is . . . what constitutes both her particular vulnerability and her peculiar defense. It is what marks her out as the lycanthrope’s prey, for the shedding of her hymeneal blood is what he specifically desires” (135). Although she is “an unbroken egg” and “a sealed vessel. . . .” (146), by the end, the wolves are “howl[ing] a prothalamion outside the window as she *freely* g[ives] the kiss she owed him. . . .” (151, added emphasis), suggesting not her acquiescence to but, rather, her welcoming of their sexual union. But before she “freely gives” herself to the wolf, there exists a tension between consumption and consummation, for Rosaleen is still not quite sure if the wolf is after her “flesh” or her “meat.”

At the beginning of the story, the narrator tells us that “the wolf is carnivore incarnate . . . once he’s had a taste of flesh then nothing else will do” (141). The “carnivorous” implication denotes a sexual hunger as well as a ravenousness, which is confirmed with the use of “flesh,” doubling as a “taste” for the wolf’s lasciviousness. Mirrored in the ending of the story, the narrator again asserts: “carnivore incarnate, only immaculate flesh appeases him” (151). The word “immaculate” highlights the girl’s virginal purity, which is what sexually satisfies the wolf. In *The Sadeian Woman*,

Carter contrasts the different connotations of “flesh” and “meat”: “In the English language, we make a fine distinction between flesh, which is usually alive and, typically, human; and meat, which is dead, inert, animal and intended for consumption” (138). The wolf desires the “flesh,” that is, of the girl’s sexualized body, but he does not wish to consume her “meat,” as he did the grandmother’s.

In typical fairy tales, such as the ones that Bettelheim analyzes, the wolf represents what all young, virgin girls are afraid of: a salacious man who takes the (figurative) form of a beast when indulging in his desires. At first, a young woman, unaware and unknowing of sex, perceives a man as monstrous and rabid (the “animal groom”), and when the wolf and Rosaleen are alone in the protagonist’s grandmother’s house, the “handsome gentleman” from the forest becomes “feral” and has “matted hair” with “lice moving in it” (148). Depicted as a sexual predator, the scary and sexually unknown is represented through the wolf: “night and the forest has come into the kitchen with darkness tangled in its hair” (148). Words like “night,” “forest,” and “darkness” represent the obscurity the virginal girl feels toward sex—at least how she feels about it at first. The emphasis that the wolf has come into the “kitchen” alludes to the previous insistence that the wolf is a “carnivore” of “immaculate flesh.” Words like “tangled” and “hair” signal the carnal acts that are about to take place; additionally, his nipples are “as poison fruit” (147), signaling either the “poisoning” of the girl’s “fruit” or the Edenic allusion to the girl’s acquiring of sexual knowledge, which is inevitable and irreversible, as we see in “Wolf-Alice,” too: “she would be the bud of flesh in the kind lion’s mouth: but how can the bitten apple flesh out its scar again?” (156). The wolf, at first, takes action which is seemingly appropriate to his epithet of sexual predator, directing Rosaleen to her fate:

“What shall I do with my shawl?”

“Throw it on the fire, dear one. You won’t need it again...”

“What shall I do with my blouse?”

“Into the fire with it, too, my pet.” (150-151)

However, Rosaleen is in no way a passive victim being seduced by a

salacious beast; she is the wolf's equal. She is no one's object; she and the wolf are the objects of *each other's* desire. Rosaleen, soon after, "rip[s] off his shirt for him and fl[ings] it into the fire, in the fiery wake of her own discarded clothing" (151), representing both her acceptance of herself and of the wolf as "Other" by keeping him forever in his bestial form, for "if you burn [the werewolf's] human clothing you condemn him to wolfishness for the rest of his life" (145). The narrator continues, "The flames danced like dead souls on Walpurgisnacht and the old bones under the bed set up a terrible clattering but she did not pay them any heed" (151), further cementing that Rosaleen and the wolf are, in fact, equal: "She frees herself from a subordinated condition of object . . . [and] can finally acknowledge and love the other, embracing with him in the unity of a couple whose terms are on par. Her answer to a patriarchal state is not a matriarchal one. What she seeks is a dance of two" (Cimitile 102). And even though the bones of her grandmother, representative of oppressive tradition, are "clattering" underneath their "savage marriage ceremony," she is no longer restricted in her sexuality but is, instead, empowered by its discovery. The grandmother's house soon fills with "the clamour of the forest's Liebestod. . . ." (151), symbolizing their union through the "death" of the girl's purity, since *liebestod* translates to "love death" in German. Thus, the wolf does not consume her meat but "consummates" their love in death—the death of patriarchal oppression.

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*Richard Kern and Jean Schultz's
"Beyond Orality: Investigating
Literacy and the Literary
in Second and Foreign
Language Instruction"*

reviewed by EVAN RUIZ

Kern and Schultz wrote "Beyond Orality: Investigating Literacy and the *Literary* in Second and Foreign Language Instruction" (2005) in order to discern the difference between *literacy* and the *literary*; discuss how these two tenets are changing in modernity; how these changes affect the ESL/EFL learning environment; and to identify the larger moral implications of these changes. In sum, Kern and Schultz find that both *literacy* and the *literary* need to be redefined in the face of increasingly global technological innovations in order to enhance both the quality and humanity of ESL/EFL instruction. Although many of Kern and Schultz's claims concerning the changing topography of technological literacy are valid, their focus on multicultural social contexts may stray too far into complete relativism. Yet, in a seemingly paradoxical turn, Kern and Schultz neglect the many positive contributions to teaching methodology that the study of linguistic universals has yielded. This review will detail the major claims of Kern and Schultz and finally provide a critique of this information.

Kern and Schultz want to draw attention to a supposed gap in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research concerning reading and writ-

ing in ESL/EFL contexts with an emphasis on social and technological contexts. Kern and Schultz claim that, in an increasingly technology-ridden world, reading and writing are gaining a form of importance not previously seen. This is especially true in both native and ES/FL university-level contexts, which favors writing (and indirectly, reading) as the primary measure of competency.

Here, it is important to note that that authors divide language learning into two discrete skill sets, *literacy* and *literary*. They define *literacy* as the more concrete instantiation of text knowledge including understanding rhetorical styles, expectations of genre, cultural-specific texts and modes of argument. An individual who has *literacy* in a certain culture would: one, understand that there are different expectations for certain genres of writing; and, two, know how to manipulate that writing to conform to those standards. For example, such an individual would know that a formal, content-based, argumentative essay on *Hamlet* for a college course would necessarily have a different register and format than an opinion-driven, personal blog post on Kenneth Branagh's movie version. *Literary* is the more abstract expression of cultural knowledge including awareness of important cultural stories, culture-specific schemata, and social interpretations (Kern 383) . An individual with *literary* awareness would be able interpret texts in culturally expected ways. For instance, when Hamlet's ghost appears before the guards in the first scene, westerners know, from culture-informed tropes, that when ghosts appear in stories it is usually because the spirit has some unfinished business with the living. This is the typical, western schemata for ghosts. Westerners typically do not assume, as a West African Tiv tribesman might, that that ghost was sent by a witch (Bohannon 25). Knowing of and being able the interpret stories in culturally specific ways, defines an individual with *literary* prowess. Kern and Schultz discuss how these two types of knowledge about the culture interface with technology, growing multiculturalism, and identity in EFL contexts.

The Kern and Schultz argue that *literacy* is presently being redefined to incorporate internet-based multimodality and changing global identities. Kern and Schultz characterize reading before the internet age as

simple recording and decoding of traditional texts. The multimodal internet has changed the face of literacy in that it demands the relearning of skills to fit new mediums like video, blogs, audio, chat rooms, hyperlinks, etc. These require different analytical clues and processes than traditional texts. Kern and Schultz argue that a form of literacy which focuses on these skills is necessary.

This new form of *literacy* is also important, Kern and Schultz claim, because of how it relates to identity creation. Because the internet is written and consumed by a larger and more diverse number of people than ever before, it allows for wider individual self-recognition. This is important to Kern and Schultz' argument since it necessitates that *literacy* be defined as something relevant to the individual, to selfhood. That is, *literacy* is meaningful to specific contexts, communities, and practices, of a certain time and never absolute in space and time. Therefore, new *literacy* should be both sensitive to multimodality and the importance of multimodal processes as individual needs.

Technology and its cultural contingencies should also affect the *literary*, especially in terms of how present discourse is shaped. Traditional university literary discourse was centered on authoritative texts of "New Criticism and Structuralism," which relied on the authoritative text and the subjective analysis of the reader (Kern 383). This approach creates a solipsistic interpretation of texts and neglects objective analysis, or a perspective that is aware of cultural time and space, necessary for the new *literacy*.

Kern and Schultz relate this argument directly to the ES/FL classroom since this space plays a major role in mediating cultures for students. Thus, new forms of *literacy* - which necessitate moving away from traditional, solipsistic frames toward ones that allow for recognition of new identities, multicultural, postcolonial perspectives through time and space - are necessary. Kern and Schultz hold that changes in both the modes of *literacy* and the forms of the *literary* have important implications for how ES/FL courses should be structured.

Kern and Schultz claim that, in light of technological developments, it is misdirected to make curricula around basic reading comprehension

with subjective interpretation (process writing), since the most current instantiation of internet-based *literacy* requires objectivity. Additionally, because *literary*, objective analysis is of a specific space/time, and, *literacy* should be viewed as local, not universal, students should be allowed to define the effectiveness of their own reading strategies. This is because their choice of strategy is dependent on their purpose and environment in an expansive multimodal and identity-ridden technology-field. Kern and Schultz draw the ethical point that accepting multiculturalism humanizes learning in that it more closely reflects human reality. So, teaching should shift toward “the unique” and away from the universal (Kern 389).

The concepts proposed by Kern and Shultz make important observations about how technology and multiculturalism are changing the concepts of *literacy* and the *literary*. Their observations about multimodality are valid in that students do need a literacy curriculum that allows them to keenly discern new, internet-based modalities. By this same turn, fostering an objective, global perspective in students will only serve them, given the aforementioned nature of the modern world.

Another important aspect of Kern and Schultz’ stance is that it is generally empowering to groups and individual learners. First, it empowers individual students by allowing them to define the usefulness of certain practices.

The second way that Kern and Shultz’s suggested teaching practices empower students is by equalizing the importance of varying cultures in the classroom. Language and culture are inseparable entities. Language is a major component of cultural identity, and cultural identity is defined by language use. The dominant culture of one’s upbringing is called the *heritage culture*, and the language associated with that culture is the *heritage language*. EF/SL classes serve students who have an interest, not in reinforcing their heritage language, but in learning a new language, English, their *target language*. It is typical, particularly in ESL classrooms, to learn predominantly in the target language. So, many ESL classes are taught in English to a culturally and linguistically mixed class. Since language and culture are inextricably combined, teaching a language is, ideally, teaching about its culture too. However it is easy to misconstrue the

primary focus on the target culture, over the heritage culture, in an ES/FL classroom as a demonstration of cultural preference or value. Kern and Schultz' stance practices cultural relativism in that it promotes equal status to all cultures in the classroom.

However, there is a point where empowering culturally unique individuals in the class room must meet with the realities of teaching and research. Given the typical class size, it would be confounding to try to accommodate all cultures and needs at any given time. Testing for competence or understanding would be extremely challenging if no general standard were given. Besides, conforming to the culture of a classroom is a large part of language acquisition. The classroom should not be ignored as a cultural space, needful of processes and standards, in its own right.

Kern and Schultz's focus on individual need can not fully meet the realities of the classroom nor the interests of SLA research. Kern and Schultz neglect that our awareness of certain processing types only exist because of the efforts of cognitive research.

This is especially evident when the process of developing new reading skills is considered. There is more than one kind of writing system. English is an alphabetic system, which associates symbols (letters) with sounds. Chinese is a logographic language, which, in short, means that its symbols represent whole concepts or words. There is evidence given by brain activation studies that different language types are processed in different portions of the brain (*Siok 2003*). Therefore, a student who aims to read in the target language will have to learn different processing strategies than the ones they used to read in their heritage language.

Techniques to accomplish this challenge can and should be explicitly taught by ES/FL teachers. Teachers who overlook this need "may not have a realistic view of the reading task for their students, even at advanced stages" (Birch 2002). Despite the fact that the English language strategy-building will be different depending on the students' heritage language, an ES/FL teacher should feel responsible for helping their students to develop new processing skills.

This research makes clear the language learning is equal parts local, cultural knowledge (*literacy and literary*) and universal mental processing.

However, neural processing is not just vital and universal to language learning, it functions independently of both *literacy* and the *literary*, as Kern and Schultz define them. Kern and Shultz rightly expound on the usefulness of culture-specific reading and writing strategies in order to promote the individual efficacy in the classroom. However, recommendations for curriculum creation that focuses too heavily on nurturing individual, cultural-specific strategies may neglect universal, mental processing strategies, which are necessary language fluency. Kern and Schultz should bear in mind that universal application does not necessarily degrade the individual.

Kern and Schultz have done an exemplary job diagnosing the new needs of ES/FL students. They have made important demands regarding how students are taught in the face of technological innovations that require different skills. Kern and Schultz also propose new discourse methods which attempt to bring the education system in line with our robust multicultural reality. Kern and Schultz's admirable propositions would be optimally combined with additional, interdisciplinary input.

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Created in His Image: The Void of Lacanian Desire that Birthed Frankenstein's Suicide

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In taking on the act of creation, one unavoidably uses elements of oneself in the palette for the portrait. The emotional, physical, and environmental factors of the host all are reflected in what is birthed. As Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* explores, a creation is a complex composite of surface, subterranean, and alien. Shelley's portrayal of the relationship between Frankenstein, his family, and his creation communicates directly with Jacques Lacan's conception of the role of the male, female, and the perceived limitations between them, as well as the motivations which drive them, towards creation. *Frankenstein* is unique in its position for Lacanian analysis because its plot springs from the dark, dramatic void of a dead mother. The novel asks what happens to an adolescent male that rejects the death of that primordial "Other," his mother? It is due to Frankenstein's repressed grief that he is urgent to create life and of particular significance that his creation be male. Shelley's development of character and the circumstances which form Frankenstein's identity pose significant questions to the supremacy of the *symbolic phallus*. Lacan has been criticized as accepting the patriarchy as "true" or structurally unavoid-

able; if this was indeed his assumption, a close examination of the Creature's character provides alternative options of existence for heterosexual males living outside the patriarchy. Through Frankenstein's handling of grief, Shelley paints an uncompromising portrait of the fate of the male underpinned by the oppressive patriarchal *logos* which ensnares his mind, body, and soul. She asks us to consider the outcome of a society unwilling to acknowledge the female's role in life, death, and the great connection, not division, between the two.

At the opening of the novel, we are met with an essential trauma which drives the plot:

I need not describe the feelings of those whose dearest ties are rent by the most irreparable evil, the void that presents itself to the soul. . . It is so long before the mind can persuade itself that she, whom we saw every day, and whose very existence appeared a part of our own, can have departed for ever. . . When the lapse of time proves the reality of the evil, then the actual bitterness of grief commences. (Shelley 26)

Frankenstein describes in detail here the physical and emotional "lack" which his mother's death has exposed within him. He attempts to repress this newfound sorrow by eschewing it from his conscious, using the word "evil," thereby associating his mother's death with the unholy, unnatural, unwanted, and utterly incomprehensible, never acknowledging that it might be unavoidable or a shared human experience to grieve. Frankenstein's main source of frustration regarding his mother's death is his mother's lack of a physical body, unable to grasp how she could one day be present and absent the next. The concept of "for ever," for Frankenstein is an alluring opportunity to rebel that he feels unable to resist. Propelled forward, Frankenstein maintains this attitude and becomes increasingly paralyzed with fear. Instead of accepting this phase of life, death is wholly rejected and relegated to the realm of "evil." To associate death with evil, an ambiguous term denoting a general sense of doom and wrongdoing, he permits himself the opportunity to accept death and thereby mature in its wake. He is quickly ushered off to school

and removed from his family home, the location of the trauma. Instead of a healthy progression towards adulthood, Frankenstein is cemented to a dichotomy that will ultimately prove fatal: Life is good, death is bad.

In order to understand how Frankenstein came to the decision to recreate life, first it must be examined why his creation must necessarily be male. In his essay "The Signification of the Phallus," Jacques Lacan explores, in part, his interpretation of Freud's theory on the role that the phallus plays in heterosexual relationships. The woman is seen as desiring from a man precisely what she does *not* have, the phallus, and the subsequent symbolic order that accompanies the concept. In other words, a subconscious innate "lack" propels her. For a man, desire for a woman stems from a "fantasy of the complementary" rooted in the *mirror stage* (Lacan 1161). Just as a child sees in its own reflection a more structured, secure image in relation to its actual, chaotic, unstructured form, so too men perceive women as holding the ingredients to their "wholeness." This "demand for one" constitutes an unavoidable and ever-present misunderstanding between the sexes (Grosz 138). However, this by no means inhibits men and women from attempting to bond with one another. The quality which sustains these transactions between men and women constitutes *desire*. Desire, for Lacan, is founded initially within both men and women during their infancy, developed through their relationship with a mother figure (1186). The mother is the original "Other" that the child learns to depend upon to meet the demands that secure survival. As the child's needs are increasingly met by itself through modeling, the demand from the mother to sustain survival subsides. The demand for love, which was manifested and fortified by the mother, remains, and is thrust outward in search of a host as the child matures into adulthood. Desire is also consequently unquenchable, as it is the residual longing which results from an "appetite for satisfaction" and a "demand for love" (ibid). In perhaps its most bleak interpretation, desire is the pacifying ruse which enables the procreation of our species; it is the narrative which ties heterosexual men and women together.

Frankenstein's character is placed precariously at a dramatic intersection in Lacan's theory. He has recently suffered the loss of his mother at a

young age, and has suppressed the urge to grieve. He has not yet known, at least to our knowledge, romantic love, and knows little of women outside his family. To make matters more complex, Elizabeth, raised as his sister and future wife, quickly succeeds as the primary maternal figure of the home, where she is permanently relegated for the remainder of the novel. With the death of his mother and the reinstallation of Elizabeth as the mother figure, Frankenstein experiences a latent *incest taboo* in attempting to continue the natural progression of desire with her. Thus, there is no room for healthy desire to bloom. Frankenstein would be seen as suffering, in Freudian and Lacanian terms, under the stress of the *Castration Complex*. Because of his mother's death, Frankenstein was arguably unable to reach the crucial understanding that his mother was not a potential love interest, but rather his father's domain. He exhibits bitterness towards his father for inhibiting his studies, and maintains distance from him. This leaves him to helplessly shepherd the symbolic lack of the imaginary phallus, inhibited by grief in experiencing normal maturation. Furthermore, Frankenstein is unable to see Elizabeth as an "alternative libidinal object" because of her new symbolic position as his father's wife (Bristow 75). His process in understanding women and their role within his life has been effectively stunted in the realm of the symbolic castration. It is from this negative, repressed environment that Frankenstein decides to create in order to seek fulfillment. His narcissism blossoms quickly, enabling him to act without understanding of consequence: "Life and death appeared to me ideal bounds, which I should first break through, and pour a torrent of light into our dark world. A new species would bless me as its creator and source" (Shelley 33). Narcissism is defined by an inability to distinguish oneself from external objects of reality. It is therefore of critical significance that Frankenstein's creation to be male, for he strives to imbue this figure, his better half, his superior reflection, with a strength and resolve he does not believe he has within himself to conquer the grief he faces. The Creature acknowledges this fact outright:

Life, although it may only be an accumulation of anguish, is dear to me, and I will defend it. Remember,

thou hast made me more powerful than thyself . . . Everywhere I see bliss, from which I alone am irrevocably excluded. I was benevolent and good; misery made me a fiend. Make me happy, and I shall again be virtuous. (68)

The Creature implores Frankenstein to reenter society through his own insistency to have meaning, happiness, and family. The Creature is his double, a mirror of Frankenstein's own emotional landscape, this fact perhaps owing to the commonplace confusion of Frankenstein with his creation. The Creature is an "icon of grief" (Grand 136) for Frankenstein, a statement embodying the transitive nature of signifier and signified. It is therefore not surprising that the more Frankenstein represses his emotions, the more entangled he and the Creature become. When confronted by the Creature's entreaties for acknowledgement and acceptance, Frankenstein replies in hostility:

Why do you call to my remembrance circumstances of which I shudder to reflect, that I have been the miserable origin and author? Cursed be the day, abhorred devil, in which you first saw light! Cursed (although I curse myself) be the hands that formed you!. . . You have left me no power to consider whether I am just to you, or not." (Shelley 69)

The Creature has come to embody Frankenstein's very struggle against death itself, his mother's unacknowledged absence a lingering haunt. Frankenstein again reiterates his association with death and evil by calling his Creation a "devil." Further, he admits that his Creation is a reflection of himself and is therefore also evil. Through this confusion he cannot parse apart his creation from himself, and indeed seems to admit no distinction between the two. The sight of the Creature ushers forth the thoughts and feelings revolving around the reality of death that he attempted to evade, and his creation knows that it is therefore necessarily through the deaths of others that he can drive his maker to acknowledge his feelings.

Frankenstein has thereby leapt into the abyss of repressed desire, attempting to recreate in his own image a being which he hoped would

reinstate a wholeness to his life that he had only experienced once before with his mother. It is fitting that Frankenstein would avoid forging a woman, as the figure of the mother is the genesis of desire. In order to maintain the repression of his grief, Frankenstein would not seek to replicate a female creation. In Lacanian terms, creating a woman would have been to admit his deficiency, his grief, his “lack.” The Creature was, instead, created as a testament to the power of the phallic order. However, his creation does not fulfill the desires that Lacan would perhaps deem “at home” in a woman, but creates instead a being more intimidatingly phallic than he, one with the potential to become more powerful and more potent. Frankenstein’s disturbing ability to create without an understanding of what a being requires to live cautions the brotherhood between patriarchy and the realm of science. Shelley’s portrayal of Frankenstein, and his naivety in creating life, asks whether there is a form in the shape of a woman which is critically missing not only within the character of Frankenstein’s development, but also within the architecture of society. The exclusion of women from fields of industry, in particular the sciences, might be missing critical perspectives unique to women.

By giving life to his creation, this mirror “double,” Frankenstein challenges the “original lack” of immortality which subconsciously underpins our very sense of being, according to Lacan. In challenging this fundamental “fact” of life, Frankenstein therefore must die within the novel, for he attempts to leap into the fundamental “lack” which knows no conscious bounds. There is no effective “other side” to the relentless pursuit of the self other than death of the individual. Henry Staten discusses this nullifying instinct: “Human desire is for Lacan, at the limit, a desire to contract into the infinite particularity of one’s own being as a being of nothingness (Staten 168). Frankenstein enters this void, this “being of nothingness” in an effort to attain the original *Object* of desire – his own mother. He then proceeds into a world of repression and subsequent terror in a dream. As he “imprinted the first kiss on her lips, they became livid with the hue of death; her features appeared to change, and I thought that I held the corpse of my dead mother in my arms. . .”(Shelley 36). It is of no surprise that Frankenstein dreams not of his

own creation after its “birth,” nor of his mother, but instead of Elizabeth, the “proper” receptacle of his desire. As he reaches out to hold her, to receive affection, assurance, and “wholeness,” her form turns instead into his mother’s. He is repulsed by her decomposing body as well as the taboo of embracing his mother romantically. Here, Frankenstein struggles directly with his misplaced desire. Lacan makes an interesting assertion that the pressure put upon the “Other” to fulfill desire walks a fine line between love, hate, and ignorance. In Frankenstein’s particularly clogged emotional capabilities, this thin distinction between the three can be seen easily, informing the fragile emotions that Frankenstein’s dream exhibits. According to Sigmund Freud, the *oedipal complex* can only be overcome in a healthy manner when the “object-cathexis” (Bristow 73), or the psychic fixation for the mother is abandoned and the boy learns instead to identify with his mother or identify more intensely with his own father. Frankenstein is stuck at precisely this juncture. For him, the latter is not an option, for he internally blames his father for hindering his scientific studies, or his “progress”. He does not allow himself to identify with him. Meanwhile, to identify with his mother would be inconceivable to Frankenstein, as his association with death as “evil” has barred him from accessing her without feelings of repulsion. This tension is exhibited clearly in his dream, which arises not coincidentally on the eve of the “birth” of the Creature. Lacan’s vision of heterosexual relations echoes the impasse experienced in Frankenstein’s dream: “The wholeness of and completion that is desired in the sexual relation is precisely what would make it impossible, deadly”(1161). Because the women in his life, his mother and Elizabeth, are both inaccessible options, Frankenstein’s desire has instead been aimed at the mirror. He cannot find his “phallic place” in the female, and thus thrusts his energy into the creation of another being entirely. This being, created in his image, can only necessarily then reflect himself.

It is therefore no surprise that Frankenstein and his creation commence a perpetual interlocking of horns, which Sue Grand aptly calls the “[v]engeance as bond and bondage”(143). A perverse romance of violence blooms between the two, with Frankenstein essentially carrying

out a fight against the *mirror stage* itself. He describes his *desire* innumera-
bly to make his creation, or his double, suffer. As previously discussed,
the Creature wants above all to join humanity in love and cohabitation.
The Creature expresses his desire openly to function within society in a
healthy manner, and is a more emotionally evolved being than Frankens-
tein himself, at least before being repeatedly rebuffed by this “father.” It
seems precisely for this reason that Frankenstein also desires to extinguish
the Creature, for he represents the yearnings for love that Frankenstein
cannot bear to acknowledge within himself. This desire for love, and the
subsequent anguish that Frankenstein suffers from denying it, Shelley
imbues with a specific, erotic diction. For example, Frankenstein emits,
after a particularly lengthy interval since he has last seen the Creature,
a “wild cry of ecstasy” (Shelley 149). He promptly weeps after this in-
teraction, marking one of the only moments of emotional release that
Frankenstein experiences in the novel. Use of the word “ecstasy” here
creates associations with feelings of an intense sexual nature, but also of
a transcendental spiritual state. It is during moments of violent anticipa-
tion and confrontation with the Creature that Frankenstein feels able to
express himself and his emotional needs:

At such moments vengeance, that burned within me,
died in my heart, and I pursued my path towards the
destruction of the daemon, more as a task enjoyed by
heaven, as the mechanical impulse of some power of
which I was unconscious, than as the ardent desire of
my soul. (Shelley 147)

This passage is particularly revealing of Frankenstein’s subconscious state.
He displaces his urgency to kill his creation onto the will of God, taking
no responsibility for his actions, instead blaming it on a strange “me-
chanical impulse.” If, as Lacan asserts, the patriarchal order creates the
system of symbols known as *logos* which produces law and religion, then
Frankenstein recognizes a loss of individual power and a complete sub-
servience to the patriarchal order here. What then does this say about
the validity of such a structure? Because Frankenstein has barred him-
self from acknowledging the role of the woman in his life, he knows no

other pursuit than that of the total destruction of his perceived “enemy,” his own creation. The word “ardent” is used to reiterate the perverse, eroticized violence that propels the dialogue between the two men, Frankenstein and his Creature. Shelley frequently utilizes the word “ardent” to describe Frankenstein’s emotional perspective throughout the novel. With the same *passion, ecstasy, and ardent* vigor he experienced in his urgency to create life, Frankenstein is now filled with the very same lust to destroy it. He explains, “I ardently wished to extinguish the life which I had so thoughtlessly bestowed” (Shelley 62). Caught in this demented love affair, Frankenstein attempts to displace desire onto a third “Other,” which is that of God. Lacan’s concepts echo Frankenstein’s development: “Lacan suggests that man attempts to put his amorous relations in place of his relation to the Other. God, perhaps man’s most sustained attempt to come to grips with the Other, always intervenes between man and his other, creating a sort of *philosophical ménage-a-trois*” (Grosz 138). With the added tension of God now controlling his actions, the father, son, and Holy Spirit are indeed knotted beyond conceivable intervention. The isolation from women proves even more disastrous in consequence.

Their combat provides the reader with the unsettling sensation of Frankenstein’s suicidal pursuit. In “The Bride Stripped Bare, or Lacan *avec* Plato,” Staten fortifies this notion by describing the function of aggression in terms of repression: “The significance of the destructured impulse of aggressivity goes beyond its role in narcissism. . .it is linked. . .to that ultimate impulse of self that wants to negate all created being. . .This curse shows us the path of uncompromising desire” (173). Indeed for Frankenstein, this uncompromising desire to bridge the gap between death and love is the curse that has resulted from falling too deeply into his own reflection, his Creature. His lamentations regarding his creation are telling: “I became as cheerful as before I was attacked by the fatal passion” (Shelley 39). Here, Frankenstein acknowledges not only that his urgency to create stemmed from emotions that he felt powerless under, but also that he felt “attacked” by his own mind, the subconscious in duress. Frankenstein reveals that he also knew, so early in the novel, that his actions would prove “fatal” to himself. Moreover, this fatality is described

as “passion,” indicating the seduction of the narcissism he experienced, indeed a kind of romantic vision of his own demise. Lacan explained this “curse” of uncompromising desire as a fundamental of humanity. He argued, “. . .the true subsistence of a human being, is the subsistence of the subtraction of himself from the order of the world” (Staten 173). It is therefore no surprise that Frankenstein frequently reiterates his suicidal thoughts when confronted with guilt at his creation’s murderous rampage: “Ah! My father, do not remain in this wretched country; take me where I may forget myself, my existence, and all the world” (Shelley 132). Of course, there is no such place, physically, where one may “forget” their existence, one can only hope to handle reality on its own terms. However, it is also understood in this context why Shelley would situate the novel in a place of disparate isolation; the realm of ice and nothing else. Alone together, Frankenstein and his Creature are finally able to compete in a barren, womanless world.

Frankenstein, it has been argued here, provides for the possibility of a feminist reading of Lacanian and Freudian conceptions of patriarchy because the crux of the novel, and indeed, the very energy which moves the plot, revolves around a missing woman and the emotional void left in her wake. It is the space that her absent body creates which allows for room to analyze more critically the “passive” interpretations of the female role in psychoanalysis. As Lacan states, “The phallus is the privileged signifier of that mark in which the role of the logos is joined with the advent of desire” (1165). Elizabeth Grosz, in her feminist analysis of Lacan, describes his assumptions of patriarchal certitude as revealing of the “debt of life, body, nourishment, and social existence he owes to his mother” (181). How “privileged” might the phallus be as signifier if, when abandoned by woman (through death, in this instance), man becomes impotent in the face of life? Perhaps Lacan and Freud can describe the modalities of a patriarchal culture, but do their theories succeed in convincing us that patriarchy is an innate architecture of our design? By having the Creature articulate himself through biblical references, Shelley encourages us directly to combat the patriarchal “self-reflecting Other, God” (Grosz 181). Here, the Creature contemplates his own existence,

as well as the existence of humanity in total: "Like Adam, I was created apparently united by no link to any other being in existence. . . God in pity made man beautiful and alluring, after his own image" (Shelley 91). The Creature has a truly unique perspective, for he is wholly rejected by the realm of man due to his hideousness, and yet, is he not the product of patriarchy at its apex? Born from a man, born to be "superior" to all, and yet, instead, he is disposed of as the "abortion" of the phallic order. So, what keeps the Creature from being a man? Through these dark spaces in the novel, we are continually lead back to the role of the woman, which is critically absent.

If God similarly created man, first and foremost, as a direct reflection of himself, "beautiful and alluring" but ultimately transient in the power of seduction (as the Creature's great rejection proves), then what does *God* truly mean, and who does *He* work for? Frankenstein's character criticized in this light allows for a new interpretation of the enigmatic passage which continues to be the pervasive reverberation of *logos* incarnate: "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (New International Version, Genesis 1:27). Perhaps Shelley helps us to question who has the authority to tell stories of origin, and how that telling mythologizes the all-knowing phallus. Grosz describes the function of patriarchal structure succinctly: "Born of woman, man devises religion, theory, and culture as an attempt to disavow this foundational, unspeakable debt" (181). Through her death, and the outline of desolate sorrow her absence creates, Shelley uncovers the awesome power of the Lacanian lack in Frankenstein, as well as the other patriarchal mythologies we are inundated with culturally. Although Shelley and Lacan would perhaps argue over the function and power afforded by that distinct female presence, their eventual conclusions coincide: "The desire of the mother is the origin of everything" (Lacan 1163). In other words, beyond science, beyond man and his attempts to orchestrate the frameworks of life, lies the indivisible mother.

It should be considered that the Creature has moved into the realm of the symbolic, though his symbol is arguably not that of the phallus, but of an alternative. As a male who exists outside the patriarchal order,

most literally, the Creature surpasses Frankenstein, exhibiting an understanding of the relationship between man and woman: "I shall feel the affections of a sensitive being, and become linked to the chain of existence and events, from which I am now excluded" (Shelley 104). Frankenstein has persistently alienated himself in hopes securing the solitude to rid of his problem, his creation, in proposed peace. Each attempt fails because isolation only deepens his unacknowledged repressions. His physical distance from others mirrors his emotional distance, and leaves him helpless in conquering his superior double. Their mutual aggression is a perfect equation for their mutual destruction. As creation and creator, they have an intimate knowledge of the fears, "dark places" or "lacks" which lie within one another, which questions the foundations of Lacan's concept of heterosexual males searching for their own "reflection" in a mate, their *ideal I* as first experienced in the *mirror stage*. If this notion is to prove the power housed within the symbolic phallus, then why is it that Frankenstein and his Creature cannot love one another? How can it be denied that women and men do find fulfillment, wholeness, in one another without mediation of the omnipresent "Other"? Bristow corroborates this critique of psychoanalysis by explaining that it "conspires with the phallic authority it strives to analyze, by refusing to propose models that could or would remove the penis or phallus from its omnipotent place" (98). Where does this leave us room to combat patriarchal order, which, as Shelley suggests, is harmful to us all, not only to women?

Shelley's work provides a fertile ground from which to argue for a new structure of relationships between all conceptions of sexuality that does not seek to nail any participant to the cross of the *logos*. For this reason, it is significant that Frankenstein's Creature does not die at the end of the novel. He might perpetuate malice, but the Creature never desires to kill outside of his need to gain acknowledgement from his Creator. In the end, he brings Frankenstein to his knees and, without pride, without victory, without enjoyment, sees to his death. What Frankenstein represents must die. The Creature mourns, and escapes into the "darkness and distance" (Shelley 161). As a character, his act of physically and emotionally outpacing Frankenstein proves superiority in his evolution. We never

see, and will never know, whether the Creature goes on to integrate into society. Perhaps he never challenges the patriarchal structure again, but his very survival of it means we have an ancestor capable of looking into a different mirror. There is the space to achieve, though it may appear dark and distant to us.

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“Hope and No-hope, Both at the Same Time”: Reading Time’s Arrow as a Deconstructionist Text

ANTHONY URQUIDI

The Holocaust is a completed event, a historical moment that cannot be undone, forgiven, or forgotten from the collective memory, so the ultimate mission of postwar art is to treat sensitively this twentieth-century nightmare without forgetting it. As a warning to future generations of the evil capabilities of those convinced of reason, the folkloric task of translating World War II’s circumstances becomes a burden of rationality. If we could chronologically sequence and explain unimaginable betrayals of human spirit and flesh, then we might inadvertently adopt the scientific terminology and thought processes of genocide’s perpetrators, lending our empathy’s attention to ineffable acts of horror.

Brian Finney emphasizes the ethical dilemma paradox inherent in portraying the Holocaust: “The systematic extermination of six million innocent civilians, an act of the highest irrationality, relied on rational means for its implementation.” For Martin Amis, *Time’s Arrow* must therefore take the side of the irrational—Nazi Germany’s ideological enemy—to combat the Third Reich’s devastating effects on the modern world. At the same time, irrationality is a term the modern mindset uses to describe the results of Nazi ideology—how can reason embody one group’s capacity for violence and for another represent the abhorrence

of that same violence? Amis's unique approach to this paradox follows a backwards journey towards past Nazi horrors and a narrator's consciousness inhabiting a figure apparently outside of itself. Through the inclusion of his ideas' absent and present meanings, Amis depicts the multifaceted inexplicable within a self-critical text that deconstructs historical narrativity and the Holocaust specifically. Jacques Derrida's deconstructionist principles of questioning structure, decentering metanarratives, and reveling in enigmatic self-contradiction are enacted on every page of *Time's Arrow*. By fictionally reorganizing historical events, Amis cannot repair, accept, or justify the past, but rather point to traces of history's own shortcomings and the *differánce* of muddled logocentrism: contradictions inherent in the simultaneous existence and impossibility of certain historical memories, the forward and implied backward motion of time, and the positivity, negativity, and ambivalence inherent in all occurrences. *Time's Arrow* applies Viktor Shklovsky's "defamiliarization" to its narrator's perceptions, allows the reader to see the perceptions in their totality of angles, and sheds the partial light of new layers of representation, without explanation or ratiocination, on a darkly confusing historical record, which includes the industrial slaughter of innocent people.

Referring to the Holocaust in the context of a historical timeline as "the caesura," Ann Parry summarizes Theodor Adorno's ideas about representing the event in Western literature: "He suggests that style, structure, all those features that can be defined as literary, have the tendency to attenuate the metaphysical horror that lies at the heart of the caesura: they make it comprehensible and bearable. The nature of the caesura can be further eroded by the continuum that formal elements establish with the traditions of existing literature" (Parry 249). Adorno highlights the touchiness of the situation with the risks of not attempting to circumvent the traditional ways of thinking about narratives. Parry mentions a discussion between Bryan Cheyette and writers Amis, Lucy Ellmann, and Joseph Skibell regarding their techniques and motives for writing about the Shoah:

Skibell argues that "Rather than looking at fiction as competing" with survivor testimony we should recog-

nize in it evidence of an ongoing engagement with the caesura that was the Holocaust. It is an effort to “re-imagine” it, which, in a world now removed from it in time, provides the assurance “that we are still dealing with it,” in doing so such work testifies to the occurrence and continued recognition of the caesura. (Parry 252)

In other words, there would constitute a collective denial of the tragedy, a failure to raise awareness, if artists could not find ways to continuously rework it into contemporary consciousness. Parry believes *Time’s Arrow*, whether a success or failure, “attempts an articulation of the caesura that, at a conceptual level, fulfils Adorno’s demand that any writing that seeks to represent the Holocaust employ a new way of thinking” (254). Another name for this conceptual technique is “defamiliarization,” as defined by Shklovsky.

The Russian Formalist Shklovsky in “Art as Technique” analyzes the application of this technique in Russian literature: “Tolstoy makes the familiar seem strange by not naming the familiar object. He describes an object as if he were seeing it for the first time, an event as if it were happening for the first time” (12). If the “He” in this statement were changed to “Martin Amis,” this statement would apply to the entirety of *Time’s Arrow*, as the crux of the book rests on its causality-defamiliarization gimmick. Shklovsky argues that art and poetry do not rely solely on the image/metaphor, as his predecessors believe, but in the skillful dehabitu- alization of common artifacts of existence: “After we see an object several times, we begin to recognize it. The object is in front of us and we know about it, but we do not see it—hence we cannot say anything significant about it. Art removes objects from the automatism of perception” (12). With regards to Eurocentric historical documentation, this statement implies that the repetitive description of events chronologically, as we receive them in textbooks, creates a deflated sense of the event in memory, effectively desensitizing future generations to moments as tragic as the Holocaust. In his defense of experimentation, Shklovsky contends that:

...art exists that one may recover the sensation of life; it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone *stony*.

The purpose of art is to impart the sensations of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects 'unfamiliar,' to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. (11)

Amis's unreliable narrator experiences every aspect of postwar life as if it is the first time it has occurred, not to mention in reverse, because this is reality to his senses. As an artistic work highlighting the strangeness of banal interactions with the world as well as much larger historical processes, Amis's novel is a comprehensive success. It reshapes our definition of mass tragedy as well as confuses the causality of certain events such as slapping hookers and committing adultery, and as a work of art it reveals the sensations of the abject, emphasizing the *fecality* of our fecal culture.

An understanding of defamiliarization suffices as a logical step toward the linguistic deconstruction of Derrida, whose *Of Grammatology*, translated with an extensive, helpful preface by Gayatri Spivak, guides a contemporary theorist in the interrogation of what's at stake in any artifact of language. Derrida's complex concept of play/trace/*differánce* (all indicating relatively the same idea) in any work of writing uncovers the politics of presence and absence in meaning, whether occurring individually at the level of the word or on the massive scale of a whole book. His deconstructionist theories outline the problems with Western thought paradigms, such as Eurocentrism in writing and anthropology, the power struggle of norms and "Others," and the scientific and philosophic risks of essentializing knowledge. Like many Taoist aphorisms, his own definition of the trace aspects of "absence" within the "presence" of a meaning, within the constraints of Western thought, contradicts itself and offers something similar to a riddle or a mocking game of intellectual thinkers:

This common root, which is not a root but the concealment of the origin and which is not common because it does not amount to the same thing except with the unmonotonous insistence of difference, this unnameable movement of *difference-itself*, that I have strategically

nicknamed *trace*, *reserve*, or *differánce*, could be called writing only within the *historical* closure, that is to say within the limits of science and philosophy. (Derrida 94)

Alas, this obstruction we might encounter in comprehending his theories is the very obstacle they detail, the limitations of writing Western knowledge and its paradigm's reliance on binary oppositions for denotation.

Derrida's *differánce* means ("means" by his definition being an essentializing word detrimental to the analysis of the concept) that inherent in the understanding of a sign unit, or a combination of signifier and signified (a word/sound unit and the idea/concept it represents), is a trace of the meaning's metonymic associations, its opposites, and its interpretation with regards to everything it *does not* mean. For example, a fictional work that could be deconstructed for its characters' ignorance of the *differánce*: in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the storyteller Marlow alienates the ethnicity of the oppressive Kurtz and himself from that of the "savages," when in fact that separation relies on relations between his perceived norm of civility, Europeans of light skin, and its absence, savagery, Africans of dark skin. To do away with even the oppositions of "light" and "darkness" leaves merely a group of interacting "people" with no demarcations of identity, a group which in turn can be defined in relation to its "not being" whatever people can be defined against. The association of savage with civil will always be inherent in both terms, but Marlow's presentation indicates that the partnership of whiteness/civilization, or the connotations lending presence to the term "European," will always be privileged over the absence of "anyone not European," people also hinted at in the trace of the term "European." Likewise, the problem of E.M. Forster's *Where Angels Fear to Tread* manifests in its definitions of British and Italian as representatives of virtuous and vicious opposition. This issue occurs in Western language products because of the politics of traditional Judeo-Christian paradigms of epistemology—forged from a place of cultural privilege, works such as these obfuscate an accurate depiction of any items discussed. Derrida sums up this idea: "We could thus take up all the coupled oppositions on which philosophy is constructed, and from which our language lives, not in order to see opposition vanish

but to see the emergence of a necessity such that one of the terms appears as the *differánce* of the other, the other as ‘differed’ within the systematic ordering...of the same” (xxx). Each term then contains paradoxically the associations of everything it defines itself against, the presence of the main thing defined as/alongside the absence of everything differing from it—we can’t understand “day” without “night” and the middle terms in between, or “good” from “bad” and all of their metonymic separations. As Spivak helpfully condenses in her preface, “The one is only the other deferred, the one differing from the other” (xlv); at the heart of this deferral lies the necessity of accepting paradoxes as definition.

Instances of such paradoxes of reality surface frequently in *Time’s Arrow*—moments when the narrator struggles to “make sense” of the unfamiliar reversed world around him. Amis deconstructs the linear narrative of Western history, exhibiting his narrator’s failure to apprehend the complex nature of both causality and ontology, as well as implying that the mysterious fallacy of explaining past events is useless if their definition includes the presence of their opposite, or their reversal in the case of *Time’s Arrow*. Michael Trussler outlines this concept in “Spectral Witnesses” when he contends that: “Instead of viewing the past as the product of retrospective narration solely, *Time’s Arrow* insists that events transpired as they did, regardless of their subsequent renditions into narrative” (38). The events in *Time’s Arrow* occur, and there is no instance in which they have not or will not occur, regardless whether time moves forward or reversed. The novel offers no “alternate history” in which some slight difference could alter World War II for the better—it merely launches the historical narrative forward, backward, and forward again to remind the reader that humans are capable of unfathomable genocide, and have demonstrated their capability irrevocably with the Holocaust.

Even the uninformed narrator picks up on sensations of impending historical disturbance, arriving from a regressing future after the fact, and possesses no agency to prevent them. In a few moments of jarring sublimity the narrator becomes aware of time moving the direction it should, such as when he notices a baby crawling forward or a Japanese medical student at AMS reading from left to right—at these points the

reader is simultaneously reminded of both this “normal” trajectory and the reversed direction against which it is transposed for the rest of the novel. Spivak details a similar line of paradox in language, the presence of an object’s meaning in the dimension of time: “The structure of ‘presence’ is thus constituted by difference and de-ferment. But since the ‘subject’ that ‘perceives’ presence is also constituted similarly, *differ-ance* is neither active nor passive. The ‘-ance’ ending is the mark, of that suspended status” (xliv). A brain cannot process the statement “Do not think of a pink elephant” without conjuring an image of a pink elephant, and thus is the nature of the subjective signifiers of the English language—the presence of a word always inescapably ties to its paradoxical others, constructed partially by its own opposites and absents. Rather than ignoring these ontological confusions to focus on binaries, *Time’s Arrow* progresses the genre of historical fiction by addressing them directly, by showing us, for example, the backwards action of giving groceries to the store in exchange for cash—an action that inherently reminds us of its reversal, the normal grocery shopping that occurs in a forward-moving timeline.

In “Martin Amis’s *Time’s Arrow* and the Postmodern Sublime,” Finney indicates the novel’s copious uses of defamiliarization and *differ-ance*, without referring to them by either term. He calls the Holocaust “a paradox that requires the use of paradoxical narrative techniques on the part of any novelist attempting to evoke it” (Finney). Portrayals of the “final solution” (Hitler’s enacted plan to exterminate the Jews) in traditional formats, such as documentary film, create a gap between the logical, linear representation of action and its desensitizing incomprehensibility to the brain. Because of the history-halting caesura of the Holocaust, the narrative arc of reality preceding this landmark seems to terminate, resuming anew after the knowledge of the Nazi horrors becomes public information. Finney notes that Amis sees the event as both an end and a start, but from a different approach—“Narrated in inverse order, the Holocaust is portrayed simultaneously as the end-product and the origin of contemporaneity.” It acts as a finish line for the reversed temporality of *Time’s Arrow*, but for the reader aware of the normalized reality of its position in the world’s chronology, the Holocaust becomes the event

from which all of the narrative's contemporary ordure emanates. For Finney the bodiless narrator is a manifestation of society's collective wish to erase the horrors of World War II, using the self-contradicting nuances of quantum mechanics to achieve that effect: "The hapless narrator embodies the barren fantasy that we could reverse the effects of history while illustrating the naivety that such a forgetting would involve. He is the source of the inextricable combination of pleasure and pain that the postmodern sublime produces in the reader." Problematic for the reader of this fantasy, then, is the real knowledge of the course of history underpinning the "hapless narrator's" description—the reader remains aware throughout the novel of what really happened, and that merely traveling backwards cannot erase that knowledge.

The plurality of identities present in the body of Odilo Unverdorben, Amis's partial protagonist Nazi doctor, is not complete with the soul/narrator and the historical body—Odilo must cycle through several identities to complete the life with which the narrative begins. he contains Tod Friendly: elderly New England doctor, John Young: horny New Yorker, and Hamilton de Souza: Portuguese houseguest. Physical Odilo contains a narrating presence that sees itself as the refugee soul of Odilo, a narrator we can nearly relate to until he finds himself feeling at home within the fences of Auschwitz-Birkenau, temporarily unified with the physical Odilo—an unforgivably repugnant participant in the worst tragedy of our time. For a reader disgusted with fascism, unfortunately, this culmination of several identities is a comprehensive representation of the totality of a human being in a work of fiction, as Amis presents not just the positive and negative sides of a person but all of the ambivalent aspects of *differánce* that detach a distinct entity from essentialization.

The representation of Odilo's life does not end with his multiple identities. In fact, his final missing identity is that of the person attempting to comprehend his story: "The reader is the missing third entity in the book. Confronted with two selves, each of which exhibits self-denial, the reader is constantly required to supply the historical events the protagonist seeks to forget and the narrator misunderstands" (Finney). By involving the reader in the process of interpretation, Amis presents a

less subjective portrayal of his protagonist—it is only with the historical context configuring the reader’s understanding of Odilo’s irony that the dehabituating devices of the book accomplish their effects. Without accompanying historical knowledge of Nazi fascism, the reader would be at a complete loss to understand this novel—but Amis assumes and hopes that a reader of the English language will never forget the Holocaust, at least by the fact that they have decided to read his book. In translating the backwards speech of Odilo’s world, according to Finney, the narrator is faced with the challenge of processing the art of history through the defamiliarized norms of language, just as the reader must become a part of this struggle by trying to translate the reversal of familiar daily events in the defamiliarized structure of causality:

The full “translation” situates the reader in the unpleasant world of modernity. But the intermediate language suggests an interspace between the repellent modern and the utopian pre-modern, an imaginary space detached from the poor “translation” of the narrator although nonetheless removed, like him, from the protagonist’s hellish experiences...The narrative construction of *Time’s Arrow* compels the reader to create meaning independent from the interpretations offered by either self. (Finney)

The “interspace” of this act of translation, in between the reading and the translating of backward events, suggests a limbo of temporary ignorance where the reader can suspend their knowledge of forward events and enjoy the narrator’s confused perceptions. Eventually, however, the reader’s familiarity with these forward events of modernity kicks in and replaces the confusion with understanding of what the narrator is actually referencing.

As Derrida explains, a term cannot contain merely its privileged presence, but must also bear its antitheses and ambivalent relations—and to understand this, a reader must serve as a critical interpreter. Following Derrida’s ideas, Lyn Hejinian’s deconstructive text “The Rejection of Closure” defines open and closed texts, leaning towards a more progressive,

feminist style of writing, with multiple points of entry:

...a “closed text” is one in which all the elements of the work are directed toward a single reading of it. Each element confirms that reading and delivers the text from any lurking ambiguity. In the “open text,” meanwhile, all the elements of the work are maximally excited; here it is because ideas and things exceed (without deserting) argument that they have taken into the dimension of the work. (42)

For Hejinian, an open text cannot smack the reader with its obvious argument or nicely wrapped epiphany; instead, the text must be constructed in a layered, challenging way that remains open to interpretation upon any subsequent reading. Because the reader must actively ascribe meaning to such nuanced narratives (in *Time's Arrow*, a tripled narrative: forward for Odilo, backward for narrator, historical support supplied by reader), the challenge of piecing together the defamiliarized is the process that informs the artfulness of the text, providing the narrative's question with no correct answers.

Robbie B.H. Goh addresses the blurred division of personalities clashing within Odilo's body: “More fundamental than the multiple identities that Tod assumes in the course of his life is the impossibility of drawing strict lines of demarcation between identities, personae and voices. This is particularly evident not only with the confusion of the consciousnesses of the narrator and Tod, but also at the junctions of the different phases of Tod's life” (67). As demonstrated by the concept of *differánce*, a superior presence of meaning in a definition is problematic—the same can be applied to the identity of a human being, no matter how inhumane his own decisions deform him. The narrator melds with Odilo's body during the reverse-Auschwitz section and eventually splits again once his role at the camp finishes, past the point of its non-reversed conception. A narrator who appears so naïve for most of the book becomes complicit in historical transgressions by accepting the reverse of genocide as a heroic mission and taking pleasure in experimenting on prisoners. Amis smudges the lines that divide the figures composing Odilo, thus the reader can never really

grasp his essence—Amis’s reaction to the simplification of binaries and essentialism prevalent in traditional narrative modes. Goh refers to this narrator’s schizophrenic division as “linked with the ‘posthuman’ condition”:

Chrono-schizophrenia, as one aspect of cultural schizophrenia, normalizes dislocations and reversals of chrono-linearity, multiple narrative-causal lines and related effects, presenting it all as the totalizing and inevitable nature of contemporary lived experience. In the process, one of its ideological thrusts is to review the notions of causality and consequences that are so closely dependent upon strict linear order. In the various guises of postmodern jouissance... such chrono-schisms also rehearse the breakdown of causal analysis, thus reinforcing certain aspects of capitalism’s laxity and license concerning actions and consequences. (64)

If this idea of disjointed time in the narrative parallels the disjointed living of postmodern culture, then the industrialization processes of human extermination in factory-efficient camps initializes the creation of systems more sublime than humanity—replacing human faculties with features of the chronologically “posthuman.” At the same time this cultural schizophrenia and detachment from morality exemplified by the multiplicity of Odilo is a product of human decision and complacency, perpetuated by not just one person but by an alliance of populous sentient nations and their commitment to mass-producing weaponized culture across the globe; taken together these factors of World War II form a paradox of the administration of over-rational fascist thought inextricably tied to the irrational complicity of capitalist freedoms and sporadic technological innovation.

The main contradiction of *Time’s Arrow’s* *differance* rests in its concept’s purpose: to suggest an alternative historical progression in which the Holocaust was a positive occurrence, while emphasizing structural play as merely a device for commemorating the regrettable fact that such tragedy could even be possible. Deconstruction requires a text to point out its argument’s own flaws, which Amis accomplishes through abject

humor—never admitting that his book is the perfect representation of Holocaust trauma or offering a solution to a retrospective disaster, he defamiliarizes the event and manipulates the book's controversy to maintain the discussion of history and responsibility to the past. Trussler highlights the paradox within the availability of *Time's Arrow* to Amis's literate but young audience, far removed from the time of the war: "...Amis tries to imagine the contemporary without the Holocaust, without what Rosenthal...describes as Nazism's domination over the 'narrative look of the twentieth century' ...But the entire weight of the novel is directed against such an erasure of knowledge" (37). While the novel attempts to write history with the Nazis erased, its ability to do so and be read with contextual understanding requires the historical presence of Nazism. In such a grotesque paradox, the "final solution" is necessary for *Time's Arrow* to exist while the novel simultaneously hopes to be rid of it. "Do not think of a pink elephant," indeed.

Amis's exploration of *differànce* attempts not to eradicate problems of the past, but rather to represent them in the most complete way possible for the reader to interpret their implications. Several instances in the novel break down barriers of essentialism by demonstrating that nothing is ever simple, easily reduced to a definition, and that a minute phenomenon contains the trace of its own opposite and ambivalent associations. Early in the novel, upon discovering his unexplained sentience comes with previously existent knowledge, the narrator claims, as if he has experienced original sin, "I'm not a complete innocent" (Amis 8). Although he is a naïve newborn consciousness, he is somehow aware that he is not naïve or even newborn; yet this is contrasted by his birth at the moment of Tod Friendly's bodily death. One of the narrator's section titles is "You have to be cruel to be kind" (17)—a saying that implies cruelty is merely a fragment of the complete act of kindness, even though by Eurocentric logic these actions should be opposites. The narrator has trouble pinpointing Tod's essence, the same problem the reader should have in classifying the ambiguous natures of the novel's characters:

I can't tell—and I need to know—whether Tod is kind.
Or how unkind. He takes toys from children, on the

street. He does. The kid will be standing there, with flustered mother, with big dad. Tod'll come on up. The toy, the squeaky duck or whatever, will be offered to him by the smiling child. Tod takes it. And backs away, with what I believe is called a shit-eating grin. The child's face turns blank, or closes. Both toy and smile are gone: he takes both toy and smile. Then he heads for the store, to cash it in. For what? A couple of bucks. (Amis 14-15)

Implied in this passage, in addition to Tod's unclassifiable nature, is the trace of "taking" within the notion of "giving." We know the act of "giving" in relation to its not being "taking," but here the roles reverse and we become aware that both acts symbolize the same thing depending on the perspective of the parties involved. This reversal confuses the narrator, who cannot clearly determine Tod's position on the spectrum of (un)kindness—backwards Tod acting as taker of "both toy and smile" opposes the implied forward action, in which the child takes the toy. Eerily, Tod's taking/giving with the child foreshadows his later role in the concentration camp as taker/giver of prisoners' lives.

Hiding behind tongue-in-cheek relationship commentary, the narrator frequently observes the alienation of modern individuals. With multiple possibilities for narrative interpretation, his explanation of trivial conversations applies equally to a discussion of historical discourse and the responsibilities of representation: "I have noticed in the past, of course, that most conversations would make much better sense if you ran them backward. But with this man-woman stuff, you could run them any way you liked—and still get no further forward" (Amis 51). The narrator explains the nature of comedy and horror, which apply to their role in the creation of this novel, as not mutually exclusive: "Humor keeps you steady, after all, even when the shit's coming down. Our hilarity contained terror, of course it did, terror of our own fragility. Our own mutilation" (Amis 84). Both components of the protagonist experience a strange psychological gender inversion, which emphasizes the fluidity of their identities: "Tod features another kind of dream in which he is a woman. I'm the woman too: in this dream I am participant

as well as onlooker” (Amis 58). In a passage regarding Tod’s relationships with nurses, the narrator describes Nurse Maureen’s mouth as “too big or just too external, designed to express only powerlessness. Powerlessness: hope and no-hope, both at the same time” (Amis 24). As both a participant and onlooker in every scene’s action, the narrator succumbs to hope for the way events will play out, as he does not know what to anticipate. Ultimately, though, he is always trapped within a Tod/Odilo-shell, incapable of effecting a beneficial change for any of these surrounding events—the narrator is a permanent, useless embodiment of hopelessness, which combined with situational hope, defines his version of “powerlessness.”

The plentitude of conflicting meanings associated with such power(lessness) continue throughout the novel as the most discussed internal fallacy. The narrator rejects Tod’s treatment of women but reflects on his own disenfranchised approach to them: “Tod can’t talk and smile at the same time. But maybe he never wants or needs to...He copes okay...Meanwhile, I suffer. I find I am very vulnerable to confusion and regret. If I were given my head, which I never am or will be (for I am impotent. I can make no waves), I would remain faithful to Irene” (Amis 54). Though this narrator has the strength and the willpower to be a more decent person than the body he inhabits, he has no potency in enacting this will because the body is incapable of sensing his presence. The narrator relates infants to “defenselessness,” although he discovers in a dream that a “baby wields incredible power. It has the power, the ultimate power of life and death over its parents, its older brothers and sisters, its grandparents, and indeed everybody else who is gathered in the room” (Amis 45). This dream garbles his natural association of babies with impotence, due in part to the trauma of remembering a baby that gives away its whole family’s hiding place during a Gestapo raid. As Tod/John/Hamilton/Odilo devolves into a younger, more virile Nazi, he becomes sexually and morally impotent. At Auschwitz, where everything supposedly “makes sense,” the narrator notes with frustration that “these glances say that in my hands there rests a mortal and miserable power. I am omnipotent. Also impotent. I am powerful and powerless” (Amis 140). He

only regains sexual potency in the backwards narrative as Nazism retreats into its own preexistence, yet in order to earn it he must carry the compiled knowledge of Tod's abject contemporary world leading up to that point. This regression is a reversal of Odilo's youthful vigor and naivety in the forwards narrative, as the boy could not possibly predict the ethical collapse he would eventually undertake.

This struggle for/with power parallels the struggle to make sense of the medical profession. As a doctor in New York, the narrator expresses disgust over the harm he inflicts on patients: "For we, we, we!—we demolish the human body" (Amis 74). The definition of healing contains damaging or killing as its differed/deferred meaning; in *Time's Arrow* the two notions become reversed and the same, implying but not rationalizing some sort of logic behind violence: "the hospital is an atrocity-producing situation. Atrocity will follow atrocity, unstopably. As if fresh atrocity were necessary to validate the atrocity that came before. As if the atrocity that came before was necessary to validate the atrocity that will come after" (Amis 92). The tangling of meaning within heal/kill confuses also the idea of mental health, relating to Goh's chrono-schizophrenia; "Because I am a healer, everything I do heals, somehow. The thing called society is, I believe, insane" (Amis 77). We are not meant to trust the narrator's opinion on this matter, as he believes the acts of violence he commits consist of justified healing, but there is truth in the *differance* of these terms; therefore, we are forced to recognize the novel's defamiliarization of societal norms in this observation of insanity. The narrator offers a discussion, but not a set answer, on why reversed-time doctors inflict pain through power, which intentionally falls short of explaining the motives of Nazi doctors when flipped on its head: "It is abruptly open to question, this idea the doctors hold in secret, that they must wield the special power; because if the power remains unused, then it will become unmoored, and turn back against their own lives" (Amis 81). It remains unclear to the narrator why these doctors are so compelled to heal the prisoners or give them life altogether, but he believes their power might "turn back against" them if they choose not to heal—in the context of the forward-time concentration camps, if they were to disobey Nazi orders,

the doctors would be punished for non-use of their power to destroy (rather than heal).

Time's Arrow embarks on a mission to complicate our accepted perceptions of historical representation; through techniques of defamiliarization, deconstruction, and schizophrenic characterization, Amis alters the way we discuss, understand and portray massive tragedy in art. He goes so far as deconstructing his own approach—by not taking his narrative seriously, by focusing on “human ordure” as the source from which “all human good eventually emanates” (Amis 113), Amis demonstrates an awareness of *differánce*, of the limitations of his concept while simultaneously offering an inclusive view of a character, a culture, an event, and a spectrum of human affects ranging from humor to horror and anything in between. He does not argue merely that time makes sense moving forward or doesn't make sense moving backward. Rather, his final paragraph's inclusion of time's arrow again launching forward reveals the certainty that nothing is for certain in subjectively flawed human minds: an epistemological argument impossible to disprove in the postmodern age. In true deconstructive self-reflexivity, he offers a representation of his ideas, criticizes them, and combats them with Uncle Pepi's absence of explanation, “Here there is no why” (Amis 115). Not just here, but everywhere, for all time.

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The Twisted Dichotomy of Masculinity and Femininity: A Study of Gender Relations in Ernest Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises

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Because gender is a project which has cultural survival as its end, the term strategy better suggests the situation of duress under which gender performance always and variously occurs.

- Judith Butler

Ernest Hemingway has long had the stigma of being a misogynistic individual, not only in the historical sense but also in the literary world. In the past, he has been accused of using his characters in his works to promote this kind of hierarchical thinking. Hemingway's "macho" public persona most likely contributed to the view that his female characters are docile, one-dimensional people who depend on the hyper-masculine male figures to navigate their way through the world. However, there seems to be a slow but important shift in scholars' way of analyzing not only the women but also the men in his works. In Hemingway's first novel *The Sun Also Rises* (TSAR), published in 1926, the application of gender studies is now being applied to the critique. By looking at how Hemingway has rendered his characters, who are lost in the battle to discover the truth about femininity and masculinity, I intend to explore how complicated and complex the perception of gender can be. I also propose

to investigate the issue of gender by consulting Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* as a guide, to examine one male and one female character and how they are dealing with society's pressure to fit into what is considered "male" and "female." I aim to enter into this conversation by not only discussing Lady Brett Ashley and her role as a modern woman, but also to attempt to understand the narrator, Jake Barnes, as tensions unfold around the eight-day long fiesta in Pamplona, Spain.

In order to start the process of looking at these characters through a gender-specific lens, let us first review Butler's notions of gender construction. In her book *Gender Trouble*, Butler discusses gender in terms of it being an act. She states, "consider gender, for instance, as *a corporeal style*, an 'act,' as it were, which both is intentional and performative, where '*performative*' suggests a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning" (190). These performances can be argued when discussing the character's desires to be either masculine or feminine in *TSAR*, and I intend to examine the text through this lens. There has been much scholarship done in terms of gender and *TSAR*, but as far as my research took me, neither Butler's notion of performativity nor this novel have been examined together. The closest connections I found were in Todd Onderdonk's article, "'Bitched': Feminization, Identity, and the Hemingwayesque in 'The Sun Also Rises,'" in which he argues that scholars are in fact looking at the progressive nature of Hemingway's character's sexuality and even using terms like gender performativity. However, Onderdonk believes that this only fades into an androgynous study more than anything else.

Other scholarship on this novel is extensive and spans wide rages of thoughts and concerns. However, for quite some time after the novel was published, most of the critics placed *TSAR* into the homophobic, anti-feminist, machismo categories. Through the advent and rise of the third wave of Feminism, new ways of analyzing the work came about, shedding much of the negative stereotypes created by the older scholars. As Eisuke Kawada discusses in her essay, "Should We Still Call Her a New Woman?: A Meta-Analysis on the Critical Reception of Lady Brett Ashley," Brett was considered a marginalized character until the 1980s

when Feminist critique became very popular. Through the increase of this reading of the text, many scholars developed the perception that she represented the “new” woman. Other critics have agreed with this notion. For instance, Xiaoping Yu comments on the male anxieties surrounding Brett during the bullfights in an article published by the Qingdao University. The men are worried that the violence would be too much for her, and yet she watches with unfazed enthusiasm: “Jake’s perception of Brett as being incapable of tolerating the violence of the fights is completely overturned as Brett enthusiastically watches the charge and even notices the way in which the bull uses his horns like a boxer, just as Jake has been pointing out” (Yu 177). Through these character’s actions, one can decipher her desire to be part of a “masculine” sport. Using the word “masculine” to categorize the sport brings about other issues within the social realm of gender.

For the purpose of this paper though, I acknowledge that I will have to look past the overt violence of a battle between a man and a beast, the hunter and the prey, which is associated with the “masculine” identity. Many additional scholars are in agreement that Brett does in fact represent a kind of woman that would not have fit into the gender restrictions of her time. Not only her short hair and dress, but also her open sexuality amongst the men has led people to either praise or demonize her. Though there are radical critics who put negative stereotypes on her, I feel as though looking at these sources will not further my argument, and not allow for a new perspective of this character to be shown. Nevertheless, I will be contributing to the argument of the critics who appreciate her unabashed bending of society’s demands of the female.

Another facet of this issue I want to examine is masculinity as seen in Jake Barnes. Many critics see *TSAR* as a prime example of masculinity in literature. It has been a source for criticism in this vein for an extended amount of time. The spectrum of interpretation of any of the male characters range from Onderdonk’s belief that Jake’s feminine qualities are what make him the only true man to Matthew Hodge’s argument that Robert Cohn, Mike Campbell and Pedro Romero attempt to “domesticate” Brett in various ways.

Scholars have also looked at the interaction between the women in *TSAR*, specifically Brett, and the men. These relationships speak loudly as to what the males think femininity is and what the females think masculinity is. Based on the proceeding research, I will expound on the application of Butler's theory of gender performativity and the fracturing of the social constructions of "femininity" and "masculinity" within *TSAR* by specifically focusing on Lady Brett Ashley and Jake Barnes and their relationship with the one another as well as the other male characters. Although there have been many different studies on this work through the lens of gender, I purpose to bring out the importance of the relationships between the characters as a way in which gender is exploited. Reading *TSAR* in this way is crucial because the issues of gender in Hemingway's novels are not only significant for the studies of his work in particular, but through the depth he gives to each individual, gender studies in literature can be intensified through an evaluation into the extensive range of characteristics exemplified through these specific characters. *TSAR* will allow me the opportunity to analyze individuals that, consciously and subconsciously, are discovering society's failing restrictions on gender as the story progresses.

The Masculine Female

The sexual tension between Jake and Lady Brett is the catalyst for many of the underlying masculine and feminine anxieties that run through the story. It is unmistakable that their desire for a sexually intimate relationship calls into question the notion of what it means to be male and female, and this question becomes more complicated as the novel unfolds, revealing that Jake's gender is separated from his sexuality by his injury. Before looking solely at Jake's personal battle with masculinity, I propose to start by looking at Brett in order to see how Jake implements society's ideas of gender on her so that when the focus is on his own struggle, we already have a foundation on which Jake's frustration can be fully understood.

Lady Brett Ashley has been characterized as many things throughout the decades. The negative criticism that usually surrounds her comes

from her obvious rejection of society's ideals of being a woman, but also her ability to take on traditional masculine qualities that appear to provoke male anxieties. To begin this reading of Brett, understanding her physical appearance will lead into some of the larger issues at stake. Brett is first introduced to the reader when Jake sees her walk into a bar. It is clear that they know each other and he describes her as "very lovely" (Hemingway 28). Jake also observes:

She stood holding a glass and I saw Robert Cohn looking at her. He looked a great deal as his compatriot must have looked when he saw the promised land. Cohn, of course, was much younger. But he had that look of eager, deserving expectation. Brett was damned good looking. She wore a slipover jersey sweater and a tweed skirt, and her hair was brushed back like a boy's. She started all that. She was built with curves like the hull of a racing yacht, and you missed none of it with that wool jersey. (29-30)

Even though her hair is cut short like a man, her clothing fits well enough for Jake to notice that her figure was still being shown off. It is obvious from the description that Jake's friend, Robert Cohn, is interested in Brett as well. Perhaps it would be too extreme to say that Brett has completely abandoned the prescribed feminine look, but rather what makes her so appealing, not only as a character but as an individual to the men who surround her, is her ability to blend the masculine and feminine qualities. As Robert Dale Parker discusses in his book *How to Interpret Literature: Critical Theory for Literary and Cultural Studies*, "sex starts to reappear as gender, and gender no longer seems like so certain a category, for Brett blends and bends masculinity with femininity in ways that make us question the conventional identifications between female and feminine and male and masculine" (165). This "blending" blurs the lines not only for the reader but the other male characters as well, complicating the issue even further. It calls forth the notion of specific set standards for females and males that are not culturally accepted when they are homogenized.

In relation to sex and gender, which according to Butler are two distinct entities, gender is derived from culture and not biology, and the traditional beliefs are that “the body is a mere *instrument* or *medium* for which a set of cultural meanings are only externally related” (12). However, Butler argues that this is not exactly true when she states, “Bodies cannot be said to have a signifiable existence prior to the mark of their gender; the question emerges: To what extent does the body *come into being* in and through the mark(s) of gender?” (12). Here Butler forces the question of how gender is encapsulated on the body. For Brett, it could be said that her short hair and form fitting dress fuses both masculine and feminine standards to create a new kind of integrated gender, neither strictly female nor male.

Another layer of gender problems arises when discussing the point of view from which the novel is written. Because the entire story is seen through Jake’s perspective, unconscious specifications are layered onto the actions and words of Brett. Parker develops this when he states, “Everything we learn about Brett comes mediated through the narration and focalizing of the narrator, Jake Barnes, so in a sense [he] characterizes his gender as well as hers and perhaps characterizes his more reliably than hers” (166). Jake’s point of view is the reader’s only immediate perspective of Brett and because of this, it becomes imperative to unravel Jake’s interpretation and what Brett is actually doing and saying. When this is done, Brett’s masculine femininity becomes less about putting her into a precise classification and more about understanding her as an individual.

In the article “Reading Around Jake’s Narration: Brett Ashley and *The Sun Also Rises*,” by Lorie Fulton, Jake’s reliability comes into question once again. She observes, “Jake’s sketchy description of [Brett] holds that like many women characters in Hemingway’s novels, she is a fundamentally weak, narrowly drawn character” (67). Fulton argues that because of Jake’s lack of understanding of Brett, he treats her as though she is a minimal individual. Although Fulton does not specifically point to gender as one possible reason of Jake’s description that places her into these established stereotypes, it seems all too possible that Jake misinterprets Brett’s actions because he feels insecure about his own issues.

In *TSAR*, one of Jake's limitations throughout the story is to cling to the binaries of gender as prescribed socially. Anoop Nayak and Mary Jane Kehily discuss such binaries in their article, "Gender Undone: Subversion, Regulation and Embodiment in the Work of Judith Butler." They state:

The binary, designed around opposition and exclusion, seeks to avoid intermixture through the polarization of categories; for example, man/woman, white/black, straight/gay, able-bodied/disabled. In these examples the former component of the dichotomous equation subsumes and dominates the latter, performing its roles as a "master signifier" whereupon the absented sign is impelled to take on a subordinate position as the "not said," absence or "lack." (466)

As Nayak and Kehily emphasize through this passage, there are different binaries that seek to disallow any "intermixture." This is prevalent in Jake's misreading of Brett. Because he sees either male or female, he cannot completely understand her way of combining both masculine and feminine qualities. Through Butler's concept of gender as being "constructed" rather than a set standard, the lines of the binaries become obscure, allowing individuals to create what they want out of gender.

The Feminine Male

One of the most obvious voids in Jake's life, which causes him pure distress over his impending masculinity, is the fact that he is impotent. Although as the reader we know none of the details of how this happened, these facts seem to become a minor concern compared to the consequences Jake now must face because of it. The issue becomes exposed during a discussion between Jake and his friend Bill when Bill states:

"You don't work. One group claims women support you. Another group claims you're impotent."

"No," I said. "I just had an accident."

"Never mention that," Bill said. "That's the sort of thing that can't be spoken of. That's what you ought to work up into a mystery. Like Henry's bicycle."

He had been going splendidly, but he stopped. I was afraid he thought he had hurt me with that crack about being impotent. I wanted to start him again.

“It wasn’t a bicycle,” I said. “He was riding horseback.”
(Hemingway 120)

In this moment, we see not only Jake’s view of his situation, but also Bill’s reaction to it too. He encourages Jake to cover it up. He even suggests making it a “mystery.” Undoubtedly, both men view Jake’s “condition” as a potential inhibitor of his masculinity which is so tied to sexual performance in his mind. It is interesting that Jake consciously attempts to make Bill feel more comfortable over the situation by continuing the conversation. This suggests that Jake seeks no sympathy and closely relates anatomical possibilities with masculinity.

It is imperative to question whether or not Jake’s physical issues truly disconnect him from being a male. According to Bill’s outlook on the situation, the answer would be that it does inhibit Jake in some way. For Bill and even for Jake, the ability to be sexually active is one of the defining qualities of masculinity. Butler, however, argues that since many see gender as culturally constructed, the biology cannot be a defining characteristic of being masculine or feminine:

The notion that gender is constructed suggests a certain determinism of gender meaning inscribed on the anatomically differentiated bodies, where those bodies are understood as passive recipients of an inexorable cultural law. When the relevant ‘culture’ that ‘constructs’ gender is understood in terms of such a law or set of laws, then it seems that gender is as determined and fixed as it was under the biology-is-destiny formulation. In such a case, not biology, but culture, becomes destiny. (11)

This suggests that Jake’s physical impairment should not be the determining factor in his masculinity. Butler argues that culture is the larger factor in the creation of gender, not the biological aspect.

If, however for the sake of the argument, this does hinder Jake’s ability to be a man, then are there ways in which he can reclaim some of his

masculinity? James Puckett, author of “‘Sex explains it all:’ Male Performance, Evolution, and Sexual Selection in Ernest Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises*,” suggests that Jake uses his financial stability to do this: “Seemingly one of the only ways that Jake feels comfortable displaying his reproductive viability and competing with the other men is through money” (140). Throughout the novel, Jake offers to pay for various items, drinks and car rides are some prominent examples. Although much of the time this is done in front of other men, at the beginning of the novel, he uses this as a way to show off for Brett. Before they can leave together, Jake stops at the bar in order to give money to the barman so that he could offer it to the prostitute with whom Jake came in with:

I stopped at the bar and asked them for an envelope. The patronne found one. I took a fifty-franc note from my pocket, put in the envelope, sealed it, and handed it to the patronne.

“If the girl I came with asks for me, will you give her this?” I said. “If she goes out with one of those gentlemen, will you save this for me?” (Hemingway 31).

At this moment, Jake is showing Brett his version of masculinity. It appears that Jake believes that women will be drawn to the fact that he can afford to dole out his money at any circumstance, and that women might see this as a sign of his masculine behavior. Puckett expounds on this situation when he states:

In one regard this is simply compensation for leaving unannounced, but the carelessness with which Jake handles his money in front of Brett can also not be overlooked in terms of demonstrating wealth, communicating to her that he has the means to provide for her every need, which is underscored by the fact that the money he leaves for Georgette is conditional—if she comes back to Jake at the end of the night, if she ultimately selects Jake, she will be rewarded with money. (141)

This pronouncement of wealth can be considered an “act” and one that can be associated with the hyper-masculine. At some point in Jake’s ex-

perience, money and masculinity were equaled. Using Butler as a lens, it can be argued that this gender act is utilized because of repetition: “This repetition is at once a reenactment and reexperiencing of a set of meanings already socially established; and it is the mundane and ritualized form of their legitimation” (191). Despite the fact Jake has come to believe money and masculinity are equated to one another, this does not solidify that money is in fact an underlying prerequisite to be a man as established by society.

Because of his desires to fully embrace what he believes is masculinity, Jake holds onto specific binaries created socially. As Anne Floyd discusses in her thesis, “Deconstructing Socially-Entrenched Ideals of Masculinity in *Fight Club*, *The Sun Also Rises*, and *Giovanni’s Room*,” many of the men in the novel are “torn between feeling pressured to lived up to the demands of the new woman and wanting to live up to the traditional neanderthalic ideals” (26). These anxieties are especially personified through Jake who deals with not only his own issues of gender identity, but also with understanding Brett and her modern way of interpreting femininity. These pressures fuel the novel with uncertainty and causes the readers, along with Brett and Jake, the opportunity to discover what masculinity and femininity actually involve and if there are in fact specific characteristics that make a male, male and a female, female.

Future Gender Explorations

While my intention in this paper is to argue for the possibility that Hemingway does in fact allow his characters the room to vacillate between masculinity and femininity, it seems as though critics of this paper could counter argue that there is no growth for Jake’s perspectives of gender throughout the story, therefore causing the entire story to promote the notion that there are in fact two distinct binaries of gender. Although I understand this claim, I would refute this by stating that Jake’s sedentary ways causes him complete unhappiness and distress, with no resolution in sight; therefore, this novel promotes the need to look past these two rigid categories. There are also the other characters, which I did not explore in this paper that could also be used to show the strict binaries

of the social setting. However, I would again urge that these individuals be thoroughly analyzed to see if their actions and words are because of specific cultural beliefs playing themselves out, or if there is in fact some hidden agenda to these characters.

My objective in this essay was to explore gender performativity within *TSAR*, but I do acknowledge that there were many different concepts that were not able to come to fruition in this paper. In the future I hope to expand these ideas to include other analyses of both Brett and Jake, but also to examine the bullfighter Pedro Romero as well as the entire setting of the bullfights and their relation to this concept of gender. At the beginning of this process I had intended on including Pedro in this discussion, but for the amount of space I could have allotted for him, it felt unfair and would not have done his character justice. There is also the issue of the prose itself. Many argue that Hemingway's writing style promotes hyper-masculinity because of the short, clean sentence structure. However, with the guidance of Scott St. Pierre¹ and Hannah Torma², I would have liked to explore this aspect of the novel in terms of gender performativity as well.

Through this study of *TSAR*, the examination of gender, as seen by way of Butler's concepts, has been used to unpack Lady Brett Ashley and Jake Barnes. Both haunted by society's ideas of what masculinity and femininity are, they each attempt to decipher the truth. As the binaries are dismantled, Jake and Brett appear to not be able to reassemble these concepts. *TSAR* is a multifaceted novel and through Butler's notions of gender an effective way to delve deeply into these characters is created. Because there is no precise resolution to these issues, readers can continue to explore this story through various perspectives for many years to come.

1 St. Pierre, Scott. "Bent Hemingway: Straightness, Sexuality, Style." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 16.3 (2010): 363-387. Web.

2 Torma, Hannah. "Style and Gender in Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*." Thesis. Ohio State University, 2014. Web.

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