

NEBULA

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Voice of Protest against 'Universal Male Sexual Sadism': an Interview with Sarojini Sahoo.

By Dr. Nilanshu Kumar Agarwal

*Sarojini Sahoo (b.1956) is a reputed Indian feminist and bilingual writer who has won the Orissa Sahitya Academy Award (1993), the Jhankar Award (1992), the Bhubaneswar Book Fair Award, and the Prajatantra Award. She writes in both Oriya and English and besides her eight novels and eight anthologies of short stories in Oriya, she has published one novel and two collections of short stories in English. Her novel *The Dark Abode* has gained critics' appreciation abroad and has been translated into many languages like French, Bengali and Malayalam. Two of her novels have been published from Bangladesh. Besides writing, she has been also an Associate Editor of a city based monthly magazine, *Indian AGE*, published from Vadodara and Chennai. She is a known blogger for her ideas in feminism and has gained worldwide fame. Thanalonline has commented thus about her literary genius: "Her novels have gained a reputation for their frankness about sexuality and of feminist outlook." She is also an advisory board member of the *Indian Journal of Post Colonial Literature*, published by the English Department of Newman College, Thodupuzaha, Kerala.*

In a detailed conversation, Dr. Nilanshu Kumar Agarwal (another Advisory Editor of IJPCL) engages Sarojini on several issues related to, feminism and her creative art.

NKA: Your website 'sarojinisahoo.com' introduces you thus: "She writes with a greater consciousness of women's bodies, which would create a more honest and appropriate style of openness, fragmentation and non-linearity." Is not this candid and frank portrayal of female body anti-woman? The titillating material provided by the feminists may arouse the opposite-sex and may further make the women playthings in the hands of men. In the poem 'An Introduction' by Kamala Das, we have the candid expression: "I became tall, my limbs swelled and one or two places sprouted hair." I think this type of excessively candid expression may titillate the baser instincts of the men to make them sex-maniacs and thus creating a long army of parochial men, considering a woman just a toy for the gratification of their desires. What are your views on this?

SS: It is very important to understand that this social movement centers on the notion that sexual freedom is an essential ingredient of women's freedom. I believe in sexual self-determination of women where each woman has the right to determine who she will be intimate with. I am strongly against the system where without being judged for her choices, a woman is forced to be involved with her partner. According to my survey, between 60 to 70 percent of married women of India don't know what an orgasm is in their whole life. Only they are used by their husbands and become a mother of children. Our Shastras also support this milieu as "Putrathe Kriyate Bharya" (means: wife is meant for a son).

I stand just as strongly for a woman's right not to have sex (of any kind) if she doesn't want to and I believe that women who make that decision deserve support and protection as well. I refuse to be a victim of some imaginary universal male sexual sadism. As a human being, I always argue about equal status for women and I refuse to believe that by denying our sexual selves, women can be equal with men.

But what I oppose is patriarchal society's unfortunate decision to grant more liberation for a man than a woman. Our current society uses woman as an object and not as a human being. If a painter paints a nude of a woman, we can appreciate it as a masterpiece. We can enjoy the erotic sculpture showing women's nude bodies on the temple wall.

We can digest all these from the pen and brush of a male artist, but if Kamala Das writes, we feel disturbed thinking that society is now in danger. When Sunil Ganguly writes about his affairs with other ladies, it is cited as a literary boldness, but when Kamala Das expresses her passion, it is considered as 'perverted thought.'

How many people became sex maniacs after reading *Ulysses*? We consider *Kamasutra* as classic. I never think sex is not dirty play. Our Shringar literature in Sanskrit, literature of Sangam Period in Tamil, and the erotic sculptures on temple wall prove that it is as truth as hunger, thirst, slumber, birth, death wish, and dreams. How could you blame a woman that society is spoiled for HER only?

NKA: In the wake of Nithari killings of innocent children by the pedophiles, what is the significance of this type of frank literature? We must come forward to attack a literature which excites the sex instincts of the people. If forbidden impulses are aroused by literature to gratify (let us hope it does not happen in the future) profane desires and men turn into pedophiles, as was reportedly done in Nithari, then what is the utility of literature? Is literature not merely becoming a plaything in the hands of the nasty people? What do you say?

SS: In 2006, a greater number of sex crimes are registered in spring and summer, according to figures provided by the Municipal Department of Internal Affairs in Moscow. In February of that year, nine rapes were committed in the capital, whereas in March this figure reached 15, and in May, it rose to 22, and in June, it rose even higher to 23. The fact is that only 20 percent of rapists are so-called sex maniacs. Another 30 percent are drunken teenagers or released criminals. In half of these cases, the rapist is a person with whom the victim is already familiar, even if they have only just met at the house of a mutual acquaintance

or at a bus stop. In the case of teenage girls, who are not always able to say “no” to an adult, the statistics are even higher: four out of five victims of sexual crimes suffered at the hands of a neighbour, class-mate, or family friend. So how can you say woman’s right over her body is responsible for the increase in rape cases ? Why not the son, the hormones, and alcohol?

It’s a vague and absurd idea that woman’s right over her own body (rather we shouldn’t name it as sexual liberation) is responsible to enhance sex crime. Look at Denmark. There were six registered sex offenders living in Denmark in early 2007, according to State List. All names presented here were gathered at a past date. No representation is made that the persons listed there are currently on the state’s sex offender’s registry. The ratio of number of residents in Denmark to the number of sex offenders is 357:1. But the country is very much liberal, having a less control over sexual restrictions.

NKA: Your webpage further talks about you: “She accepts feminism as a total entity of femalehood which is completely separate from the man’s world.” If there is complete separation between the two sexes, there might be continuous confrontations, arguments and debates and thus generating ill-will between man and woman. The divorce rate is rapidly increasing, which in turn, makes people of both the sexes hysterical. Is there a way out of this confrontation to make life sweet?

SS: Scientists have come to accept that a few fundamental differences between men and women are biological. It turns out that men’s and women’s brains, for example, are not only different, but the way we use them differs too. Women have larger connections and more frequent interaction between their brain’s left and right hemispheres. This accounts for a woman’s ability to have better verbal skills and intuition. Men, on the other hand, have greater brain hemisphere separation, which explains their skills for abstract reasoning and visual-spatial intelligence. The biological differences subject a woman to some experiences like menstrual periods, menopause, and pregnancy which a man never experiences. I differ from Simone De Beauvoire in this context that women have their own identity and that they are different from men. They are ‘others’ in real definition but this is not in context with the Hegelian definition of “others.”

In various articles I have written, though I protest the patriarchal system , I am never for replacing it with a matriarchal system. I believe in a like status of females with the males. In thinking, taking action, working, and creating, women should be on the same terms as men rather than seeking to disparage them.

I am not against motherhood, but I don’t think ‘motherhood’ is the only important job in the world, nor is it the only “choice” available to women. It should be confined to the ability of woman to say “yes,” as well as “no,” to having children.

I am not against ‘divorce’ and I think it should be treated as the right of both sexes, not only the male’s. What I stress upon is on love and emotional bonding between two hearts, not the social and patriarchal guidelines for females to teach them ‘how to be an ideal woman.’

NKA : What differences do you find between ‘the writings of men about women’ and ‘the writings of

women about women?’

SS: I think a writer should be gender-neutral. If he is a writer in true sense, a man can write from a woman’s viewpoint, though there are some feelings like pregnancy, the post-menopausal psychological conditions, or the feeling of joys in feeding her breasts to her child, which a male writer couldn’t express correctly as a woman. But it doesn’t show the inability of male writer. I consider Balaram Das, a fifteenth century Oriya poet, as the prime figure to establish feminism in literature. In his *Laksmi Puran*, we find the agony, melancholy, and pathos of a woman. And this is the first ‘Purana’ perhaps in Indian literature to claim for women’s rights.

NKA: How are your works, marked by feminist iconoclasm, received by men?

SS: In India, a female writer is always considered as an inferior writer in comparison to a male. I have presented a paper on “Women Writing of India” at Calicut Book fair 2008, where I have elaborately discussed this topic. Traditional readers have a tendency to find out the hidden love affairs that have been hiding beyond a fiction of a woman writer. Until now, their minds have not been prepared to accept a woman as a thinker or as a philosopher, whereas in the Vedic period, there were female philosophers like Madalsa, Gargi, and Maitryi. There were some interesting happenings with my story writings. *Gambhiri Ghara* (‘The Dark Abode’ in English and ‘Mithya Gerosthali’ in Bengali), the most controversial novel of mine was first written in story form and it was written for a special issue of an Oriya periodical. Before its publication as a short story, it was rejected and I was asked to submit another story in place of *Gambhiri Ghara*. While inquiring the reason of the rejection of my story, I was told that the editor would talk to my husband. This comment of the chief editor made me irritated and I asked the chief editor whether my husband has an authority over my writings? The patriarchal attitude of the chief editor made me to transform the short story into a novel.

Once I was also insulted and forced to beg apology for writing the story *Jalhad* (The Butcher) by the staff council of my college. It was a story about rape where the victim was an infant. The story was claimed as an obscene one and the matter was referred to the Governing Body of the college to remove me from my service of lectureship from the college.

For my story *Rape*, (published in *Waiting for Manna*) I was criticized for using the word ‘fuck’ in my story for several years. It was a story about a woman admitting sexual desire and it was intolerable for a patriarchal society to find a woman speaking about her sexual desires. The story has a central idea whether a woman has no right for sexual desire even if only in her dreams.

In *Agneyagiri* (The Vulcano), I have painted two types of woman. One is a traditional one, submitting herself to husband, family, and society by losing her identity and the other one is searching for her identity. It is the story of two sisters, both having the same family background but the ultimate way of their flying was different. My elder sister, about whom I have told you earlier, felt herself very hurt thinking that the story was meant for her. No one of my family took it easily. As a feminist writer, from time to time, many

people, both male and female, certainly get hurt by my frankness. I think a feminist writer is herself a challenge for the patriarchy form of society and also always has challenges from society in general.

NKA: What was the reaction of the parochial and patriarchal intelligentsia about your works here in India and abroad? Do you think that the west is more open to these types of revolutionary ideals or is it also following the stereotypes set by the men?

SS: There are mixed types of readership both in the East and in the West. You see conservatives and fundamentalists everywhere. In Orissa, where we think the people are more rational, my short story *Rape* and the novel *The Dark Abode* raised a controversy while in Bangladesh, where we think fundamentalists are that still remain under the roof of some recognized political parties, the same novel and short story got the response and appreciation of many readers there.

When these two works have been exposed to the Western market, I have found that they are well accepted. The West is more open to the idea of feminism, but still, there remains a timidity in the Western mind to accept sex, much like Eastern conservatives here.

NKA: What are major literary influences on you?

SS: In writing, I have been influenced by many Western writers. How could I mentioned just one name? He may be Dostovosky; he may be Kafka; he may be Joyce; and he may be Proust. But are they my hero? I don't think of anyone as an idol. If I consider anyone an idol, it would be Jagadish Mohanty, my husband, who is a veteran Indian writer of Oriya Literature and whom I consider to be my friend and philosopher and guide.

NKA: Why do you write? Do you have a mission to reform society or is it merely for self-pleasure?

SS: It's an old debate and still a complicated question to which to reply. In the seventies, when I was just a budding writer and was a college student in undergraduate classes, in the literary debates, I was always standing to speak against the social commitments. Today, I also feel and believe nothing can be changed with your writings. Still, we write with the people and for the people. We, as fiction writers, have to write with society in mind but for me, commitment to art and commitment to self-answerability is more important. You know, as a feminist, I think I am more a writer and as a writer I think I am more a feminist.

NKA: What are the major themes of your novels? Are there certain other issues too besides this discussion of feminism?

SS: Though I like to portray a woman's life, her destiny, her experiences, and the pathos -- the agony she has to bear for being a woman, I don't want to be confined to the feelings of women only. I have written on gender-neutral topics as well.

In one of my novels, *Swapna Khojali Mane* (The Dream Fetchers), the story revolves round an acting troop who have come to a village to shoot the poverty in celluloid forms. The protagonist, Medha, at last realizes that the poverty lies with them, the intellectuals who want to earn money by selling the have-not's helpless conditions.

In *Mahajatra*, the protagonist Barun, an editor of a newspaper and an atheist, has realized how fragile his beliefs are.

In *Pakhibasa*, I have portrayed a family saga of a downtrodden cattle bone collector family. This is a multi-dimensional plot where the landscape spreads from symbolic representation of mythical Bhagwat to the current Naxal problem. It is a very complicated yet strongly weaved novel.

In *Gambhiri Ghara* (The Dark Abode), I have tried to raise my voice against terrorism from a micro level to a macro level. You can say *Gambhiri Ghara* is a feministic novel. It can be represented as a novel whose base is sexuality. And you can also say it is a novel based on the current South Asian political environment.

As my novels are multi-dimensional in character, you can't say any of them have a single-line concept. But in some of my novels like *Pratibandi* and *Upanibesh*, I categorically confined the plot to feminist issues while in *Asamajika*, I have tried to focus on the social aspect of the gender problem issue. The later novel is the first novel in the Oriya language that deals with a lesbian relationship. *Upanibesh* has also been accepted by the critics as the first Oriya novel to claim the sexual rights of a woman.

In my short stories, I portray the feelings of a pregnant lady ('*Waiting for Manna: Amrutara Pratikshare*'); hysteria (*Burkha, Deshantari*); fear of miscarriage (*Sakal: The Morning*); false pregnancy (*Tarali Jauthiba Durga: The Melting Castle*); agony of and annoyance of menopause (*Damppatya: The Couple*); and lesbianism (*Behind the Scene*). I have also portrayed the shaking situation of a sixty years old lady, who is still waiting for her menopause and in every month her embarrassing situation when she find herself in bleeding (*Aparanha: The Afternoon*). Even in my story *Jahllad* (The Butcher), I have told the story of an infant who finds herself being raped by a caretaker servant.

But, like in my novels, I have also written many stories on gender-neutral topics. Some examples are: *Smoke, Flies, End of the Fascination, Burden of Proof* and *Beyond the Reach*. All are anthologized in *Waiting for Manna*, my second collection of short stories published in English.

NKA: Some of your short stories are translated into English. Are you satisfied with the translation of those stories into a foreign language? Are the translations faithful to the original and do they capture the native spirit of the Oriya cultural background?

SS: Sometimes, the problem is not that many translators have the wrong concept but that the variance in culture cannot be directly or effectively translated. When Western readers open a book by an Eastern author, the reader will have to accept that he/she is going to be reading material with which is not familiar.

In such cases, footnotes or other unnecessary elaboration of text may disturb the reader's mood and focus. A translator always tries to capture the original feelings of the author but the success always varies with his intelligence and skills.

NKA: Do you prefer writing in your mother tongue or in English?

SS: No doubt, I prefer writing in my mother tongue because I think if Shakespeare would have written in French, he might not have ever been a Shakespeare. A writer can express his/her feelings well and skillfully only in his/her own language. I write critical appraisals, my blogs, my regular columns in *Indian Age*, and other articles in English, but I always prefer to write my creative writings in Oriya for the reasons stated above.

NKA: You are also an editor. What are the major problems of the creative writers of today?

SS: Today, young writers are more crazy for publishing. I have noticed that many of them that I have edited want to submit the article in one writing. One of our eminent writers, Gopinath Mohanty, once advised the young writers of his time to keep the article in a drawer after completing it and to read it again after few months. If it would still seem to be worthy for publishing, then the writer should send it to an editor. But nowadays, nobody wants to keep his/her writings in a drawer for even a day after completing it.

NKA: Who are the other contemporary female voices from Orissa writing in the native language?

SS: There are countless female writers writing in Oriya. If any one would make a survey, they would find that the number of female writers would outnumber the number of male writers. In this case, to utter only one or two names, I think, would be an injustice to the many talented writers out there.

NKA: Have you written some poetry too? If yes, are you planning to publish them?

SS: Yes I also write poems but there are not a sufficient number to make them into a book. But you can find poems and poetic essences in the majority of my creations.

NKA: What are your future writing plans?

SS: I am now working on a novel and don't want to plan anything more before completing it.

It's Still a Long Way Coming: The Importance of Humanizing the Same-Sex Marriage Discussion.

By Sarah Antinora

August 1996. The incessant ringing of the telephone on his bedside table awakens David at 2:15 A.M.. Through his grogginess he is finally able to recognize his sister-in-law's voice and process her words: "There's been an accident." Chris has been in Texas for the last week, attending a conference. Although they have been married for over five years, the hospital's first call was to Chris's parents. Chris's sister has been kind enough to notify David. Even though he will be on the next available flight to Dallas, David will not see Chris for another four days, since Chris's parents do not recognize his marriage to David, and neither does the state of Texas.

It has now been fifteen years since the battle over same-sex marriage came to the legal forefront. In 1993, the Hawaii Supreme Court ruled that it was unlawful for the state to deny marriage licenses to couples solely on the basis of sexual orientation. It was found that such denials were in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, unless a "compelling reason" could be shown for the discrimination. And, yet, by the end of the decade, the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) had been signed into law in addition to the numerous states (including Hawaii) that had amended their constitutions to define marriage as solely between a man and a woman (George 33). As with any polarizing issue, there are at least two sides, and to state that the issue of same-sex marriage polarizes is an understatement. Those opposed to same-sex marriage, who call themselves "Pro Marriage Activists," tend to focus their rhetoric around the term "marriage" itself. The same-sex marriage of my friends David and Chris is portrayed as not only a distortion of the term, but a threat to the family.

The assertion that marriage has always referred to one man and one woman joined in a union to provide for the rearing of children troubles me. However, I find the arguments on the other side just as disturbing. Proponents of same-sex marriage rally their arguments behind the issues of civil rights and equal protection under the law. They ask, how can this country, founded on the principle that all men are created equal, legally restrict whom one marries? The answer to this question, to me, is obvious--ethically and morally, it cannot be justified. But this discourse misses the point. The understanding that we as a society are not

talking about a same-sex couple, but two people who love each other, has been shunted aside during the discussion. It is all too easy to withhold someone's rights when we speak in the abstract, as the "Pro Marriage Activists" do in their discussion of the term "marriage." Similarly, the proponents of same-sex marriage have diluted their arguments by focusing on law, instead of human needs. It is my contention that in order for society to reach humane legal decisions, we must continually place the actual people and their stories at the forefront of the debate.

Before examining the idea that both sides of the same-sex marriage debate leave a critical aspect of the issue out of the discussion, it is important to scrutinize on what exactly they do center their rhetoric. As stated earlier, "Pro Marriage Activists" focus their arguments against same-sex marriage on the term "marriage." In February 2007, a panel consisting of four speakers, all of whom are connected to the current California litigation regarding homosexual marriage, convened to discuss the issue. During the debate (SSMC), The Honorable Ken Starr asserts that the institution of marriage has "historically been understood to be the union of one man and one woman" and "is in fact part of our history and part of our tradition, part of our culture....[The] legal definition of marriage corresponds to the definition of most religions" ("Same-Sex Marriage in California: Legal and Political Prospects"). This traditionalist and historicist argument is frequently used by opponents of same-sex marriage. Historically, marriage has described the union between a man and a woman; therefore, the term cannot be applied towards same-sex partners.

Robert P. George expounds on this reasoning in an article he wrote advocating for the passage of the so-called 28th Amendment. He writes, "At the time the U.S. Constitution was adopted, it was taken for granted that marriage is the union of a man and a woman....Our forefathers shared the consensus of humanity...." In fact, George claims the definition was so taken for granted that the word does not even appear in the Constitution. Court cases on this issue have even been decided based solely on what many view as the historical definition of "marriage," since the relationship being proposed "is not a marriage" (*Singer v. Hara*). By claiming this traditional definition as the only definition, opponents to same-sex marriage are able to withhold the term in relation to non-heterosexual couples. The intention is to stop the debate before it even begins; how can we argue over who receives the label of "marriage" if the definition itself defines who is entitled to it?

However, same-sex marriage advocates challenge this claim. For example, across cultures and centuries, marriage has at times included polygamy. While polygamy has never been legal under United States law, it has been an acceptable marital practice throughout history. Polygamy dates back to at least the Old Testament, and it was considered a sign of wealth and success in many non-Western cultures and in the Church of Latter Day Saints in the U.S.. As Jeff Jacobberger, an audience member of the SSMC, asserts, "To state that for millennia we've understood marriage to be between one man and one woman is simply a historical lie." This reasoning discounts the idea that society can define the term "marriage" based on the historical use of the word. If the term has not always indicated a union between one man and one woman, then it cannot be assumed that this particular definition holds true today.

Still, regardless of these entanglements over semantics, it is true that the United States has consistently defined marriage as between a man and a woman. However, should the historical characterizations of terms such as “marriage” and “person” influence legal decisions today? If we interpret The Constitution by only using the definitions understood by our forefathers, then only white, land-holding, opposite-sex couples are entitled to a legally sanctioned union. Before the enactment of the Fourteenth Amendment, marriage only pertained to white U.S. citizens. Until the 1967 *Loving v. Virginia* decision, marriage was legally defined as not only being between members of the opposite sex, but also of the same race. As a country we now understand that these laws created a fundamentally racist definition of “marriage.” And, yet, the protestors of the *Loving v. Virginia* decision believed the courts “had no business redefining traditional marriage”—an eerily similar argument as the one put forth by opponents of homosexual marriage today (Graham 41). Gay rights advocates question the use of historical definitions of marriage as viable in current society. After all, “it’s simply not the case...that we are frozen in time at the enactment of the constitution” (“Same-Sex Marriage in California: Legal and Political Prospects”). However, note that throughout the entire debate of this one aspect of the same-sex marriage issue, the actual human relationship between same-sex partners is not discussed. There is nothing quite as impersonal as a dictionary, and both sides of this issue allow the debate to center on definition instead of personhood.

While the above arguments combat the claim that the definition of “marriage” ends the debate before it even begins, advocates for same-sex marriage address the religious and moral concerns more directly. This position is often depicted as a Christian perspective, but it is important to me not to fall into that rhetorical trap. It is true that many of the leading opponents of same-sex marriage are affiliated with Christian organizations, but it is misleading to color all opponents as Christian or to claim that all Christians are intolerant of homosexuality. Instead it is important to acknowledge that many of the religions practiced in the United States do morally object to same-sex marriage--and any homosexual behavior for that matter. However, gay rights advocates argue that religious beliefs should not mandate law. Justice Kennedy’s decision in *Lawrence v. Texas* is often cited in support of this idea: “The issue is whether the majority may use the power of the State to enforce these views [moral principles] on the whole society through operation of the criminal law. ‘Our obligation is to define the liberty of all, not to mandate our own moral code.’” While all citizens are entitled to their religious beliefs, and moral principles, the stated role of the law has never been to uphold one set of morals to persecute the rights of others. And, indeed, there are many existing laws that are frowned upon by a majority of the religious institutions, such as the right to divorce or have an abortion. While religious beliefs must be respected, those who do not hold those beliefs should not be held to those moral standards, especially if those beliefs infringe upon a basic right. Additionally, gay marriage advocates point out that the First Amendment protects every religion’s right to choose for itself whether to recognize a marriage or not (“Same-Sex Marriage: Legal and Political Prospects”). This argument acts as an acknowledgement that many will disagree with the practice of same-sex marriage, and that as U.S. citizens they have the right to disapprove. That disapproval, however, should not prohibit the legal recognition of those marriages.

November 1998. My new husband and I stand in the receiving line, greeting all of our wedding guests. Although this is a tremendously joyous day, we both know that we originally never planned to have a

wedding. We have been committed to each other for five years and neither of us are members of a church. The idea of a legally or religiously sanctioned union has never appealed to us. However, a few events in the last few years changed our minds. Without “marriage,” we could not share health benefits or claim tax credits, and we had to jump through a plethora of hoops to purchase our home together. And, of course, there was the incident in Texas--the knowledge that as an unmarried couple we would have no rights during life and death situations. David and Chris are now approaching me and I almost don't want to meet their eyes. Their love is no different than ours. Why are Michael and I entitled to all of the benefits of “marriage,” and they are not?

Thus far, the definition of marriage as between one man and one woman has been discussed. However, those who oppose homosexual marriage believe there is another facet to the definition. John Eastman offers this final characteristic of marriage during the SSMC: marriage is fundamentally founded on the “connection to procreation and the rearing of children.” It is believed that marriage is the institution used by society to protect its children and guarantee the continued survival of the human species. Less eloquently, William Edge, the president of a same-sex marriage opposition group in Canada, asks, “Marriage is made for man and woman to procreate, and how are you going to get two queers to procreate?” (Gatehouse 28) Margaret Somerville laid out her argument in favor of marriage as a “reproductive human relationship” in a brief submitted to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights in 2003. She claims that her objections are purely secular-based and not influenced by homophobia. Somerville argues that the state must provide children with the best opportunities to be raised by their biological parents and it has “obligations not to facilitate the creation of situations that are not in the ‘best interests’ of children.” Eastman supports this argument by supplying studies demonstrating that children raised by two natural parents have fewer problems than children raised by a single, divorced parent or one biological parent and a step parent (“Same-Sex Marriage in California: Legal and Political Prospects”). He argues that those studies must be interpreted, until proven otherwise, to also indicate that children raised by same-sex parents would have more difficulties. This argument shows that opponents to gay marriage not only use semantics--defining “marriage” as the union between one man and one woman for the purposes of rearing children--but also employ social concerns over the welfare of children as a way to caution against permitting same-sex couples to have the title of “married.” Yet, it is interesting here that those making this argument go out of their way to proclaim a lack of homophobia in forming their opinions. In fact, they want to claim that the argument is not about homosexuality at all; it is about the welfare of our children.

While it would be difficult to find anyone who argues against providing the best environment for children as possible, legally this argument has some flaws. The California Supreme Court has already ruled that sexual orientation cannot be a factor in denying an adoption petition. Thus, sexual orientation in regards to parenting should not even enter into the same-sex marriage debate. Further, not a single study exists “showing children are harmed in any way by having lesbian or gay parents (“Same-Sex Marriage in California: Legal and Political Prospects”). In fact, research has shown that there is no difference between children raised by heterosexual parents and same-sex parents. The American Academy of Pediatrics, Child Welfare League of America, both of the APA's, and the National Association of Social Workers all have taken the position that “sexual orientation is completely irrelevant to a person's ability to parent”

(“Same-Sex Marriage in California: Legal and Political Prospects”). Currently there are hundreds of thousands of same-sex partners already raising children. According to the 2000 Census, 250,000 same-sex households are raising children under the age of eighteen. Shouldn’t the government allow for those families to raise their children to the best of their abilities, by legally recognizing the parents as married?

Additionally, advocates for same-sex marriage also question the belief that marriage is inextricably tied to procreation. It is clear that not all married couples have children, whether by choice or circumstance. Yet, those marriages are legally recognized by the state. In fact, the U.S. Supreme Court has decided that states must allow married couples legal access to contraception, allowing couples not to procreate. To imply that only partnerships that further the human species should be recognized as marriages is faulty. Hence, same-sex marriage supporters argue that the ability to procreate should not even be a factor in determining who is eligible to marry (“Same- Sex Marriage: Legal and Political Prospects”).

March 2004. After attending a kickboxing class, David and I relax on my couch by flipping through the channels on the television. David stops on a program that I never watch, Bill O’Reilly’s daily right-wing rant. The topic that has forced David into immobility is San Francisco’s recent decision to grant marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Of course these marriage ceremonies have been a source of joy in the gay community in the last few weeks. However, O’Reilly is not full of joy. Instead, he is spewing hatred against homosexuals. Okay, he is not explicitly making remarks against homosexuality, but the subtext is clear. When I ask David if he and Chris will be making a pilgrimage to San Francisco, he replies with a no. “This won’t last. Just wait. They’ll find a way to take these licenses away.”

Since many of the pros and cons for same-sex marriage are on equal footing, opponents to gay marriage use the rhetoric of fear to influence public opinion. One of the most outspoken opponents to same-sex marriage is Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family, a Christian-based organization focused on “nurturing and defending families worldwide.” In his book Marriage under Fire, Dobson outlines all of the above arguments used against the legalization of homosexual marriage in support of the idea that marriage as an institution is under attack. This is a frequent rhetorical technique used by those opposed to same-sex marriage--in essence, legalizing homosexual marriage will “destroy the traditional family” (Dobson). Dobson and others employ the “slippery slope” argument to demonstrate how family and the institution of marriage will be destroyed by gay marriage. Dobson argues that “legalized gay marriages lead inexorably to polygamy and other alternatives to one man/one woman unions” since courts will have to “prove that a polygamous relationship is detrimental to society” and not the other way around. Incest, pedophilia, and polygamy will all have legal grounds for marriage recognition if same-sex marriage is allowed. If same-sex marriage is prohibited, these other atrocities can be avoided. Therefore, opponents to gay marriage focus their argument on defining marriage in such a manner that cannot possibly include same-sex partners.

To reach this end, opponents to homosexual marriage advocate two legal options. The first legal acts adopted to restrict marriage to opposite-sex couples were the DOMA’s, enacted at both the federal and state levels. In the federal DOMA, marriage is defined as “a legal union between one man and one woman

as husband and wife, and the word ‘spouse’ refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or a wife.” Amendments adopted at the state level often have similar wording to the federal DOMA. While DOMA does not restrict states from allowing same-sex marriages, it does allow states to not issue same-sex marriage licenses or recognize same-sex marriages from other states.

This tactic has been fairly successful. Only one state, Massachusetts, currently issues marriage licenses to same-sex couples, while only one state, Rhode Island, legally recognizes same-sex marriages from other states. Nine states, in addition to the nation’s capitol, provide legally recognized civil unions between same-sex partners, while more than thirty states have passed laws that deny the recognition of same-sex marriages granted out of state (“Same Sex Marriage, Civil Unions and Domestic Partnerships”). Sadly, my friend David was correct. California is currently both one of the states to recognize civil unions and to contain a DOMA in the state Constitution.

The second legal push is for what is being called the 28th Amendment. This amendment would read, “Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this constitution or the constitution of any state, no state or federal law, shall be construed to require the marital status or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon unmarried couples or groups” (George 33). This amendment calls for the definition of marriage, in every state, to only consist of one man and one woman. It also prohibits the recognition of civil unions or domestic partnerships as an extension of marital rights. Thus, only opposite-sex marriage partners would be entitled to benefits such as marital tax breaks, property rights, and the marital privilege against being forced to testify against one’s spouse (George 33).

However, those in favor of same-sex marriage claim that neither of these legal avenues is constitutional. In fact, most of the arguments used by advocates for gay marriage are legal in nature. When not defending against their opponents’ arguments, gay rights advocates usually use legal discourse to support their position, with the focus on demanding equality as defined in the Constitution. Federally, the *Loving* decision held that marriage is a basic civil right. Restrictions on that right can only be lawful if a legitimate governmental reason is proven for doing so; in other words, the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses impose limits on states’ powers over family law. Since the advocates for same-sex marriage have addressed any and all of the issues put forth as the possible reasonable basis to restrict gay rights, same-sex couples are equally entitled to marriage as a fundamental right. Any restrictions put on that right will necessarily be grounded in discrimination. If the 28th Amendment is passed, it would be “the first ever to mandate discrimination against one group of Americans and the first constitutional decree of second-class citizenship since the end of slavery” (Graham 39). Similarly, DOMA denies same-sex partners from receiving the approximately 1100 benefits that federal laws automatically grant to married couples, ranging from survivor rights to family discounts at national parks. This holds true even in states that have created civil unions that are equitable to marriage, as in Virginia (Graham 39). Thus, in restricting “marriage” to only one man and one woman, DOMA and the 28th Amendment deny same-sex couples the right to marry the partner of their choosing and the rights and benefits stemming from legal recognition of a marriage, benefits that heterosexual couples take for granted.

Interestingly, while advocates for same-sex marriage seem to argue against their opponents' objections on equal ground, the same does not hold true for how the opponents address arguments made by advocates in favor of gay marriage. Opponents evade most of the constitutional arguments posed by gay rights advocates, with the exception of those who center their debate of state rights versus federal rights (a debate that tends to ignore the merits of the same-sex marriage issue all together). To address these arguments would be to acknowledge that a restriction of rights would be based on sexual orientation. Opponents want to restrict a homosexual's personal liberties, liberties granted to heterosexuals, based solely on sexual orientation. There is no way to escape that this is bigoted thinking, and all too reminiscent of how many felt about mixed-race couples not so long ago.

The discourses used by the two sides of the same-sex marriage debate are multiple and diverse, employing religious, historical, societal, and legal rhetoric. However, when all of the pretence is removed, it is difficult not to see the same-sex marriage issue as a human issue. After all, the Supreme Court stated in *Loving v. Virginia* that the right to marry is one of the "basic civil rights of man." And, yet, where are the humans in these arguments? The "Pro Marriage Activists" discuss "marriage" in terms of semantics. When reading these arguments it is easy to forget that many of those making them speak from an anti-homosexuality position. In fact, it is easy to forget that we are even discussing an issue of homosexuality. Lawrence Friedman calls this technique "the person from Pluto" approach (54). According to Friedman, we see lawmakers use this approach when "the textual surface of the law, the actual rules and regulations, should be so phrased and framed that an alien from outer space, totally unaware of the realities of life," would not be able to tell what types of inequities and prejudices are indelibly intertwined with these decisions (54). While Friedman describes this approach in relation to the cases addressing racial segregation, "Pro marriage advocates" use moral objections, hysteria predicting the doomsday of marriage, and the marriage definition from centuries ago to obscure the fact that homosexuality and the rights of homosexuals are the true centers of this debate. If a "person from Pluto" read many of the articles objecting to same-sex marriage, that person would most likely not understand the inherent homophobia that prompts many of these arguments. I believe that the human aspect of this issue has been kept out of these arguments strictly because these humans are homosexual. If those opposing gay marriage discussed the human aspect of this issue, they would have to discuss homosexuality. They understand that our contemporary society would not accept an across-the-board condemnation of homosexuals. Their arguments would not be considered rational if they were exposed as, or even suspected of being, based in prejudice and hatred. Therefore, the person from Pluto approach allows for "Pro Marriage Activists" to present their arguments as grounded in the rational, by removing the human aspect of the issue from the discussion.

While those opposed to same-sex marriage are right to assume that blatant prejudice against homosexuality would automatically discount their argument to most U.S. citizens, it is also much too clear that a fear of homosexuality is still prevalent in our culture. The 2004 elections are a case in point. At the time, the United States was dissatisfied with the economy, the war in Iraq, and its standing on the world stage of opinion. History has shown that when the United States as a country is discontent with the status quo, they vote out the party that is currently in office. Therefore, going into the 2004 election, it was assumed that the Democrats had a good chance of reclaiming the House of Representatives and that the Democratic

nominee John Kerry would be elected president. The Republican tactic for staying in office? Make same-sex marriage a central issue of the election. Counting on a large turnout of traditional, neo-conservative Christians to vote in favor of DOMA initiatives, the Republican party used this sector of the population's intolerance of homosexuality to ensure a party victory. And it worked. If gay rights advocates were not aware of the continued intolerance of their lifestyle in the new millennium, they completely understood after the 2004 elections.

It is this understanding of existing intolerance that inspires proponents of same-sex marriage to also remove the human element from their arguments. This seems to be counter-intuitive. At a quick glance, it would seem that the way for gay rights advocates to win the right to call their unions "marriage" would be to humanize their plight. However, same-sex marriage advocates have realized that to humanize this issue means to alienate those who disagree with homosexuality. Hence, they have chosen legal discourse over humanistic rhetoric. When gay rights advocates ground their arguments in legal rhetoric, it is very difficult for their adversaries to win. Under Equal Protection, homosexuals should receive the same rights as heterosexuals. Their partnerships should receive the same benefits as their opposite-sex counterparts. Their relationships should be regarded with the same impartiality as any other union. Gay rights advocates understand that if one reads the law and The Constitution with impartial eyes, they will win the right to marriage.

However, "impartiality" is the key term here. To win over the huge population that is somewhere in between the two polar opposite sides of this argument, gay rights advocates must allow the general public to forget, if even for a moment, that this is a gay rights issue. Sadly, we are still a culture that would like to believe that gay is more like "Will" than "Jack"--or that two men may love each other, but we do not want to see them physically demonstrating that love with a kiss. By removing the human aspect from their argument, proponents of same-sex marriage have allowed the politically-correct (but not quite tolerant) group in the middle to seriously consider the legality of applying the term "marriage" to same-sex couples. The aim is to frame the debate as the civil rights issue that it so fundamentally is. As legislation against same-sex marriage becomes exposed for what it truly is, the hope is that society will demand equality for all.

March 2009. David and I have talked more about the issues surrounding same-sex marriage in the last six months than in all the time we have known each other. While this project has highlighted the issue recently for me, it is the marriage cases currently being heard in the California Supreme Court that has had us talking. These cases question the constitutionality of Proposition 8, an initiative passed by California that allowed for a definition of marriage amendment to be added to the state constitution. While he and Chris have been "married" for more than fifteen years and their union has been legally recognized as a domestic partnership for almost as long, David understands that his "marriage" is always written in quotation marks. His marriage is not acknowledged as being as beautiful or as valid as my own. And, since his battle with the Texas hospitals in 1994, he has been extremely hesitant to even leave the state of California--he knows that when he leaves its borders, he and Chris are legally recognized as strangers.

The idea of a "separate but equal" civil union is inherently unequal. The civil union, at its core, states that

David's relationship is not worthy of the term "marriage." A previous draft of this project ended in optimism. I quoted Chad Graham, who wrote, "Gays and lesbians should savor all these moments....Twenty years from now, we're going to look back at this whirlwind and it'll seem like a quaint, distant, memory" (43). While I would like to believe this prediction is still true, I am honestly not so sure. November 4, 2008 delivered a complex mixture of feelings regarding civil rights. Our country took a giant step forward in electing our first African- American president (regardless of whether or not one agrees with his policies) and a huge step backwards in California with gay rights. If a requirement for discussing the issues of same-sex marriage is that we remove the human element from the equation--that we pretend we are not discussing gay rights--then we are still far away from the tolerant society foreseen in Graham's quote. Until our discourse centers on the humans who have these inalienable, basic rights to marriage, it is clear that same-sex partnerships will never be accepted as the commitments to love and fidelity that so many of them are, regardless of the word we legally use to define them.

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Disorderly Conduct: an Interrogation of Residual Sodomy Laws Five Years after Lawrence v. Texas.

By James Keller

In Aug. 2007, Senator Larry Craig was arrested in the men's room at the Minneapolis Airport and was booked for violation of privacy and disorderly conduct for making sexual overtures toward an undercover police officer investigating complaints of lewd and lascivious behavior. The arresting officer observed Craig staring at him through the crevices in the bathroom stall, tapping his foot and sweeping his hand underneath the stall dividers. Craig swiftly pled guilty, hoping that the incident would remain concealed. After all, such charges seem rather innocuous. When his indiscretion was revealed, he initially elected to resign his Senate seat; however, the public denunciations by his colleagues and the media's obsession with the subject compelled him to change his mind and fight to overturn his guilty plea, which he claims was made under duress, all along vehemently denying in the media that he is gay and simultaneously parading his wife around in front of the news cameras. Craig's indiscretion was a sensation, inspiring the jokes and parodies of comedians, both professional and amateur and even a novelty toy, representing a bathroom stall with the Senator's feet protruding beneath the plastic partitions.

Much of the related mirth seems justified because the Senator's persistent opposition to Gay Rights legislation, which includes voting for the 1997 Defense of Marriage Act that defined marriage as a bond between one man and one woman. Craig also hypocritically chastised Bill Clinton for his participation in the Monica Lewinski scandal, calling the embattled President a "bad boy" and supporting the Republican Congress's efforts to impeach the popular president. Craig's conservative and even prudish legislative record was antithetical to the recurring accusations that the Senator himself was engaging in homosexual activities, allegations dating back to the Reagan administration. Craig had even been unofficially implicated in the Congressional Page molestation scandal that destroyed the career of his Republican colleague from Florida.

Craig's hypocrisy was as gross as earth, and his downfall seemed a well earned comeuppance for his homophobic agenda, and while it is true that few progressives would wish any better for him and while his efforts to peer into the privacy of a presumed traveler in an adjoining toilet seem indefensible, the law

enforcement tactic that ensnared the Senator has a sordid history, one long dedicated to the entrapment, public humiliation, and personal and professional destruction of gay men. Thus it is difficult for those of us conscious of the continued aggressive persecution/prosecution of homosexuals by law enforcement all over the country to find much humor or justice in the fall of Senator Larry Craig.

Craig's debacle reveals some recurring themes in the struggle of gay men for equal rights under the law. Despite the U.S. Supreme Court's repeal of sodomy laws some years ago, police harassment intended to interdict homosexual activity has scarcely diminished. Indeed, the *Lawrence v. Texas* decision seems to have had little effect save to preclude police from prosecuting same sex partners engaged in homosexual activity in their own homes. Law enforcement officers continue to masquerade as willing sexual partners of gay men only to arrest, charge, and publicly disgrace the latter when they take the bait, charging them with soliciting a police officer, lewd and lascivious conduct, disorderly conduct, and even disturbing the peace. Amazingly, requesting the very sex act rendered legal by the courts is in itself a crime in many states; thus it is not a crime to commit sodomy, but it is a crime to request it, which would seem to constitute a broad cultural application of the military's "Don't ask; don't tell; don't pursue" policy. However, just as many have reported in the military, the promise not to pursue is specious. The activities of the police have been exacerbated by the continued complicity of the news media and the business sector of our culture. As was the case with Craig, the media picks up on the arrest stories, and under the pretense of reporting "all the news fit to print" and "the public deserve to know," parades the presumed indiscretion of law enforcement's prey across the public stage, resulting in humiliation and often loss of employment, thus effectively eliminating the individual as a productive member of society. The discretion need not be as intrusive as Craig's voyeuristic disturbance since merely asking for male sex is considered "solicitation" if the recipient is a policeman, a charge that in the public mind implies the exchange of sexual favors for remuneration, yet law enforcement's continued legal pursuit of gay men is not motivated by the effort to interdict prostitution, but to drive any manifestation of homosexuality out of the public eye and to generate a community in which heterosexual men can be free of the threat of homosexual overtures while the same continue to harass unwilling women with impunity. The same tough cops would not arrest a woman if she offered sex but did not ask for money, nor would they prosecute men pursuing sexual favors from women outside of the home since it would effectively shut down heterosexual pairing.

The Craig incident also reveals some of the more complex attributes of any sting operation intended to interdict homosexual activities in public spaces. These operations frequently net a large number of ostensibly heterosexual men (Humphreys 33) whose mainstream credentials include lengthy marriages and children, attributes which are generally received as confirmations strong of the subject's hegemonic masculinity and his heavy investment in heterosexual/heterosexist institutions. Public and anonymous sex is attractive to married men because it requires little or no time to produce gratification, nor does it involve the emotional attachments or reciprocity generally required by the long term illicit romance or financial expenditure demanded by the hooker; it is "much less personal than other forms of sex" (Humphreys 33). In addition, these straight men report that the sense of guilt over infidelity is reduced by the absence of a female sex partner; the illicit contact cannot be construed as love or as an emotional attachment to another woman that rivals the marital sentiment: they are not really cheating if they are not having sex with a

woman. Often this type of contact takes place within adult movie houses and peep shows, but by some mysterious calculus, other places less (or sometimes more) discrete become the locus of such congregations—public bathrooms and rest areas, locker rooms, parks, and wooded or wilderness areas—potentially any secluded and largely male environment where the participants might congregate alone and find a modicum of privacy.

Of the many sights where such transgressive behaviors occur, certainly the public toilet (in airports, train, bus and gas stations, malls or department stores) is the most troublesome and dangerous as there is generally a high amount of foot traffic that can or will include the occasional child or unwitting and subsequently scandalized adult. But while the numerous loci for illicit sex offer varying degrees of discretion and seclusion, they are often policed with equal ferocity and vigor once identified by the police. And the activities of law enforcement in these areas reveal a general persecutory bias against homosexual contact, since the relative seclusion and privacy of the area does not seem to impact the police presence nor mitigate the judicial recriminations against those apprehended. In his study *Public Sex/Gay Space*, William L. Leap succeeds in deconstructing the binary structure of public/private sex, demonstrating that the concept of public is locally and inconsistently constructed (5), Pat Califia has argued that public sex invariably involves an effort to attain a small amount of privacy within a communal space, and these liminal spots, straddling the line between public and private, have subsequently been dubbed “quasi-public” spaces (76).

If one considers the efforts of love struck teenagers, the fluidity of this public/private dialectic becomes clear. The teenage couple who has no house to use, since they are occupied by disapproving parents, nor sufficient money or maturity to rent a hotel room is forced into the public domain to gratify their desires—back rows of movie houses or the backseat of the family car, parked in back alleys, parking lots, or lonely country roads. Yet how frequently does one hear of these youthful couples being arrested for public indecency and paraded through the press to the humiliation of themselves and their families? For that matter one never hears of heterosexual couples (young or old) experiencing this type of police persecution unless the couple has willfully made a public spectacle of themselves or the coupling is directly related to prostitution. Indeed, many heterosexual teenagers have their first sexual experience in the back seat of a car; it is considered a rite of passage for young males in our culture, lionized in the movies and the public imagination. The interdiction and prosecution of public sex is focused with great intensity on sex between men, and this in spite of the repeal of sodomy laws which at least offered a pretext for the harassment, as draconian, unfounded, and unjust as that may have been.

One of the among the legion of locations upon which the apparatus of the state has sought to mount its campaign to maintain sodomy laws or prohibitions against homosexual activity is both literally and metaphorically relevant to our discussion. In the 1960s and 70s, the anticipation of a massive influx of new residents into Southwest Florida led to enormous land development projects by companies such as General Development (now long gone) who created hundreds of miles of city streets in wilderness or undeveloped areas. Rather than adopt the familiar grid pattern, the developers laid out a multitude of interlocking

subdivisions, creating a veritable maze of circle drives with cross streets and cul-de-sacs scoring the center. The low and wet areas were drained into canals and retention ponds shaped only as human ingenuity can accomplish—ovals, circles, squares, and rectangles with perfectly straight and steady lines.

These shapes are burned into the landscapes of lower Sarasota, Charlotte, and Lee counties; however, the much anticipated land rush did not occur, development transpiring at a much slower pace, and much of the work of the land developers has been reclaimed by the Florida scrub and brush lands. To offer a creative paraphrase of Frost, I would say, ‘Something there is that does not love a road...that sends the ground swell under it.’ More than twenty years ago these areas were already considered wasted. In the intervening twenty years, some of these areas have been populated, particularly in Cape Coral, but others, such as those in Charlotte and southern Sarasota counties, have remained largely undeveloped and have deteriorated substantially. Most of these properties have never made accessible to local utilities so they have not even been available for settlement. The extensive road work has become irrelevant in many places as the grasses have begun to encroach upon the fringes of the pavements and peek through the legion of cracks and swells, a process which renders the surface obsolete, and in places the pavement has been reduced to a single lane or to a pair of parallel tire tracks saved from the intruding green. At such a point of dilapidation, the roads have to be completely resurfaced. The retention ponds have become so over grown with water foliage that they are sometimes scarcely recognizable as manmade structures and sometimes even as bodies of water. The pavements now segment and portion out large stretches of raw Florida scrub lands, structuring the slovenly wilderness, imposing order onto a veritable riot of vegetation and wildlife, the latter including, but not limited to wild hogs.

Paralleling and infiltrating the unclaimed city streets is an elaborate network of dirt trails created by a combination of land developers, local youth on dirt bikes and four wheelers, and wild hogs. These pathways, known as the “Hog Trails,” were made notorious by the operations of a serial killer Daniel Conahan, who in the 1990s murdered gay men by tying them to trees, torturing, photographing, and strangling them. The victims had willingly allowed themselves to be restrained after Conahan told them that he wanted to take kinky photographs. The killer was not particularly efficient in his labors, allowing more than one person to escape who had struggled with him at length. These people of course testified at his trial, and he was convicted and sentenced to death. Within the past couple years a gruesome discovery of secret bone yard in Lee county has led authorities to believe that Conahan may have had a killing field near Fort Myers as well.

Conahan’s selection of the (un)developed areas of Charlotte and perhaps Lee Counties to operate as his killing ground was not entirely accidental; these areas were already being used for illicit homosexual encounters and offered a legion of secluded pathways and hiding places where one may secrete his/her salacious or murderous agenda as the case may be. Despite the notoriety of the place and the potential for danger, it is still a very busy hub of anonymous sex between men both gay and straight, who spend a few minutes indulging their lusts before returning to the ordered and disciplined world of work, wives, families, girlfriends, etc. It seems to consist primarily of ostensibly heterosexual men, seeking gratification, men who seek out an anonymous sex that does not require names or telephone numbers, promises to

meet again, or standard dating practices of dinner and movies. The semi-wild environment is the locus of a semi-wild sexual scene that ruptures the discrete and overly simplistic structure of sexuality within the ordered and civilized confines of the city or town. The boundary between homosexual and heterosexual is deconstructed and not necessarily by the equally simplistic bisexual classification, but by a queer sexuality, one that is determined by social status, by a placement outside of mainstream sexual binaries. The participants may have specific sexual roles to which they are addicted, but the designation of partners as male/female, gay/straight, married/unmarried, top/bottom is irrelevant and unspoken in the instinctual clash of aroused bodies. The liminality of the environment hovering between wild and tame, city and wilderness, disorder and order, nature and culture, animal and human is imposed upon the sexual encounters which defy mainstream heterosexist assumptions and categories.

It should be noted that the areas in question are not government lands, but the object of a real estate boom in the 1990s when a person could buy property in the area for only \$3000 an acre, and by 2004 shortly after Hurricane Charlie devastated the area, the same land had risen to around \$25,000 an acre. The real estate is privately owned and very little of it is posted either by realtors or by “No Trespassing” signs. There is now little or no real estate traffic through the area, and in all probability many of the owners have never laid eyes on the investment land since there is no chance of its being developed anytime soon. Thus the illicit activities that occur in the area are taking place on private property where there can be no expectation of damage since there is nothing to destroy or harm, save trees and bushes; the value lies latent in the land itself waiting for a future push of the city margins, across county lines and into the neglected region.

As has probably become evident, the previous section prepares the ground for a discussion of the vigorous campaign of police harassment aimed at the visitors to the [un]tamed region along the Charlotte and Sarasota county lines, an area patrolled by the police of tiny North Port whose margins are co-terminus with the county line, exceeding the limits of actual settlement by many miles. The North Port police scrutinize, infiltrate, defend, and investigate the region as though it was a wealthy and insular gated community. The efforts at interdiction in the region are wildly disproportionate to the potential for transgression or harm and can be explained only by residual resentment and homophobia following the repeal of sodomy laws with *Lawrence v. Texas*. Indeed, one might assume that the law enforcement officers of North Port had never even heard of *Lawrence v. Texas* and that the open season on homosexuals remained unchecked by any judicial review. The police presence involves vehicles of varying manifestations such as squad cars and parks and recreations trucks. In addition, there are undercover cars with blacked out windows in which the officers in full uniform are concealed—SUVs and sedans of varying colors.

The efforts to interdict homosexual activity in the undeveloped regions of Sarasota County involve more than the happenstance discovery of two men blissfully consummating a momentary union before returning to their quotidian lives. They involve entrapments, provocations, harassments, and threats. Unmarked cars attempt to induce suspected homosexual subjects to follow them into remote or hidden areas in order to confound reasonable explanations for subject’s presence and behavior. What follows is a minor

interrogation in which the police officer attempts to coerce or bully a confession out of the subject to the effect that he is searching for male sex, a confession that it is difficult to believe the officer ever receives. In one incident, an undercover cop approached a subject sitting in his car at the end of a cul-de-sac. Obviously expecting the subject to follow, the policeman turned off the paved road and followed a dirt trail along a retention pond. When the subject did not follow, the officer, evidently disappointed that he had failed to provoke the desired response, returned to the idle vehicle where he impeached the driver, demanding demands an explanation for his presence in the isolated area and informing him that he was trespassing on private property. The driver, unruffled, indicated that he likes to sit and read in the area because it is a peaceful and aesthetically pleasing environment. He politely added that he was sitting on a public street and, therefore, was not trespassing on anyone's property. Undaunted by logic, the police officer informed the driver that he had better stay clear of the region or he would get in "big trouble."

In another incident, a single vehicle was travelling behind an undercover SUV along a circle drive, when the police car turned on its veiled lights and braked suddenly. A furious middle aged policeman emerged from the front vehicle and demanded to know why the driver was following him, to which the latter responded that he was simply following a circle drive and that there were only two potential directions in such an environment. The still fuming officer interrogated the subject, demanding to know the reason for the civilian's presence. With the driver gradually lapsing into silence, the policeman concluded his rant with a warning that the driver had better not return to the region again or he will get into "big trouble."

The two above incidents reflect a pattern of harassment of apparently gay men, one that would seek to exclude the same from public streets under the pretense that they may engage in activities deemed unacceptable by local authorities. The purpose of the essay is not to defend the transgressions of those who might engage in sex acts outdoors, but to discuss the implications of motorists being profiled and singled out for exclusion from a public space based upon their perceived sexual inclinations, a differentiation that is always already problematized by the fluidity of human erotic expression. It is difficult to imagine law enforcement mobilizing such resources to interdict and discourage the copulation of heterosexual couples secreted in tents and trailers around our national parks or wilderness areas, undercover cops posing as swingers only to arrest the potential sex partners and/or transgressors after the unsuspecting heterosexuals have been teased and cajoled into making a proposition, and since the act of heterosexual copulation is not illegal, the charge would be veiled as "Disorderly Conduct" with an explanation sufficiently lurid to evoke the requisite humiliation after the subject's name has been listed in the police beat section of the local paper or, as is often the case with men pursuing male sex, plastered across the front page.

The forgoing analogy may seem hyperbolic, but in reality, it is a fairly accurate description of the continued persecution of ostensibly gay men in rural regions in spite of the Supreme Court decision of 2003. Law Enforcement has retained many of its previous tactics for the entrapment, public humiliation, and professional destruction of homosexual men and has transmogrified others, bending the law to accommodate personal or community prejudices. In a 1996 article, "Tennessee Williams Doesn't Live Here Anymore: Hypocrisy, Paradox, and Homosexual Panic in the New/Old South," I wrote about the practices of Law Enforcement in Lowndes County, MS where the harassment of gay men included a prolonged campaign

to chase away potentially sexually transgressive men from an area known as the Lock and Dam. Those people caught in the dragnet (many of whom were family men) were charged with solicitation for male sex (which to the reading public implied a financial arrangement), publicly exposed on the front page of the paper, fined, and banished from the public area for an indeterminate period. During the same crusade, individuals were lured to local hotels where they were surprised by concealed law enforcement officers who swiftly arrested them, charging them with attempted sodomy, which at the time was a felony in Mississippi. The laws in Lowndes County may have change since *Lawrence v. Texas*, but the practices and the desire to destroy the lives of homosexual men via unjust and prejudicial legal operations has not diminished.

In a recent incident, an individual was ticketed by a parks engineer fixing a drinking fountain (many parks workers have been deputized in the wake of 911), who claimed the alleged transgressor had made a suggestive gesture, which the engineer interpreted as a sexual invitation. Since the parks regulations include no legal restrictions regarding the solicitation of engineers, the ticket charged “Disorderly Conduct” and listed as an explanation that a park ranger had been solicited and also included a summons to appear in court rather than a fine. Park regulations included no legal justification for alleging “Disorderly Conduct” based upon a presumed sexual proposition, so the charge was on its surface an effort to cut and paste materials in order to invent a law that had been violated. While there can be no certainty that the parks employee understood the indefensible nature of the charge, there is ample evidence that the charge was bias based and was intended to manufacture public disgrace--the insistence that the charge be addressed in court, the effort to manipulate existing regulations to construct a violation, and the fact that the original confrontation between the engineer and the so-called perpetrator included the former charging the latter’s vehicle, adopting an aggressive deportment, and offering veiled threats of violence. Clearly there has been very little progress in Lowndes Co. MS in the five years following *Lawrence v. Texas*. Indeed, the behavior of the establishment suggests a legal impotence that would fling itself against the inevitability of social progress, a subject unwilling or unable to abandon individual prejudice in the interests of legal advancement and rectitude.

The residual sodomy laws succeed by playing upon the shame associated with sexual transgression; thus they operate within a network of interrelated cultural processes regulating behavior. Sexual transgression invokes the interest and participation of the media, and squeamish employers in both the government and private sectors recoil from scandal claiming an institutional embarrassment, which, of course, necessitates that the perpetrator be dismissed, the result of which is often a dramatic degradation in financial and by extension class status. The cumulative effect of the event rolls through the familial institutions as well. As observed previously, the men caught in these homophobic machinations are frequently married men operating within the liminal space between gay and mainstream straight cultures. Such individuals are not at liberty to embrace a gay identity for a variety of reasons, which include the probability that they will lose their families, yet the compulsion for same sex encounters finally proves irrepressible. Moreover, few relatively minor legal transgressions carry as much stigma as a misdemeanor charge of solicitation for male sex. An act that in the eyes of the law could constitute little more than a nuisance transgression can be devastating to the individual subjected to the whimsical and often haphazard application of petty

directives.

As Larry Craig argued in the appeal of his conviction, he only signed the guilty plea because he was embarrassed and wanted the potentially explosive situation to disappear as quickly as possible, a declaration that may be the only truthful statement he has made about the incident. Nevertheless, he failed to anticipate the press's fascination with sex scandals and public officials, particularly during an election year. The incident in the Minneapolis Airport men's room raises some troublesome questions about privacy, veracity, and aggressive police subterfuges. First, operations like that which ensnared Senator Craig actually manufacture and construct the transgressions that they seek to interdict and prosecute. An undercover officer in a men's room waiting for a hapless homosexual to proposition him is not an analogue to the innocent bystander, who enters the men's room, relieves himself, and leaves. The undercover cop lingers, peering and gazing, and in some cases (such as is alleged by singer George Michaels in his own arrest scenario) grabbing his crotch and/or exposing himself, thus soliciting the solicitation.

A cop may have to wait hours in an airport bathroom stall before he is able to garner any captive transgressors, a behavior which is as much an enticement to sexual dalliance than anything that Senator Craig may have done—peering through the crack in the stall, tapping his foot, brushing up against the officer's foot with his own, and/or sweeping his hand under the partition. The cop's own loitering could be construed as an invitation or provocation. Moreover, the policeman would have had to be peering right back through the crack in the stall in order to see the Senator's blue eyes which he reports as evidence of Craig's intrusion. All the time that the Senator spent soliciting the officer, the latter did not protest, which could only be construed as a reciprocal interest. Consider by analogy the way the law protects heterosexual men from false rape allegations by insisting that a woman articulate her disapproval and offers mitigation when the woman engages in behavior that can be construed as provocative. A woman who is a victim of male sexual aggression is obliged to express her outrage and displeasure if she is to have any legal case against a perpetrator. Yet the policeman in the Minneapolis Airport men's room allowed Senator Craig to peer through the crevice in the stall for what he describes as two minutes without ever telling the Senator to "piss off"; this too could be understood as an encouragement of the former Senator's actions. It is difficult to imagine that any unwitting visitor to the men's room would endure the alleged abuses inflicted by Craig on the police officer without saying "forebear"; after all, heterosexual men are not generally shy about expressing their often ferocious disdain and contempt for homosexuals and their proclivities. In short, the undercover policeman who lingers in a public men's room cannot be said to be protecting the unsuspecting public from exposure to lewd invitations and behaviors since the typical individual in an airport restroom spends only a few moments performing the urgent bodily functions and then moves on to his/her destination, and protecting the public space may be the only justification that would not infringe the rights of the so-called perpetrator since the activities themselves are not illegal.

However, additional issues hinge upon problematic implications of the term "public" in the legal discourse of such cases. Indeed, the public/private distinction is completely dismantled within the Craig debacle:

the space is both public and private for the arresting officer, but only public for the Senator. The charges against the Senator alleged that he not only committed disorderly conduct, but also “interfered with privacy,” and Judge Edward Toussaint, Chief of the Appellate Court that rejected Craig’s effort to overturn his guilty plea, argued that Craig had “invaded the ‘privacy interest’ of a ‘captive audience’” (Pershing A03). The court assumes that the individual has a right of privacy within a public space and that the officer’s own behavior is indicative of one who is attempting to avail himself of this right. However, by necessity the officer’s purpose within the restroom undermines any but a fraudulent desire for privacy since privacy would undermine his goal which is to attract the interest of would be sexual perpetrators. The undercover policeman did not come to the airport men’s room because he needed to urinate, defecate, groom, or clean himself; he came to perpetrate a fraud or deception, an act that necessitates an audience and is, therefore, very public. Even though he may be concealed within a cubicle, he wants and thereby elicits an intrusion.

If the space is private for the officer, why is it not private for the Senator or for anyone in the Senator’s predicament? The privacy of the officer should inadvertently legitimize sex in a public restroom. The stall is now private, thus, the acts of consenting adults are outside the jurisdiction of the law. Yet while the cop sits comfortably within his personal space, Craig is evidently on public display. The officer charges that Craig placed his bag in front of his feet, an act which within the former’s extensive understanding of gay symbolism constitutes an effort to attain privacy within the stall by obscuring the view of the impending illicit activities otherwise subject to detection through the gap at the bottom of the partition. Here the officer’s observations dismantle his own claim to privacy. If the officer has privacy, so does Craig, and he need not cover the gap in the door for more. Moreover, the officer was, according to his own observations, invading the solitude of the Senator, having carefully observed the movement of his subject’s hands, feet, and eyes. Moreover, when the policeman, by his own admission, twice shoved his hand under the partition, showing his badge and pointing to the door, thus ordering the Senator outside, did he not twice intrude upon the Senator’s own privacy in much the same way alleged against his subject who swept his hand under the partition? It is easy to conclude that Craig has earned the intrusion with his own behavior; however, the disturbance of the Senator’s right to public restroom privacy is not what is most disturbing about the operation; it is the idea that the officer no doubt sat in the stall for hours each day observing the actions of countless unsuspecting travelers, carefully policing their bathroom etiquette for inappropriate behaviors. The sting operation is itself a repulsive violation of the public’s privacy, and what about the desperate travelers who needed to use that stall when the room was full?

Clearly the space of the bathroom stall is only private when it is convenient for the judicial system to claim it so for the purposes of prosecution of homosexual activities. Thus the category of “private” becomes incoherent, “a fiction” (11) “locally constructed” according to Leap (5). There are many instances of authorities placing hidden cameras in public restrooms to scrutinize and prosecute washroom violations. In Naples, FL in the 1980’s, a police operation involving a camera in a public restroom recorded homosexual activities and led to the arrest and prosecution of numerous men, and much more recently in the Mill Stream Run Reservation Metropark restroom in Strongsville, OH, a hidden camera helped police arrest 27 men, including a police officer, for indecent exposure (Puente). (Now there is a slippery slope—indecent exposure in a washroom. How will we trust and/or tolerate the urinal facility ever again?) Moreover,

workers at Consolidate Freightways, a large trucking company in California, were told by the courts that hidden cameras mounted in terminal restrooms were not a violation of their privacy (Brooks C- 2). When the government or the corporation decide to peep into the public washroom, the space is as accessible as it needs to be even to the extent that recorded materials can be presented in the public spectacle of the courtroom or the front page of the local newspaper, but when Senator Craig goes spying, the subject of his interest occupies a place of integrity and serene isolation. How do we view those washroom settings in public parks and roadside rest areas where cubicle doors have been removed to deter homosexual and illicit drug activities? Is anyone who enters a restroom when a person is occupying one of these exposed toilets and who intentionally or inadvertently witnesses an act of excretion guilty of infringing the occupant's privacy or is the said occupant indecently exposed? Long ago, Pat Califia warned the gay community that there is much to be feared in too narrow a definition of private space, which could infringe the rights of homosexuals to engage in sex acts in places such as hotel rooms (71).

Most would conclude with little hesitation that sex in a public restroom is indefensible, and indeed, it is a complicated issue, but the collapse of the public/private binary renders these activities less obviously wrong so long as the coupling remains within a stall. Since the arresting officer in the Larry Craig debacle had an expectation of privacy despite his own probing interest in the actions of the people around him, it seems both reasonable and legally defensible that a couple could engage in sex acts in a similar space without the intrusion of the law. The placement of the bag in the front of the stall (I am not sure where else one could put a bag in a toilet cubicle, but evidently those who do not have anything to hide find another spot.) further obscures the activities within that space, which according to the officer in the Craig case increases rather than diminishes guilt. The discovery of sex in a bathroom cubicle could only be achieved by peering through the gaps in the partitions, the same act that was construed to be a violation of the undercover cop's privacy. If privacy is the requisite condition for legal sex following *Lawrence v. Texas*, then by the judicial system's own admission in the Craig case, a bathroom stall meets the appropriate conditions for legitimacy. The discovery of a sexual dalliance in a bathroom may also be achieved by observing that there is more than one pair of feet protruding below the partition of a single toilet cubicle, but one may not necessarily be able to assume that people were having sex just because they were occupying a single cell (although it is difficult to imagine what else they might be doing). Any additional inquiry into the activity in the stall would require a clear invasion of privacy, but despite arguments in the Craig case, the contemporary public bathroom model in America is calculated to preclude privacy. Otherwise, the partitions would be solid extending all the way from the floor to the ceiling, and the cubicle entrance would not have wide gaps between the door and the frame. The reason for the current design, aside from the reduced cost and the avoidance of potential water damage in the event of an overflow, must be directly related to the effort to interdict illicit activities in such places. The minimization of privacy (scarcely sufficient barriers between individuals in some of the most private acts) in the public toilet signals that the state does not consider the space private. Otherwise, they could easily stipulate the construction of fully enclosed cubicles eliminating any effort to infringe the privacy of another. If the occupant of a bathroom stall decided to compulsively masturbate while eliciting moans that draw attention to his activity, it is difficult to imagine that a police officer in attendance would allow the activity to continue unabated. The ecstatic would very rapidly find himself under arrest. And yet the only way that the officer could confirm

his suspicions would be to gaze through the crevices in the toilet partition. It seems highly improbable that the transgressor could successfully defend his activities on the basis of a privacy claim. Even if the lewd and lascivious charge were defeated, the prosecutors would get him on disturbing the peace. In homage to Foucault's analysis of Bentham's panopticon, the state and its agents clearly desire to observe without being observed, survey without mutual scrutiny (195-228).

Fully enclosed cubicles in public restrooms would signal complete privacy which could be problematic in the prosecution of public sex. Paradoxically, the state stipulates a privacy that is always already infringed, a privacy that can be repudiated or denied whenever convenient for the state in enforcing its residual sodomy laws. This liminal circumstance has been previously dubbed "quasi public" (Califia 76). Sex in a public toilet is generally only public because the architectural forms of the facility will not allow privacy, and within that environment, public/private seems to be defined as much by a residual or perhaps inadvertent prurience as by the exposure of human genitalia. Indeed, an excretion/copulation duality seems to be operative in such spaces. Sex in a bathroom cubicle would reveal little more of the individual than would defecation or urination. In any of these actions, the exposure of the genitalia or buttocks of the individual involved is requisite, but it is the knowledge of those outside of the cubicle that seems to matter in the juridical circumstance. The law enforcement personnel and hapless traveler have an idea of what may be happening behind the closed door of the cubicle, and it is this knowledge that generates indecency. If the passerby has an idea that the stall occupant is engaged in a bodily excretion, s/he thinks no more of the matter; indeed the mind recoils from imagining the act and its aftermath, but it is the allure of sexual activity that draws the imagination of the "blind witness" (if you will). While the mind recoils from the physical process of defecation, it may be drawn to imagine the details of sexual activity, even if those details are morally repellant to the witness. Sex in a toilet cubicle may not expose the act of copulation so much as suggest it, and mainstream culture does not want to be reminded. Indeed privacy is defined as the absence of a witness and public is conceived as any place where there is a reasonable assumption that a third party might observe (Califia 73).

The word "imply" above captures another problematic feature of the public/private variance of the "public restroom," and here I brush up against the subject of my previous article—veracity and mendacity. What can be known of the activities in a public restroom stall with certainty since the actions are occluded by the makeshift partitions? If one perceives two pair of legs protruding from beneath a bathroom stall, can one assume that sex is taking place even if the image is accompanied by sound. Certainty would be further undermined by a bag placed in the front of the stall obscuring the view of the feet. Thus sex can only be presumed, and should a legal conviction be rendered on the basis of presumption, particularly when the veracity of the arresting officer is at best problematic as in the case of undercover sting operations. Moreover, if we were to assume that the officer in the case of Larry Craig had indeed cracked the secret code used by gay men to negotiate sexual congress in public (i.e. shoe tapping, hand swiping etc.), does it necessarily follow that the officer can assume the invitation is to have sex in public. The assumption is based upon stereotypes of men who have sex with men and is energized by a judicial bias and inequality that considers men who have sex with men the singular targets for zealous interdictions and prosecutions. Consider as an analogue the privileged status of heterosexual relations. If a heterosexual man propositions

a woman in a club, the authorities do not assume that they will copulate in the bathroom stall or in a car in a parking lot, yet there can be no doubt that such indiscretions occur on a regular basis and that the locations for these encounters are not haphazard, but are used and reused persistently. Consider the cultural tradition of the lover's lane. How frequently do we hear of the police mounting an undercover sting operation to arrest and make a public spectacle of those who have chosen such a space to copulate. Still further there is little precedent for presuming that those who are occupying the same car in a lover's lane are assumed to be engaged in public sex. And it is even less probable that such a sting operation would be leveled to interdict heterosexual copulation before it occurs, rendering a proposition disorderly conduct. Only the public revelation of writhing naked bodies is assumed sufficient to legitimize an indecency charge. The principal exceptions here would be the interdiction of prostitution and child molestation, those two old chestnuts with which the gay community has long been inaccurately associated, an association that has been overturned first by the rule of reason and second by the 2003 supreme court decision. The judicial system clearly still considers gay sex indecent no matter where it occurs, and the mere suggestion that gay sex may be taking place is sufficient to warrant arrest. If a police officer pulled two gay men out of a car groping each other in a lover's lane, it would not matter whether they were fully clothed; charges would no doubt ensue. The discrepancy between the treatment of gay public/private sex and heterosexual public/private sex reveals the project within our judicial institutions to make gay sex (in)visible, constantly scrutinized to ensure it is permanently unseen. While hetero-sex can be tolerated (to a certain extent) or at least given the benefit of the doubt, gay sex must be forced into the cloister of the bedroom or prosecuted because it is always already obscene, illicit, and public. Paradoxically, even as the establishment ostensibly tries to make gay sex invisible, it engages in a particularly energetic effort to investigate, discover, and expose the same, rendering the invisible visible long enough to persecute and prosecute the activities forced into the public consciousness by the processes of surveillance, interdiction, and suppression.

Gay sex straddles a line between public and private. As Foucault has taught us, our social institutions apply subtle pressure, encouraging us to confess our inner most secrets so that we can be situated within the various professional discourses that construct our place as subjects within society. Despite an ostensible desire to remove homosexuality from public view and public discourse, the operation of the establishment serves to make it the constant subject of scrutiny, to identify, stigmatize, pathologize, and institutionalize the homosexual subject. This stigmatization is a public enterprise. In its harassment of the gay community, law enforcement regularly strives to make the private public. The "cruising" in the men's room of the Minneapolis Airport may have been the subject of complaint from a few weary travelers who were offended by what they could only assume was male sex, but the revelation of Larry Craig's indiscretion made these semi-private indiscretions public on a global scale, exposing not only the Senator's actions, but also the codes, conducts, and processes of "tearoom" sex. The result is a spectacle of loathing, an abjection in which the pagentry simultaneously allures and repels. The public desires to know so that they can be scandalized by knowing and can complain about the public nature of an impropriety that the subject would have done anything to keep concealed. In a manner of speaking, the public indiscretion is actually perpetrated by law enforcement and the media. The revelation of an alleged transgression comes in advance of a conviction for any crime or misdemeanor, the arrest itself reported in the papers before there is any full disclosure or assessment of the evidence and the arresting officer immune from any civil

action by virtue of his job description. Thus there is great opportunity for abuse; the arresting officer can pursue his charge with impunity and recklessness, indulging his biases and hostilities. The revelation of the matter is sufficient to ruin the reputation, career, or personal life of the subject, and there is a tendency for the public to assume the guilt of those arrested or charged with sex related crimes.

However, there is a major problem with the assumption of law enforcement's veracity in a sex sting operation, and I am not referring to the high profile cases in which law enforcement officers have been involved in criminal activity and other high jinks, although such matters must give us pause. Instead, I am referring to the paradox that is at the center of any undercover vice operation, which is that the arresting officer is awarded the greater portion of credibility and veracity by virtue of having played false throughout the operation. If the public did not make such assumptions, there would often be no way to distinguish between policeman and perpetrator. The insincerity of the police officer is central if he solicits a hooker and arrests her for prostitution or if he solicits or makes himself available for solicitation by gay men and then arrests them for some residual sodomy offense, such as disorderly or lewd conduct. Otherwise, the officer is just another perpetrator since the case often hinges upon the exchange of words, codes, and/or gestures rather than actions such as touching. But just how believable or reliable is the arresting officer in such a case, particularly in the case of Larry Craig. The officer perpetrates a fraud and is studied in deception and dissimulation, pretending to be an unsuspecting visitor to an Airport men's room or even a willing participant in gay sex, who is just waiting for the appropriate signal from a likeminded individual. Here the line between entrapment and interdiction, solicitation and incitement could hinge upon the subtleties of the officer's promptings and responses to presumed overtures. If the Senator stares intently through the crack in the partition for over two minutes without the officer ever giving any signal that the advances are unwelcome, then it seems the officer has crossed the line into incitement and entrapment, perhaps not in the eyes of the law but certainly from the perspective of reason. Any of the subsequent actions that the Senator took soliciting the officer would seem to defy charges of invasion of privacy or disorderly or lewd conduct as the undercover cop has offered a non-verbal signal as clear as any of the Senator's. In the absence of physical evidence, the case should come down to a contest between one individual's word against another's. A presumption of greater honesty based upon professional credibility here is also problematic. Whereas one would like to believe that the veracity of each individual based upon his professional affiliation is beyond reproach, in actuality a presumption of dishonesty prevails in both—a feather would turn the scale. Both professions advocate the use of duplicity, fabrication, and falsehood in the interests of an often constructed and/or imaginary public good. However, in the case of the Minneapolis Airport men's room, can we know that the law enforcement officer is the only one actually putting it into practice? If in both professions, practicing dissimulation is a matter of principle, should we assume that only the officer is perpetrating a fraud in the men's room? Should Craig also be considered every bit as dishonest and, by virtue of that dishonesty, innocent of a sincere appeal for queer sex in a "quasi-public" location? Perhaps Craig should instead have been charged with lying to a police officer for making insincere gestures of affection.

In the evaluation of one's veracity, quite often the extent to which the individual can be considered unbiased is a crucial measure. Consider the impact that the revelation of Mark Furman's occulted racial bias

had upon the O.J. Simpson trial. With what confidence can the public or the gay community assume that the officer in the Larry Craig debacle was acting without prejudice against homosexual activity in general, since homophobia—even homosexual panic—is still widely acceptable within American culture and even expected, condoned, and celebrated in some of the country’s most venerated social institutions—i.e. the church and most patriarchal social organizations. The repeal of sodomy laws certainly does not signal the end of prejudice, which is still codified in a variety of laws, such as those banning same sex marriage and those denying equal protection against discrimination in housing and hiring to gays and lesbians. Not only can we not assume that the officer in the Larry Craig case was unbiased, we can reasonably assume that he was and the law is. Not only do these kinds of sting operations by their very nature signify a judicial bias against homosexual activity, but they indicate that there has been little social or judicial progress as a result of *Lawrence v. Texas*. Indeed, even the most fundamental principles of the Supreme Court decision still have not had a lasting impact on law enforcement activities in some areas of the country. In June 2007, a priest nabbed in a Waynesville N.C. sting operation for asking an undercover officer to go home with him, was charged with “soliciting for a crime against nature.” The priest’s lawyer argued that the law was “brazenly unconstitutional,” yet by that time the principal damage was already done, the event having trumpeted throughout the media (“Bathroom Sting”). In this case you can also see that the charge was not for public sex but was leveled against a speech act, a proposition to engage in a presumably legal activity

The role of the “disorderly conduct” charge in residual sodomy prosecutions is worthy of a more careful examination. Initially, it is a show of resolution, signaling the length to which law enforcement will go in order to continue to enforce regulations forbidding homosexual activity. As there are no more sodomy laws, law enforcement must resort to a catch all category, which despite its lack of specificity and its innocuous status as a misdemeanor, nevertheless, achieves the desired outcome as it necessitates that an explanation for the charges be placed in the judicial record where all of the lurid details can be laid out for the purposes of eliciting public disgrace along with all of the attendant indignities--loss of reputation, professional ruin, financial insolvency, and often divorce. The charge is disorderly conduct for some behavior; it is not an empty category. Senator Craig was given the option of pleading guilty to “disorderly conduct” immediately or be charged with the more serious and explicit crime of “lewd conduct.” As he explained later, he had hoped to put the traumatic event behind him as rapidly as possible, so he injudiciously elected to plead guilty. The false dilemma represented by the respective charges seems to offer anonymity versus humiliation, privacy versus publicity, and preservation versus ruin; however, both charges offer the latter category in each of the forgoing pairings. The judicial deal making was even more of an entrapment than the washroom dissimulation since both charges guaranteed notoriety; however, the charge that seemed to offer the most hope to rectify the situation quietly also contained a clause which barred any appeal based upon legal innocence. What person, after enduring the trauma of arrest in a public place, would not plead guilty or no contest to the lesser charge, hoping that the ordeal would not ruin his/her life, particularly when the lesser charge holds out the false hope of deliverance? The devastated individual actually elects order over disorder. He acquiesces for sake of an imaginary secrecy and self-preservation to an agreement that guarantees the continuation of an unjust prosecution of male sex.

Disorderly conduct also operates as an interesting metaphor in the scenarios presented here. The structure

of the public restroom with its flimsy partitions operates to produce orderly and discrete bodies, offering only enough privacy to keep genitalia carefully concealed, but not enough to encourage infringement of propriety. Indeed the so-called privacy of the space is always already infiltrated by spying eyes, but not the eyes of authorities (although, as we have already seen, there are many examples of the same). But the only partially concealed spaces are structured so the individual subject will remain self-regulating, believing, as do the denizens of Foucault/Bentham's panopticon, that there may be someone watching any given time. The space that offers the most promise of privacy is then a place that inspires the greatest expectation of oversight and intrusion. The various partitions between stools and urinals direct the vision downward, offering only blank walls and dissuading peripheral sight that may contribute to the discomfort of others. The public washroom is the place where one is watched but is never permitted to watch. Disorderly conduct occurs when one occupant breaches the quiet and solitude of the discretely regulated stalls, stalls which invite and facilitate oversight by the regulating gaze of authority but foreclose the gaze of associates; it occurs when one refuses to obey the dictates of the architectural machine which functions to tame or dissuade indulgence of men's sexual impulses, to repress the pleasure principle. The liminality of the status between public private, the flimsy partition in the bathroom signals the liminality of homosexuality within the law, within America— it is inside and outside.

In the case of the cruising grounds of southwest Florida, the charge of disorderly conduct seems metaphorical and ironic. The idea that a sexual transgressor could be disorderly is highly paradoxical, considering the untamed aspect of the region itself where nature breaches all order, restraint, and structure. The free reign of all bodily appetites would seem to be completely apropos in a location where fertility and growth riot unchecked, making war on human structures. There can be no expectation that a third party might witness the act of gratification in a nature setting so vast. As in the Minneapolis Airport restroom, law enforcement and other social institutions are attempting to impose order upon biological pulse and impulse, trying unsuccessfully to order and discipline nature, but nature's inclination continually violates the integrity of these structures, whether spreading its verdant arms across the neglected pavement or crawling over the partitions in the public facilities; copulation and generation will thrive. The efforts to impose order on South Florida's hog trails operate as a convenient metaphor for the endeavors to interdict homosexual activities there and elsewhere. The structures of compulsory heterosexuality cannot restrain the still greater impulse to indulge those sexual expressions to which the individual is inclined. The effort to tame the wilderness then becomes an analogue to the attempt to structure and channel cravings, to construct subdivisions and partitions, portioning, taming, restraining, and ordering human desire.

It is easy to despise and condemn a man like Senator Larry Craig for his hypocrisy and to make well-deserved jokes about his indiscretion in the Minneapolis Airport men's room. It seems like poetic justice that he should be caught in a police sting that signifies the continued persecution and prosecution of gay men by law enforcement more than five years after the *Lawrence v. Texas*, particularly since the Senator has persistently voted against legal protections for gays and lesbians and has even supported aggressive efforts to guarantee that the same never have equal rights. However, there are some more important issues at stake in the incident than revenge can accommodate. The queer communities cannot afford to tolerate the kind of police entrapments and harassments that ensnared Larry Craig. Keep in mind that the people

who have found the incident so scandalous and/or amusing—late night comedians, political commentators—are in all probability heterosexual or merely oblivious to the way in which such operations have worked to humiliate and destroy men who have sex with men, and those who believe that such operations are undertaken with anything but malice and ill will for the queer community are quite simply naïve. These operations have not changed in decades save insofar as they no longer actually operate within gay bars. It was not long ago that a person could be arrested for soliciting a police officer inside the queerest club in town, and if the current interpretation of *Lawrence v. Texas* continues, an interpretation that still makes it illegal to proposition an undercover policeman, there is nothing stopping law enforcement from resuming such practices.

While it may be a kneejerk impulse to distance oneself from those who allegedly troll for sex in public spaces, we cannot afford to dismiss these sting operations as something that happens to other men, or reject the victims because they make the gay community look bad and hinder the struggle for equal rights. The police who arrest such men are not objective, applying the law equally to all members of the population; they are singling out homosexual activity for special attention. Until the gay community can be certain, the laws enforced against Senator Craig are being applied equally to the entire population or not at all, we cannot afford to be indifferent or entertained or happy at his downfall, and it is particularly myopic to argue that only gay men are having so-called public sex. The dominant culture simply sees the instances of gay male public sex as particularly brazen, repellent, and threatening since such encounters often take place within the same spaces in which exclusively heterosexual men function, offering up the possibility that straight men may be subject to propositions or alternatively witness an act between others.

Gay and bisexual men have an obligation to fight the continued prosecution of residual sodomy laws by refusing to plead guilty to a lesser charge, thereby perpetuating such police tactics. The operations need to be examined by the court system beyond the local level. They cannot be so easily defended against legal challenge. Craig was right when he said that his mistake was pleading guilty. The will of the local government to bankroll a complicated prosecution that could result in a federal lawsuit alleging discrimination and unconstitutionality may be very limited. The victims of these operations need to hire a lawyer. Such reactions will certainly make the sting operations more costly than they are advantageous for local government and law enforcement. The cost for the queer communities of doing nothing is too high to be countenanced, and those costs are measured in profession, families, and lives. Not long ago, the Coroner in a nearby Kentucky county was arrested for presumably exposing himself to an undercover police officer in a local park. Unless the man was a flasher, it is difficult to believe that he exposed himself without the seeming consent and encouragement of the policeman. His indiscretion was the subject of headlines all over the region. Shortly thereafter he disappeared only to be found a week later dead from an apparent suicide in a hotel room only a few blocks from my home.

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Before the Bunker.

By Steve Redhead

A 'bunker' called Martello Tower No 73 stands guard over the coastline of Eastbourne in East Sussex almost two centuries after it was originally built.



A circular, semi-conical building policing the security of English territory across the sea from France, Martello Tower No 73 is the last of seventy-four forts to be built on the coast in a line between Suffolk and Sussex in the South East of England in the early 1800s. They have never been used in war but they represent a time 'before the bunker', a pre-history of modern military architecture symbolised by the World War 2 bunkers of the Atlantic coast.



Martello Tower No 74, at Seaford, just past Beachy Head on the way from Eastbourne, is also still standing. Some of the seventy-four forts have been converted over the years into contemporary living accommodation. Some are derelict.

This article for Nebula is a photo-essay. It is a homage to Paul Virilio's book *Bunker Archaeology*. First published in 1975 in French, it was republished with this seeming spelling error in the title intact, in January 2009. The relationship between text and image replicates and refracts his alignment of text and image. The capacity to use an online refereed environment to re-locate and reconfigure this old book seems not only timely but appropriate.

Paul Virilio has argued that 'war was my starting point. I discovered the bunkers when I discovered freedom...my discovery of the bunker was the discovery of a child who was claustrophobic...For me the bunker is a kind of metaphor for suffocation, asphyxiation, both what I fear and what fascinates me.' (Virilio and Lotringer, 2002: 23)



The Martello fortresses, precursors of the World War 2 German bunkers in France which Virilio famously studied in his ‘bunker archaeology’ and ‘cryptic architecture’ in the 1950s and 1960s, were directly copied from Corsican forts on Mortella Point. They were designed, in England, to rebuff a Napoleonic invasion from over the water, an invasion which never materialised (1). Virilio’s bunkers were built to keep the Allies out of German occupied France. He experienced strategic Allied bombing in Normandy as a child in World War 2, an experience he never forgot. He swam out to sea to see the bunkers, the blockhouses that were built to defend fascism.



Locally in East Sussex the Martello Tower is known as the Wish Tower from the marshy area close to it (known as the ‘wash’ which became, in adaptation over the years, ‘wish’). The towers were built up to thirteen feet thick in places on the seaward side, using enough bricks (half a million) to build forty modern houses, and calculated to repel Napoleonic naval bombardment. Virilio talks of finding out about the German bunkers – he emphasises that the thinnest wall of the bunkers he photographs is ‘five feet thick’ and that there is ‘twenty feet of concrete for the submarine foundations’.



In the late 1950s, a young Paul Virilio (Redhead, 2006, Redhead, 2004a, Redhead, 2004b) first put pen to paper about the German bunkers he had been photographing along the Atlantic coast. The partnership he forged with architect Claude Parent (Redhead, 2005) in the 1960s around the idea of ‘the function of the oblique’ (Virilio and Lotringer, 2008) was based in Virilio’s photographic study of the German bunkers. The two ‘hip gunslingers’ of ‘Architecture Principe’ went on to create a ‘post-architecture’ of sorts, envisioning people living on inclined planes with buildings sprouting furniture coming out of the floor; a whole city, indeed, on an incline. The buildings, such as churches, they created together were based on bunkers (Virilio and Lotringer, 2002).



The bunkers along the Atlantic Wall totalled 15,000 and were designed to repel Allied attack against

occupied France.



These bunkers had fascinated Virilio since he was a ten year old boy evacuated to Nantes in the Second World War where he says he learnt at the ‘university of disaster’ (Virilio, 2009a). The subsequent military architecture studies led him to an understanding of what he calls the ‘space of war’. Eventually, he would study ‘spacetime’ and its conversion into ‘space-speed’.



Paul Virilio always saw himself as a ‘blitzkrieg baby’ or ‘war baby’ and later was himself conscripted into the French army during the Algerian war of independence. Virilio subsequently published the very short piece ‘Bunker Archeologie’ (see translation in Redhead, 2004a: 11-13) and eventually an illustrated book called *Bunker Archaeology* (Virilio, 2009b, English translation) following an original French edition in 1975 and the exhibition of his collection of text and images on the bunkers at the Decorative Arts Museum in Paris in 1975.



Sociologist Mike Gane has written, convincingly, of Paul Virilio's 'bunker theorising' (Gane in Armitage, 2000). Moreover, the idea of the architecture of fortification, and 'fortification as architecture', has been subjected to wide historical and social survey (Hirst, 2005: 179-223). The Wish Tower bunker in the series of photographs presented here recalls, from two centuries earlier, Virilio's 'modern' bunker studies.



For Virilio ‘the bunker is the symbol of modern times’.

Notes

*All photographs by Tara Brabazon, Professor of Media, University of Brighton, Sussex, England.

1. A symposium called ‘Trajectories of the Catastrophic’ was organised by City Lights Bookstore at the San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, USA, in October 2008 to bring together scholars looking at the work of Paul Virilio, especially ‘bunker archaeology’, speed politics and ‘the logistics of catastrophe’ - http://www.citylights.com/info/?fa=event&event_id=402.

The symposium incorporated a ‘Bunker Tour’ of the World War 2 military bunker on Marin Headlands, Fort Chronkhite, Marin County. The bunker, like the Martello towers in Suffolk and Sussex, was built for an overseas invasion which never came.

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Footballers' Wive\$' Tanya Turner: Bolivian Marching Powder, Booze and Baby Snatching = D.I.V.A.!

By Michael Angelo Tata

Importing/Exporting the Medusa

On Ann McManus' and Maureen Chadwick's outlandish, opulent and thoroughly outrageous serial *Footballers' Wives* (BBC; 2002-2006), she (Zoe Lucker) weaves in and out of respectability, mistress of all domains impressed by her toxic yet intoxicating presence.ⁱ Buff, blonde and kissed by a perpetual stream of UV rays, she is fashion plate and sociopath in one killer package. Only briefly occupying the slot of victim, as when in the inaugural episode Club Chairman Frank Laslett (John Foregham) crosses her by signing an Italian newbie who will eclipse the fame of her team-captain husband and her volcanic response is to beat him into a coma, when, in Season Four, the love of her life Conrad (Ben Price) spurns her for his Bollywood princess Amber Gates (Laila Rouass) and the two orchestrate her banishment from the UK, or when, in her final hour, she mistakenly inhales a line of cocaine mixed with strychnine, she is irrepressibly an omnivorous predator with a well-developed taste for blood, semen and all things lab-synthesized.ⁱⁱ

Even when she loses, she goes out in a blaze of glory, exiting like a true banshee only to return at double the strength. Murderer, she secretly plies her cardiac-challenged husband with Viagra in order to ensure his timely exit after she has milked him for his millions and is ready to move on to the next conquest. Hormones raging, she passes off an Indian child plucked from the uterus of her amorous rival Amber as her own, paying Nurse Dunkley (Julie Legrand) to burn his skin with bleach while she smiles for the paparazzi and puffs her ciggies, long white Bronx fingernails tapping the ashes away.ⁱⁱⁱ Alcohol hound and drug fiend, she distances herself from the realm of the edible in the never-ending quest for a Prada-worthy body, eschewing calories altogether for the wonders of the Coca leaf and the distilled magic of the potato. In part modeled on Victoria "Posh Spice" Beckham, she graces our television screens for one blissful hour per week to act out our own fantasies of leaving behind our own fleshy torsos and the moral and ethical strings binding them to their respective societies for a super-body ruled only by chemicals and an all-encompassing mania for international fame. We could never be her: hence, the necessity for her existence as crowning glory of capitalism and postmodernism. She is our worst self, the creature we could never be

yet whose existence we ache for in and of her capacity to spice up our own lives ruled by Kantian reason and Rousseauian renunciation.^{iv} For her, there is no categorical imperative, no social contract, not even the “discontent” that Freud identifies as civilization’s remainder, only a war of all against all which can only be won through violence and vengefulness.^v

Yet in the zone of her magnificence, other specimens comprising a species emerge from the shadows: they are that impossible, fictive and unstoppable category of XX-chromosome divinities heralded as perhaps the most overworked gay term ever, Divas. “Divas to the Dance Floor, Please!”; “How Do You Spell Diva?”; “Girl, that is so diva...”^{vi} Related obliquely to both Queens and Fag Hags, the Diva shares the regality and authoritativeness of the absolute despot with historical queens like Elizabeth I or Catherine the Great while also partaking of the Hag’s particular and specific access to the male homosexual, whose desires she colonizes and monopolizes to the point of suffocation—as, for example, Debra Messing’s character Grace on NBC sitcom *Will and Grace* and her effect on the sex life of “main gay”^{vii} Will Truman, played by Eric McCormack, or the bizarre control exerted by Marie Mencken on her “son” Gerard Malanga in Warhol classic *The Chelsea Girls* (1966).^{viii}

Transcending the staid social norms imposed upon other docile women, the diva assumes a position of total monstrosity: she rules, and will do anything and everything in her power to ensure that her will achieves perfect expression. Escapee from a Nietzschean fantasy of absolute power and the purity of ego of the sort envisioned by his *Beyond Good & Evil*, she marches over the corpses of those silly enough to imagine they could control or contain her enormous appetites: truly, she transvalues all value, leaving “good” and “evil” behind for matrices in which action and performance are all that count. Performing on a stage which has engulfed the entire world, she never loses sight of her ideal audience, the homosexual male. Forming a dyad, the two roll through the streets with an unstoppable inertia of histrionics and scopophilia: in the real world. In the universe of the soap opera, the homosexual is culled from her fan base, the two united across the thin glass epidermis of the TV screen. He needs her to mortify, scandalize, wreck, and she could not survive without his rarefied taste for female trouble. She acts out his most morbid and grotesque fantasies, and he catcalls. She sacrifices herself to the eternal flame of addiction, and he makes mental notes for a future eulogy.^{ix}

Tanya Turner is one such diva—in my estimation, the most important recent arrival to cloy contemporary appetites for destruction. Her superiority and brutality stand out, linking her to other generic predecessors such as Joan Collins (Alexis Carrington Colby, *Dynasty*), Donna Mills (Abby Cunningham, *Knots Landing*) or Heather Locklear (Amanda Woodward, *Melrose Place*), while also leaving one hand open to beckon to future manifestations of the wicked impulses she so innocently and selflessly embodies.^x Like her operatic forbear, the “Diva” diva, she stands at the center of drama and intrigue, all roads leading to and intersecting her chakric network of energy pulses and alkaline pools.

Like opera star Grassini in Thomas de Quincey’s *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, her great art is to force hallucinations upon a rapt world—and a rapt queer.^{xi} Like the parade of opera divas, most of them sopranos, obsessing Wayne Koestenbaum in *Cleavage*—Dawn Upshaw, Elisabeth Shwarzkopf, Angela

Gheorgiu—the non-opera diva makes an epic out of the inconsequential.^{xii} Unlike her contemporaries on American juggernaut *Desperate Housewives* (ABC, 2004—present), she is not so much desperate as the condition of possibility of the desperateness of others. No clumsy Susan Mayer (Teri Hatcher), low-level sexpot Edie Britt (Nicolette Sheridan), domestic demon Bree Van de Kamp (Marcia Cross), bourgeois bore Lynette Scavo (Felicity Huffman), or philandering socialite Gabrielle Solis (Eva Longoria), Tanya Turner lives on no ordinary suburban street and will not be caught dead in Abercrombie. The world her runway, Tanya jets around the Commonwealth and beyond, where her exploits resonate and her gossamer threads ensnare unsuspecting and infinitely less intelligent men who could never for even a moment glimpse her destructive potential because, as correctly assessed by Val Solanas in her *SCUM Manifesto*, the Y chromosome is defective.^{xiii}

In order for Tanya Turner to be appreciated as “Diva” in the first place, the phenomenon of divahood must itself be examined under a queer electron microscope. For if it occurs at the junction of Queen and Hag, it might also pop up on other female cartographies. That Tanya qualifies as some sort of harpy or virago seems evident, yet even these terms demand a closer reading, given, for example, their extraction from Greek mythology (harpy, siren, Fury) or from the language of sexology (Krafft-Ebing’s *Psychopathia Sexualis* contains its fair share of masculine women treated as psychopaths). True enough, Tanya’s wickedness does appear under the guise of masculinity. Not a moral creampuff like Conrad, and not an indiscriminate center of pusillanimity and sexual ravishment like her first husband Jason (Christian Soumeno), she parcels out her cruelty methodically and with painstaking precision. Spiderlike, and every inch a black widow, she reverses the male/female power dynamic governing cross-culturally so much human behavior, dwarfing all men in her life with a testosterone power surge transforming her into a ruthless arch-enemy and precarious lover ever seconds away from a beheading.

Men can only underdetermine her: physically, she is a powerhouse, and psychologically, a thorough menace. Whether or not a dose of strychnine can put out her lights is a question phrased in a vacuum, yet as we wait breathlessly for some future episode to satisfy our curiosity, we are not even remotely convinced that she has come to an end. Transcending the natural limits posed by space and time, the diva prevails, haunting local myth and legend with exploits that future generations might emulate yet never supersede. Larger than life because we need her to be larger than life, a diva like Tanya Turner assumes her place in the vitrine of the feminine as an exotic specimen rivaling El Chupacabras or some other chimaera of cryptozoology, exhibiting herself for our pleasure and, like it or not, education. Sadean heroine, she squashes, smashes, claws and exhausts, turning all rooms into her boudoir and revealing a Darwinian struggle at the core of polite society.

Diva Theory

As with all marvelous creatures, the Diva too must find herself subject to the taxonmizing gaze of the cultural critic, if only so that her rarity and rarefaction might be relationally understood and her aesthetics

might be metabolized and savored. Though there is no standard Museum of Divahood, just as there is a Museum of Natural History or, in New York City, Museum of Sex, there is a grand tradition of the intractable and truculent woman, a phantasmic hominid haunting many cultures in many guises: hence the title of Kylie Minogue's *Impossible Princess* (Mushroom Records, 1997), a catchphrase applying not only to the pop star, but to fellow centers of conflictual orders and contradictory impulses. At times a sexual frightfest whose *vagina dentata* devours pricks, at times a "female Quixote," "Betsey Thoughtless" or "Emma" whose moral bumbling must find itself put in check by the sobering parameters of the novel, the diva appears throughout mythological, literary and "historical" history as transgressive site and fantasy projection.^{xiv}

Still, how far back to trace a wonder like Tanya Turner is a less important or interesting question than what it is about her surfaces which can inspire the frenzied consumption of the fan and the close attention of the philosopher. Excessive women are a dime a dozen in European and American cultures. They murder their children (Greece: Medea), sell their men down the river (The Aztec Empire: Malinche), mercilessly manipulate the lives of puppet underlings (France: Laclos' Mme de Merteuil), and set fire to the psychoanalyst's sofa (Austria: Freud's Dora). Ultimately, gay, straight and bisexual men all need her, yet for different reasons. For straight and bisexual men, she is the object of conquest, a pinnacle of morality to be taken down from her pedestal and dragged through the mud, as with Mme de Tourvel of Pierre de Laclos' *Liaisons Dangereuses* or Clarissa of Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*. For these men, she may also be the wild shrew demanding cauterization, a terror whose wings must be clipped. She may finally manifest as the trophy wife, a designer femme fatale slung across his arm as an exotic treasure vouchsafing his sexual virility and masculine charm, as with the supremely morbid case of Anna Nicole Smith and J. Howard Marshall. For the gay man, she is sexually neuter, yet aesthetically ripe.

Like Elizabeth Taylor's character Catherine Holly in Tennessee Williams' *Suddenly Last Summer* (Mankiewicz, 1959), her only hope is to become a magnet for his future tricks. While she so many times takes him as sexual object, initiating a doomed love affair ending only in gay divorce, she quickly learns that her role is to ensure a constant stream of glittering surfaces taking the form of high drama. This drama raises the *miniscule* to the *majuscule*, recasting even the most ordinary of lives as a melodramatic smorgasbord of acerbic wit, physical violence and the power of unbridled consumption.

Voracious, the Diva lives each second on the brink of overdoing it. Inhabiting a strange region bordered on one side by anorexia and on the other by supermorbid obesity, she enters life as one who consumes to the point of absurdity. In her anorexic form, as with a diva like Warhol Superstar Edie Sedgwick or, today, freak child stars Lindsay Lohan or Ashley and Mary-Kate Olsen, she sews her mouth shut and opens every other orifice. "Lollipop" and "bobblehead," she concentrates her bodily mass into the zone of her head, then graces it with oversized sunglasses which threaten to topple her forward and parades around town lordling her emaciation over those human enough to eat.^{xv} Anything which numbs her appetite works, all for the gleeful appreciation of a gay audience well accustomed to the beauty of self-destructive behavior and the pleasures of courting death.

Dubbed “Scary Thin” by tabloids like *Star Magazine* and *The National Enquirer*, the career anorexic slides her bones into a pink Lara Flynn Boyle tutu and shows her fans the spectacle of renunciation: they use their incisors to tear the flesh from animal bones while she espouses the ultrasimple diet of the Breatharians.^{xvi} Clearing the table of food, she makes way for rivers of vodka, crops of tobacco, and every drug under the sun. Half-dead, she is a corpse bride married to her queer constituency, whom she viciously guards and insulates from other female centers (one fag hag per square mile, or some such ratio). Well on her way to sainthood, she is a Teresa of Avila who starves not to achieve union with a mortified divine presence, but rather to transform into an Arcade mannequin.^{xvii} Neither she nor the fatty can stand one another—an understandable conflict, given their respective takes on uses of the body and the value of the organic. While she moves toward a two-dimensional existence, her overweight sister blossoms and balloons, attracting an orbiting entourage of fags enamored by her many lusts. As remarked by the Duc de Blangis in the Marquis de Sade’s *120 Days of Sodom*, those who cannot eat cannot screw: this bit of wisdom the eater comprehends with all her being, her racing libido making the unfortunate détour through the gay ghetto, where her sexual desires will reconstitute as an appetite for fame among the fags—i.e., as a metamorphosis from consumer to comestible, from devouring to devoured. In short, she becomes their food, and they grow fat on her excesses. Taking them as her love object, she distances herself from those venues where she might actually meet the man of her dreams in favor of a gay theaterscape where sex is replaced entirely by notoriety: “Oh, no, she did-n’t!!!” Yes, she actually did, and all so that you might feel cinematic and alive. Martha Wash’s video for *Give It to You* (RCA, 1993) visually represents her epitome: engorged queen to a room of monogamous muscleboys, she sucks them into an anthill interior where her charms will nourish them and obviate the need for any other uterus.

Whatever her bodily disposition, the diva is primarily a weaver of trances, as it is through her inebriating presence that all men are robbed of their manhood. For straights and bisexuals, she offers baby substitutions, false pregnancy tests, altered lineages and skewed primogeniture, while for homosexual men she extends the opportunity to hoot, holler and carry on. Exemplary Siren extracted from an Odyssean present, her voice is enough to inspire transport, loss of identity, and blind obedience. Enunciating each syllable which passes through her lips with clarity and perfection à la Liza Minnelli, she makes sure that her words resonate in the empty minds of her marks.^{xviii} As with any good Shakespearian she-devil (a Regan, a Goneril, a Queen Tamora), she manipulates the sensual details of the world in order to hoodwink its interpreters into apprehending an order that, as her prized handiwork, bears an inverted relation to things as they really are. Most successful at restaging reality such that it bears the imprint of her will, she is a worldmaker in the extreme. In her novelistic and soap-operaly form, the diva runs the show.

Setting up a variety of potentials between truth and falsity, she manufactures energy deposits which will fuel countless pages and/or episodes. Text and TV show are her batteries. In them she stores gradients, as, for example, when a pilfered identity takes years to resolve. Without her, there would be no desperation, and, hence, no beauty; as with any good aesthetics, hers is rooted in a human capacity for survival gone haywire. Acting in the heat of a moment threatening to annihilate her, she thinks quickly, proving to be an opportunist making even Oscar Wilde blush. Operatically, she does not so much concoct chaos as inspire and preside over it. Whether she is de Quincey’s Grassini belting out an aria or Donna Summer blasting

a Bocelli remix across the plains of the discothèque, her voice is the outcast's ether.^{xix} The rich and robust splendor of her spacious voice seems to promise a revision to ideal gas law. Opening an expanse, she leads the way to a new order where the pariah, be he a drug fiend (de Quincey) or gay man (Donna Summner's ideal audiencegoer), discovers the proper soil for his flowering. Swelling with hope, an eminent Warhol homo like Ondine finds his existence passing into electric dimensions where his own Popedom can flower in an ecclesiastical Cuckooland of his own design.^{xx}

When her victims sober up, all hell will most certainly break loose, yet she will not be around to pick up the pieces. On *Footballers' Wives*, when Tanya's plot to switch hers and Frank's baby with Amber's and Conrad's unravels and, for once, the truth has won out, the story demands that Tanya be shuttled to the airport via helicopter while dressed to kill in a canary business suit which can barely contain her breasts. Exiled to Rio by Amber and Conrad, she flies the coop after directing one or two vicious barbs toward the happy couple and their newly found son, ready to undertake fresh mayhem. In other places, the diva similarly vanishes once her work has been uncovered, at times finding herself the object of terrible vindication, yet for the most part safely absconding to an alternate geography where her wiles will once again prevail.

Even with Tanya, only the space of a few minutes separates the scene of her banishment from one of her working the beaches of Brazil for a new sugar daddy, proving to us that she is once again on the ascent. If the diva dies, she dies extravagantly, puncturing a hole in space and time as she departs for places unknown. Even when she is gone, we know in our heart of hearts that she might reappear in a revived form, leaping from the bathtub like Glenn Close in *Fatal Attraction* (Adrian Lyne, 1987). In all earnestness, she never commits any crime, even when dismembered limbs litter her flagstones, since she operates well above local law and custom, wielding a sovereignty making even the most austere 18th-century *philosophe* reconsider the origins of civil order. Comprehending that rules are for the weak, she invents her own morality as she goes along, pragmatic to a fault. While others might consent to a *contrat social*, she is never foolish enough to relinquish even one drop of her personal freedom, putting her venom in the service of corroding any chains which threaten to tie her down and compromise her mobility. "Society reinvents itself with each individual," she seems to whisper, "if only one is brave enough to accept the challenge."

Though it might sound odd at first, in truth men of all ilks need her to be powerful, voracious and unflinching in the execution of her desires. A paradigmatic example of her necessity as erotic prop would be the text of Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's *Venus in Furs*, specifically Wanda von Dunajew's continual resistance to transforming into what Gilles Deleuze labeled the "cloacal mother," a center of chaos.^{xxi} Ultimately, Severin wills Venus into existence, sculpting an unwilling Wanda into this icy white witch all for his own sexual pleasure and sensual fulfillment. Only able to experience the heights of fetishistic joy when under the absolute command of a female despot, Severin forces Wanda to assume a role that, in the end, she masters. Like Severin, men of all sexual orientations come together to erect the diva, who supports perverse aims and involuted libidos with her claims of omnipotence and omniscience. She is willed into existence by men sexually attracted to the impossible princess, as well as by men who identify with her horrors.

The power she wields might never find itself concentrated into a single body, as it does in a music video, novel, opera or soap opera, and so men from all backgrounds demand the miracle of her appearance. She might dominate a sexual scenario or take over a gay nightclub, yet in each situation it is her body from which all rays emanate and in which all points converge. As she materializes, bizarre demands follow, most in violation of logic's Law of Contradiction. A turbine for double binds, she is the birthplace of schizophrenia, a behemoth speaking in tongues which can only be mistranslated. Whether we follow her commands to the letter or veer off on another path, we act in error. In *Either/Or*, Søren Kierkegaard develops a sanity-saving formula: You are always in the wrong against God.^{xxii} And so it is with the Diva: any and all action on the part of her men is sinful. Whether she mounts them or causes a public commotion, whether she steals a sample of his hair to alter a DNA test or belts out "Oops...I Did It Again," all that is permitted is the perpetual acknowledgment of her radical freedom and sovereignty. She may only be appreciated, never interpreted.

Vicarious Exorbitance from across the Pond

Back on *Footballers' Wives*, Tanya Turner continues to wreak havoc on anyone pitiable enough to occlude her path. As with the production, marketing and sale of the diva as prime commodity, there is always the problem of differentiation. What will separate one fictitious mega-bitch from her grandiose predecessor? How can she survive in a medium already saturated with toxic progesterone? Will she have anything at all to do with a real-world Nastyqa on whom she might in no small part be modeled? On a show with no truly hateful male vixen of the sort made famous by Larry Hagman's character JR Ewing, il Divo incarnate, on *Dallas*, a power vacuum forms making way for a super-lethal Jezebel to take over.^{xxiii} Without the extremes she both provides and inspires, there would be no menace, no fire, no motivation for anybody else to behave abominably. Dialectically, she is a revved-up Hegelian antithesis, whose passions and perversions fuel social chain reactions, making Chernobyl and Three Mile Island appear quaint and lovely. Her fury violates the Enlightenment thesis that reality is primarily rational in nature, her presence an atavistic return to a world ruled by violent inhuman forces placing emergent *Homo sapiens* in peril. Consequently, we need to see her punished, since her success might undermine centuries of domestication.

Hence, despite the great pains she takes to manipulate her environment to her advantage, Tanya Turner suffers exquisitely. Her tears fall the hardest, as when Jason Turner humiliates her by sleeping with Jackie Webb (Gillian Taylforth) and fathering an intersexual child, or when Conrad nearly strangles her to death for arranging for Nurse Dunkley to perform a fetal switcheroo. Furthermore, her physique more than anybody's experiences anguish, as best demonstrated by the bodily spasms that rock her after the Viagra she slips her husband Frank does the trick and his heart gives out. Removing his hand from the telephone and staring him dead in the eye with a look of hate and vehemence, she drinks in every aspect of his death throes, her quivering fingernails closing his eyes as her shaky lip stabilizes itself in preparation for the necessary hospital call. When, later in the season, Frank's lawyer gives her a videotape in which Frank explains that, during their intense sexual encounters, he used only condoms poked through with holes,

leaving Tanya to conclude that her pregnancy is not the result of an Edenic romp with Conrad, but rather the product of repulsive intercourse with a man she detested, she once again goes visceral. Tearing open a condom and filling it with water, she watches aghast as tube turns into sieve. Furious, she hurls the condom at her TV set and screams to full capacity while the sticky plastic love glove adheres to Frank's pixelized countenance. Unlike diva predecessors within her genre, Tanya leaves the circumference of language, returning to a time when onomatopoeia and the grunt ruled.

All in all, Tanya Turner arrives in America at a time when the popularity of the Diva has waned. Her carnivorous tendencies, coupled with an adherence to the sartorial principles of *haute couture*, reveal a decadence out of tune with wartime values and post-911 anxieties. An overt dependence on alcohol and drugs makes matters only worse for a public more interested in a goody-goody like Teri Hatcher. When even Madonna tames down her act and takes to the writing of children's literature and comprehension of cabalistic truths, claiming to have dissolved her overdeveloped ego in favor of an agapic world-soul, there is little hope for the success of the superbitch. Reminding us of how things once were and how they one day will be again, Tanya drives through town in a bulldozer, sacrificing everything in the name of carnal lust. Without her, there is only Wisteria Lane and the *Da Vinci Code*, bland bourgeois Levittowns where the present is so boring that we must reinvent the past. With Tanya, there is hope for the return of ego and its glamorous workings. Revivifying Hobbesian speculations about a primal bellicosity buried deep within the social organon, as well as Shakesperian phantasmagorias of incredible brutality (*Titus Andronicus*), she is a bat out of hell come to haunt our dull start of a new millennium with vistas of more wicked days to come. No sleepy suburbanite bumbling about the business of her life clad in Banana Republic or American Apparel, Tanya is a royal reincarnate whose autarchic tendencies promise ruination for anybody retro enough to think democratically.^{xxiv}

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ⁱ Though finished in Great Britain, *Footballers' Wives* is in its fourth season on BBC America. This lag is

somewhat humorous, setting up a temporal disparity between dual Tanyas, one live and one in limbo, one an open project and the other a *fait accompli*. This split recalls a party in Sydney where I was the hit of the evening because *Passions* (NBC) was being broadcast in Australia at a five-year gap. Like a clairvoyant, I predicted the odd destinies of Harmony's denizens for a spellbound audience. Never have I possessed such power!

ⁱⁱ The Tanya strychnine situation calls to mind other famous strychnine ingesters: the Holy Ghost People of Georgia. Awestruck anthropologists have studied their odd rituals, which include draping themselves with poisonous snakes and imbibing gulps of strychnine, all to prove their predestination as God's beloved. See, for example, *Holy Ghost People* (Peter Adair, Thistle Films, 1967). As the noxious powder flies nasally upward toward her sinus cavity, Tanya, too, proves to be the recipient of divine favor (there is no way she will ever die, even if Zoe Lucker should be struck down by lightning and incinerated outside the TV's charmed quadrangle). Like all divas, Tanya Turner is immortal.

ⁱⁱⁱ Like *Sex and the City*'s Carrie Bradshaw (Sarah Jessica Parker), Tanya Turner knows just which bit of "outer borough" style to snatch and jazz up. While for Bradshaw the gold nameplate necklace is the item of choice, for Tanya the pilfered look *de choix* is the long, sculpted fingernail of the fly girl. Even Tanya's real-world analogue Victoria Posh Spice Beckham plays along, naming her child "Brooklyn" in an effort to co-opt an ethnic caché connoting danger and street credibility, as well as raw American-ness.

^{iv} In Gayatri Spivak's introduction to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, she makes the bold move of identifying the Sadean heroine as paragon of pure reason. Like the Sadean hydra, Tanya, too, displays the cold and calculating spirit of the Kantian Houyhnhnm. Glacial and detached, she reveals rationality to be a disembodied game won by the sociopathic, as it is only for them that humanity can be raised to an abstract principle of, for example, "unconditional worth." See *Frankenstein* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1996).

^v For Kant, the categorical imperative guarantees that an individual act only in a universal capacity, transcending the narrow limits of self to view the world from a grander perspective; see his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Rousseau's notion of a social contract provides for human discontent to exist as necessary by-product of the construction of a general will, or *volonté générale*. See his *The Social Contract*, trans. Maurice Cranston (London: Penguin Classics, 1968). Following Rousseau, Freud posits a central dissatisfaction inherent to the project of human domestication; see his *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York City: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989). Finally, as regards the "war of all against all," my reference is to Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York City: Touchstone, 1997). All in all, I place Tanya Turner within the context of 18th- and 19th-century political theory in order to facilitate an appreciation of her incredible disregard for the shared project of human civilization and her regression to a more vicious and precarious time: the famed and fabled "State of Nature."

^{vi} "Didn't I Know? (Divas to the Dance Floor Please)" (EG Fullalove, 1997); "Diva" (Pier Queen Remix)

(Kim Cooper, Capitol Records, 1995). Central to queer nightlife, the figure of the diva manifests her true identity as gay support supereminently in the genre of dance music.

vii “Main Gay” is comedienne Kathy Griffin’s term for those homosexuals populating her innermost orbit. Her Bravo TV show *My Life on the D-list* is itself a documentary of Kathy’s dedication to current beloved gay men as well as her perpetual search for new ones—as when she travels to Kuwait to perform in a USO program and is elated to meet a squealing gay American transplant (*Allegedly*, Anchor Bay, 2004).

viii As center of gravity, Marie harangues and harasses her son Gerard for his taste in women. Bizarre electronic music from a Vincent Prize nightmare plays as she berates him for having introduced her to his new girlfriend, played by a seething yet composed Mary Woronov. Married to a gay man in real life, at least according to Woronov in her memoir *Swimming Underground: My Years in the Warhol Factory* (Boston: Journey Editions, 1995), Marie was presumably selected by Warhol to play a role she intimately knew. Like any true diva, she achieves the enviable accolade of using her off-screen divadom to create an on-screen divadom (such is not always the case).

ix Unfortunately, there is no diva/fag bond on any soap opera. For example, although Alexis Carrington is mother to gay son Steven, the operative dyad is Alexis/Adam. As with other soap divas, her gay counterpart inhabits the world on the other side of the screen. *Footballers’ Wives* is no exception, as proven by Tanya’s ruthless treatment of gay footballer Noah Alexander (Marcel McCalla). The sad truth is that the genre is largely homophobic, though, oddly enough, beloved by gay men, such as myself.

x Not coincidentally, Joan Collins appears as character Eve de Wolffe in *Footballers’ Wives* season Five. Glamazon and maternal sicko, she gives Tanya a run for her money when she sets her eyes on her adoptive feral son Paulo.

xi In de Quincey’s text, Grassini becomes the focal point of his drug-induced hypnagogia. Dosing up and heading to the opera, de Quincey uses the diva to support a habit, but also to facilitate a fantasy. Prefiguring the Warhol circle’s preoccupation with opera diva Maria Callas in the 1960s, de Quincey’s affection for Grassini and his ritual of taking laudanum prior to her performances places the homo/diva dynamic at the center of a larger phenomenological debate. See his *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (London: Penguin, 1986).

xii See Koestenbaum’s *Cleavage: Essays on sex, Stars and Aesthetics* (New York City: Ballantine Books, 2000), as well as his *The Queen’s Throat: Opera, Homosexuality and the Mystery of Desire* (New York City: Da Capo Press, 2001). Comprehending the trans-operatic power of a true “diva” like Leontyne Price or Maria Callas, Koestenbaum lifts the diva from the proscenium and places her within the purview of the consuming male homosexual, whose existence is intimately and inextricably tied up with hers in terms of cultural production and appreciation, as well as sexual identification.

xiii See Solanas’ *SCUM Manifesto* (AK Press, 1996).

^{xiv} For the anthropological tradition of the “toothed vagina,” see Camille Paglia’s *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991). For novelistic proto-divas, see Charlotte Lennox’s *The Female Quixote: or the Adventures of Arabella* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), Eliza Haywood’s *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), and Jane Austen’s *Emma* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). Unsurprisingly, these enterprising women find themselves cliterectomized by their respective texts.

^{xv} In common parlance, a “lollipop” or “bobblehead” is an individual so emaciated that her or his head appears hydrocephalic. The first time I heard the term it was used in reference to Robin Givens.

^{xvi} The two current “mass” poles for the diva are Scary Thin and Supermorbid, terms coming to prominence almost simultaneously in the 21st-century. Online blogs offer insights into the phenomenon of “scary thin-ness” as embodied by Nicole Ritchie, Lindsay Lohan, and R  nee Zellweger, among others. “Nicole Richie (sic)...Scary Thin!. What happens when you do heroin? Just ask Nicole Richie (sic)” (www.i-am-bored.com), or, with regard to Kate Bosworth’s recent weight loss, “Another one of the Olsen twins, its scary how people are thinking that looking like a stick figure is ‘fashion now’...don’t worry it’ll wear off soon, when someone dies” (<http://www.usmagazine.com/blog/2006/06/21/kate-super-thin/>). As regards the Breatharians, see their doctrine on www.breatharian.com.

^{xvii} For the various mortifications and deprivations St. Teresa of Avila inflicts upon herself in the pursuit of divinity, see her *Interior Castle* (New York: Image Books, 1989). See also Caroline Walker Bynum’s *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), especially as its insights on the fraught relationship among the female appetite, food, and spirituality might be applied to the current Scary Thin generation of secular flagellants.

^{xviii} Liza’s diction did not appear odd to me until the release of her Pet Shop Boys-produced *Results* album (Sony, 1989). Set against an electronic disco beat, as with the song “Losing My Mind,” her exaggerated pronunciation of a word like “cup” reinforces the fact that she has arrived in clubland via Carnegie Hall (“The coffee cup/ I think about you...”). Misplaced, Liza is Neil Tennant reborn as geriatric child star.

^{xix} Donna Summer’s remake of Andrea Bocelli classic “Con Ti Partiro” in the form of “I Will Go with You” (Sony, 1999) brings opera to the Roxy, literalizing Summer’s status as diva. It is as if we are at La Scala, only with more bare torsos.

^{xx} Regarding Warhol Superstar Ondine and his fascination for Maria Callas, see Warhol’s *a, a novel* (New York: Grove Press, 1989), among other sources addressing the Warhol 60s.

^{xxi} In his *Coldness and Cruelty* (New York: Zone Books, 1991), Gilles Deleuze identifies three Masochian mothers: (1) the uterine/haeteric/cloacal, (2) the Oedipal, and (3) the oral. Tanya is clearly the first, as it is she who brings the noise, as opposed to the Oedipal beloved or the oral nousisher. Regarding Wanda von Dunajew’s relation to her role as Queen B, see *The Confessions of Wanda von Sacher-Masoch* (San

Francisco: Re/Search Classics, 2005).

^{xxii} See “The Edifying in the Thought that Against God We Are Always in the Wrong” in Søren Kierkegaard’s *Either/Or* (Trans. Alastair Hannay; London: Penguin Books, 1992).

^{xxiii} In this essay, I do not deal with il Divo, yet he clearly exists as the Diva’s counterpart. Whether he be an 18th-century rake (*Clarissa*’s Lovelace) or a 20th-century WASP aristocrat (*Passions*’ Alistair Crane), he, like his female analogue, acts all-powerfully and all-knowingly, instituting and implementing one terror campaign after another.

^{xxiv} The recent successes of clothing company American Apparel are evidence of a more conservative American spirit which has shied away from the sumptuary clamor of a Donatella Versace or Roberto Cavalli. Marketed as “vertically engineered,” their simple cotton garments made available in a variety of rainbow hues have made more than a splash for a nervous public less willing to take chances. See www.americanapparel.net for photographs and philosophies.

Companion Species under Fire: A Defense of Donna Haraway's *The Companion Species Manifesto*.

By Chris Vanderwees

According to Marianne Dekoven, Donna Haraway's "A Manifesto for Cyborgs," published in 1985, "signals the end of utopian feminist theory....and the inception of postmodern feminist theory" (1694). Haraway argues that technology constantly challenges gender binaries and in a world of continuous technological advancement, "we become unable to think of ourselves according to these categories or even as merely biological beings" (Richter 1966). She states, "[c]yborg imagery can suggest a way out of the maze of dualisms in which we have explained our bodies and our tools to ourselves" (Haraway, "Manifesto for Cyborgs" 601). Haraway does not argue that all organisms possess fixed or containable identities, but rather that all organisms are always in a process of identification. She not only challenges and destabilizes dualistic arguments pertaining to gender, but also "offers the opportunity of dismantling hierarchies of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and location" (Dekoven 1694). More recently, however, Haraway has left the cyborg behind, stating that she "ha[s] come to see cyborgs as junior siblings in the much bigger, queer family of companion species" (*Companion Species Manifesto* 11). Despite this shift in direction, Haraway's understanding of companion species shares some intimate connections with cyborgs. She argues that companion species function, like cyborgs, to bridge gaps between binary categories:

Cyborgs and companion species each bring together the human and non-human, the organic and technological, carbon and silicon, freedom and structure, history and myth, the rich and the poor, the state and the subject, diversity and depletion, modernity and postmodernity, and nature and culture in unexpected ways. (Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto* 4)

Although cyborgs and companion species function similarly, Haraway writes, "by the end of the millennium, cyborgs could no longer do the work of a proper herding dog to gather up the threads needed for critical inquiry" (*Companion Species Manifesto* 4). And so, she has set aside arguments pertaining to hybrids of organic and mechanical matter and has turned to dogs instead.

In *The Companion Species Manifesto*, Haraway explores how "an ethics and politics committed to the

flourishing of significant otherness [might] be learned from taking dog-human relationships seriously; and...how...stories about dog-human worlds [might] finally convince...people...that history matters in naturecultures” (3). While Haraway’s focus is on dogs, “companion species” also refers to a range of human and non-human animal relationships where humans and non-human animals have co-constitutively evolved alongside one another. Joseph Schneider interprets from Haraway’s argument that “any history of dogs needs to be told as inextricably entwined with the history of *Homo sapiens*” (Schneider 82). Similar to the cyborg, the significance of companion species is neither fixed nor containable, but instead, is always shifting, changing, and incomplete. Haraway explicitly states that the history and understanding of companion species is “permanently in progress, in principle” (*Companion Species Manifesto* 3). While companion species are always contingent upon one another, they are as much compatible as they are irreconcilable. The complex relationship between human and non-human animal companionship leads Haraway to draw from the work of Marilyn Strathern, which emphasizes a theory of “partial connections.” In Haraway’s words, “[p]arts don’t add up to wholes in this manifesto – or in life in naturecultures. I am looking for...the counter-intuitive geometries and incongruent translations necessary in getting on together” (*Companion Species Manifesto* 25). Haraway wants to tell stories about the interconnections between dogs and people and does so, through the concept of “metaplasm,” which is, in her words, “the remodeling of dog and human flesh, remolding the codes of life, in the history of companion-species relating” (*Companion Species Manifesto* 20). Eva Hayward sees metaplasm as “a kind of enactment with relationship as part of the relationship, a practice of enfolding relationships in their ongoing materializations” (78). In other words, companion species relationships are continuously in a state of becoming. Ultimately, through the concept of “metaplasm,” Haraway advocates an ethics of communication and understanding between humans and non-human animals and exemplifies this in practice by acknowledging the histories of her canine companions and through the interspecies sport of agility. She argues that the relationship between both dog and handler demonstrate the inadequacy of binary distinctions between nature and culture and communicate the need for an understanding of naturecultures.

Additionally, weaved throughout this manifesto are roots of feminism as Haraway writes, “I want my readers to know why I consider dog writing to be a branch of feminist theory, or the other way around” (*Companion Species Manifesto* 3). Consequently, since its publication, *The Companion Species Manifesto* has received attention from animal studies and feminist scholars alike. This attention often arrives in forms of harsh criticism or disagreement. It is important to note that these scholars often critique and refer to Haraway and her ideas in contexts of posthumanism and ecofeminism. Voicing her dissatisfaction for posthumanism in an interview with Nicholas Gane, Haraway states, “[t]he reason I go to companion species is to get away from posthumanism. Companion species is my effort to be in alliance and in tension with posthumanist projects” (140). The practice of citing Haraway as an ecofeminist is also questionable. Stacy Alaimo argues, “[w]hereas ecofeminism seeks to strengthen the bonds between women and nature by critiquing their parallel oppressions...Haraway seeks to destabilize the nature/culture dualism that grounds the oppression of both women and nature” (133). For these reasons and for the purposes of this paper, I will avoid discussing Haraway and her ideas in posthumanist and ecofeminist contexts. This paper will, instead, defend Haraway’s arguments and concepts in light of both animal studies and feminist reactions to *The Companion Species Manifesto*, arguing that the criticisms Haraway receives are often misconstrued

or misdirected. Finally, I will briefly explore and question Haraway's conviction that the concept of dog writing is a branch of feminist theory.

Haraway's latest manifesto perhaps receives the most disparaging criticism from animal rights and vegan-feminist activist, Carol J. Adams. In an interview with Tom Tyler, Adams states: "I found the final product, her small pamphlet...uneven, as though it were cobbled together. And her voice is not so much ambiguous as inconsistent. Sometimes it feels downright petulant. It's the lacunae in Haraway that disturb" (125). While these may be legitimate criticisms, Adams does not provide any specific examples of these inconsistencies or ambiguities and hardly develops a concrete argument against the ideas at the core of Haraway's manifesto. Adams is apparently disturbed by Haraway's lacunae, or gaps in writing, but these gaps are inevitable when distinctions between nature and culture are unclear in terms of companion species. Haraway is working indirectly within what Jacques Derrida calls dissemination, "a continual flickering, spilling, and diffusing of meaning...which cannot be easily contained...within the categories of a conventional critical approach" (Eagleton 116). Haraway deals with elusive meanings and definitions and perhaps any concrete, unambiguous framework that would better comfort Adams in a discussion of companion species does not exist. Haraway repeatedly defines and redefines companion species throughout her work, emphasizing its fluidity and mutability as a category. For her to apply stable or fixed parameters to companion species would undermine the premise that these relationships hold shifting, multiple, and evolving significances.

Adams also argues that Haraway ignores and dismisses animal rights issues, based solely on Haraway's use of the phrase, "rights besotted" (*Companion Species Manifesto* 48). She targets Haraway's ethical beliefs concerning veganism and argues that Haraway ignores and supports atrocities surrounding the production of meat:

[Haraway] seems so hesitant to address herself to the species with whom humans have the least ethical relation – the animals whom people eat – indeed, referring to a stop at *Burger King* to get 'burgers, coke, and fries'. Her book was published after *Burger King* started selling veggie burgers, but she fails to tell us what sort of burger she bought. Haraway protects the dominance that ontologizes animals as edible....She renders unto the renderers the bodies of animals....She cannot or will not acknowledge the possibility that livestock might also be companion species. (Adams 126)

Whether Haraway ate or did not eat meat at a fast food restaurant certainly does not, as a point alone, contradict the entirety of her text. While Haraway does not discuss the animals that people eat at any length, she does endorse "radical reform of the meat-industrial complex" (*Companion Species Manifesto* 97), and so it seems unfair to claim that she explicitly justifies or advocates meat consumption. Perhaps Haraway does not thoroughly discuss meat production because this is simply not a manifesto about the production of meat. Here, she is writing about dogs and argues that "dog people need to learn how to inherit difficult histories in order to shape more vital multi-species futures" (Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto* 63). She wishes to fully acknowledge the complex histories and context surrounding dogs and presents them

as an example to further human connection with other species. Haraway does not deny any possibility that humans and livestock might potentially exist in a companion species relationship, rather she explicitly writes, “[g]enerally speaking, one does not eat one’s companion animals (nor get eaten by them); and one has a hard time shaking colonialist, ethnocentric, ahistorical attitudes toward those who do (eat or get eaten)” (*Companion Species Manifesto* 14). With this in mind, it appears unlikely that we could presently discuss livestock as existing in mutually constitutive relationships with human beings. Nevertheless, Haraway writes, “[c]ompanion species...is my awkward term for a not-humanism in which species of all sorts are in question....Companion species is a permanently undecidable category, a category-in-question” (*When Species Meet* 164-165). All species then, livestock included, are in question as possible companions in the process of “becoming with” (Haraway, “Encounters” 99). Again, more simply put, her focus is on dogs and dog-human relations serve as one example for a much wider range of potentialities.

Animal studies scholars also tend to target Haraway’s perception of interspecies agility sports as mutually rewarding for both human and non-human animal participants. Haraway advocates for an ethics of reciprocal communication and understanding between humans and companions animals. Agility sports are Haraway’s exemplification of the potential for cross species mutuality:

Both dog and handler have to be able to take the initiative and to respond obediently to the other. The task is to become coherent enough in an incoherent world to engage in a joint dance of being that breeds respect and response in the flesh, in the run, on the course. And then to remember how to live like that at every scale, with all partners. (*Companion Species Manifesto* 62)

This is where Boria Sax disagrees. In “Human and Post-Animal,” Sax argues, “[t]he routines that dogs are trained to do are a symbolic affirmation of human dominance over the natural world” (1). Dog training, for Sax, is always a demonstration of human mastery over animals. He argues, “[w]hen a trainer gives commands and the dog is expected to follow them exactly, this can certainly appear to be the ultimate extreme of dominance” (*H-Net Discussion*). Raising a similar concern, Rebecca Cassidy writes, “[t]he idea that training relationships can be mutually gratifying, and even ethical, is opposed by many who would argue that the training relationship is always hierarchical and patriarchal” (327). These concerns are both valid ones, but Haraway is clear that companion species relationships should be cooperative, existing with premises of reciprocal communication. She argues, “in training, dogs obtain ‘rights’ in specific humans. In relationship, dogs and humans construct ‘rights’ in each other....Possession – property – is about reciprocity and rights of access. If I have a dog, my dog has a human; what this means is concretely at stake” (Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto* 53-54). Further, Haraway is explicit in her disdain for dog people that establish relationships with their canine companions based in hierarchy. Haraway writes that those who believe that dogs are capable of unconditional love and treat their dogs as children base their beliefs “on mistakes, if not lies [and]...are in themselves abusive – to dogs and to humans” (*Companion Species Manifesto* 33). She argues and demonstrates that patriarchal and hierarchical ethics of domination can be minimized in agility training and in companion species relationships, if not eliminated altogether. While dog training may or may not symbolize human dominance over nature, Sax ignores the significant

implication that both human and canine existences are inextricable. Jon T. Coleman writes, “[t]he subjects of genetic, behavioral, and cosmetic manipulation for centuries, dogs are unimaginable outside of their relationships with people. Dogs mongrelize species categories, and their impurity threatens to collapse other boundaries” (491). Dogs and human lives are therefore inseparable and certainly, training is part of this inseparability. Haraway argues that through ethics of reciprocal communication, humans not only train their dogs, but dogs also train their humans. In “Between Species: Science and Subjectivity,” Barbara Smuts similarly advocates for mutual communication between humans and non-human animals as a method to protect and preserve endangered species (125); while in “Feminism and the Treatment of Animals: From Care to Dialogue,” Josephine Donovan argues that humans “must recognize that the [non-human animal] ‘other’ has a ‘nature’ of her own that needs to be respected and with which one must enter into conversation” (324). Like Haraway, both Donovan and Smuts argue that in the best interests of both humans and non-human animals, humans must transform their perceptions of human and non-human animal relationships while striving for communicative mutuality. It is not enough to argue that companion species relationships are concretely patriarchal, hierarchical, or dominating as this argument alone is stagnant and ignores that these relationships are always in motion, changing, adapting, and transforming through, in Haraway’s words, ontological choreography. Companion species do not reinforce hierarchies, but rather, like cyborgs, work to destabilize them.

In “Critical Pet Studies?,” Heidi J. Nast also critiques Haraway in a context of hierarchies. Here, hierarchies between humans and canines do not concern Nast, rather she argues that Haraway “curiously sets self-critical capacities aside to argue that working dogs are so superior in intelligence (‘other’ dogs are mere pets) that they constitute a special category of ‘subject’; humans who successfully interact with such dogs...engage in a heightened form of intersubjectivity” (894). It is difficult to place Nast’s criticism especially since Haraway is frequently self-critical, acknowledging her subject position as a “US middle-aged white woman” and is fully aware that “[i]n the US, middle-aged, middle-class, white women dominate...[agility] sport[s] numerically” (*Companion Species Manifesto* 11, 60). Haraway is also careful to not construct hierarchies between pure breeds and mutts or working dogs and pets. She writes, “institutionalized breeds...as well as dogs with no fixed breed or kind, can help shape a potent worldly consciousness in solidarity with my feminist, anti-racist, queer, and socialist comrades” (Haraway, *Companion Species Manifesto* 64). Further, Haraway states, “[a]nyone who has done historical research knows that the undocumented often have more to say about how the world is put together than do the well pedigreed” (*Companion Species Manifesto* 88). She balances any discussion and history of pure breeds with “A Category of One’s Own,” a chapter devoted strictly to Mexican strays that are adopted and shipped to the United States. While I do not believe Haraway supports or creates hierarchies between dogs, perhaps if she does focus more on working dogs or pure breeds, it is because she is writing from a personal perspective and Great Pyrenees and Australian Shepherds are the dogs she lives and interacts with on a daily basis. Dekoven writes, “[Haraway’s] new manifesto is not about ‘the dog’ at all but about real dogs, her dogs, the particular dogs with whom she has become intimately involved” (1695). Haraway does not exclude dogs outside of pure breed status; put simply, these are the dogs she writes about because these are the dogs she knows.

While I have tried to defend *The Companion Species Manifesto* from what I believe are often misdirected and confusing criticisms, one question still remains: How might we consider dog writing as a branch of feminist theory or feminist theory as a branch of dog writing? Alternatively, what relations do dog writing and feminism share? Haraway writes that she “consider[s] dog writing to be a branch of feminist theory, or the other way around” (*Companion Species Manifesto* 3), but she hardly explores or justifies this statement. Throughout *The Companion Species Manifesto*, Haraway fleetingly refers to feminist theory and concepts (both Judith Butler and Virginia Woolf are mentioned), yet she never sufficiently outlines any connection between dog writing and feminism. Haraway’s perception of an intimacy between dog writing and feminism inevitably raises questions. Would Haraway consider John Grogan’s *Marley & Me*, with Grogan’s clear disdain for his partner’s “feminist screeds” (11), to be a feminist text? Additionally, Dekoven writes, “[i]t is not clear...that *The Companion Species Manifesto* advances feminist theory beyond the insights already articulated by Haraway in her earlier work” (1695). This appears accurate, as Haraway seems to rely only upon the connections she envisions between companion species and cyborgs to justify connections between feminism and dog writing. Although Haraway ultimately leaves the relationship between dog writing and feminism relatively ambiguous and fails to explore the complexities of this implication, perhaps it is not her responsibility to provide every answer. Handelmann argues that Haraway has “prick[ed] the thinking of scholars and intellectuals by pushing beyond disciplinary boundaries, thinking laterally...and raising critical issues that academic common-sense...does not recognize” (254). Haraway has opened the door to a work that is “permanently in progress, in principle” (*Companion Species Manifesto* 3) and admits, in her own words, that “other people are doing a better job on a whole lot of this work than I am, and it’s a collective project” (Haraway qtd. in Gane 144). Therefore, as a collective project in progress, perhaps it is now the job of animal studies and feminist scholars to discuss, critique, and discover useful applications for a mutually constitutive relationship between dog writing and feminism, feminism and dog writing, as a potential advancement toward understanding continuously evolving naturecultures.

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The Modern World through the Luminous Path of Prose Fiction: Reading Graham Greene's *A Burnt-out Case* and *The Confidential Agent* as Dystopian Novels.

By Ayobami Kehinde

What an absurd thing it was to expect happiness in a world so full of misery.... Point me out the happy man and I will point you out either egotisms, evil - or else an absolute ignorance
(Graham Greene, *The Heart of the Matter*, 1948: 117)

Graham Greene was undoubtedly one of the most gifted and acclaimed novelists of the War/Post-war era in Britain. His novels reflect a constant search for new novelistic modes of expression capable of visualizing the disillusionment and malaise of the modern world. According to Waldo Clarke (1976), an enduring trait of Greene's fiction is the willingness to look at the repulsive face of the twentieth century. Since literature mostly reflects the mood of its age and enabling contexts, Greene's fiction dwells on the conflicts and pains of the modern world. The central burden of this discourse is to prove that Greene's novels steadily progressed in his bold use of the convention of dystopian fiction. It has been proved elsewhere that Greene's *The Power and the Glory* and *The Heart of the Matter* are quintessential existential dystopian novels (See: Ayo Kehinde, 2004). However, in this present paper, an attempt is made to study more closely the dystopian features and political and ideological implications of the deployment of this convention in Greene's *The Confidential Agent* and *A Burnt-out Case*. But first we must look closely at the concept of dystopian fiction and its role in fictional discourse.

Western imaginative literature took a decidedly dystopian turn in the twentieth century; this was with a

view to reflecting the problems of the Western world in that century of wars and agonies. In fact, actual experiences of the modern world have been dystopian. This called for strong dystopian features in the literary texts produced in that period. According to Keith Booker (1995), “in many ways, dystopian fiction has become a paradigmatic expression of the Western imagination in the twentieth century” (58).

Dystopian fiction is a generic term for a work that is skeptical about ideal states and is fearful of totalitarian thought control. In such fictional work, the future is depicted as a nightmare world of state or corporate control and of dehumanized mechanization (Edward Quinn, 2006). In dystopian fiction, the novelist is always blunt; he or she uses the text to interrogate the idyllic posture of the pre-twentieth century utopianism. This is due to certain sad and unexpected events in the contemporary world – cold and violent wars; revolutions; totalitarianism, like Hitler’s Germany and Stalin’s Russia, and the like. In such a bleak world, the powerful are capable of destroying themselves and all of mankind; governments can also bend people to any kind of purpose. Barbara Foley (1993) sums up the features of the cosmos of a dystopian work in the following words: “oppositional confrontation between the desires of a presumably unique individual and demands of an oppressive society that insists on total obedience and conformity in its subjects” (21). Thus, the world of dystopian fiction offers a stifling threat to the freedom and integrity of the individual.

It is against the backdrop of the foregoing that the world of Greene’s novels should be considered. Like most of Greene’s novels, *The Confidential Agent* and *A Burn-out Case* raise questions about the modern world, its predicaments and destination. Predictably, the image of humanity that the novels offer is negative. Nothing can better testify to Greene’s talent than his artistic holding up of a fictional mirror to the existential pangs of the modern world; that is, his ingenious depiction of life under siege, a world bereft of fulfillment and joy. In fact, Greene’s treatment of the dissonant and painful realities of humanity in the modern world is both remarkable and unique. His fiction shows a shift in the belief in Robert Browning’s comforting refrain: “God’s in his Heaven/All’s right with the world!” (From: “Pippa’s Passes”, 1841). The characters are out of step with their societies because the values of the societies are seen as warped or misguided. Those characters might be considered evil or psychoanalytically troubled, but they should also be seen as products of their societies, as personalities shaped by the problems of those societies and by the warped values the societies have come to represent. The characters rebel against the pressure and stress of the modern world, but, according to a seemingly ineluctable strategy of containment, they pay for their temporary emancipation with some significant loss of lives and of social respectability.

The Confidential Agent is classified by Greene himself as an “Entertainment”. However, a close reading of it reveals that it is a serious and highly accomplished work of art that dwells on some issues which border on the existential problems of man in the modern world. Although the “entertainment” essence is there (actually, it is a good story that gives pleasure), it still possesses the quality which any good novel must have – topicality, in terms of serious issues, neat plot and structure, ability to create suspense, and abiding didactic overtones. Thus, although the novel can pass for an adventure tale, it is yet a subtle and double-edged criticism of the social ills and malaise of the modern world. As a dystopian novel, there is a background story of war, revolution, uprising, natural disaster and some other painful events which result in dramatic changes to the societies.

Set in England, during a civil war in a neighbouring country (Holland), *The Confidential Agent* traces the gradual dehumanization and brutalization of a spy (D). It shows how a person can degenerate into crime and violence in such a situation. In line with a tenet of dystopian fiction, D is a protagonist who questions his society, because he often feels intuitively that something is terribly wrong with it. In the novel, Greene presents the problems of humanity in the modern world by a most skilful manipulation of plot and structure, depicting each stage of brutalization and frustration processes, proceeding very logically and inevitably from the preceding. D goes to England hopefully to get the coal which he is bound to miss getting. We witness a rather static world, where to struggle is to grope towards doom and failure. The search of D and L (two rival confidential agents) for coal is doomed to failure because of Greene's vision of an end to the pervading crises plaguing the world. Since neither D nor L could get the consignment of coal, it is pertinent for both warring groups to cease fire. He also proffers a linguistic solution to the problem of global crises. Dr. Bellows' project on 'Entrenationo', a hybrid language, aims at giving a linguistic solution to world tension.

The reader's first impression of D is of innocence. Greene does not fail to capture the initial thrill of the moment – the garrulity and exuberance of Rose do not go unnoticed. However, Greene still carefully suggests that behind the façade of the thrill and innocence, there are sinister omens waiting to blight the nearest future. The reader is introduced to quite a lot of ravaging dystopian images, including gulls, mourning, death, half-speed, fog, coffin and heat. War, a ubiquitous fact of the modern world, is a common motif in dystopian fiction. A civil war is going on in D's country (Holland); another one is going on half a mile outside Dover Breakwater. D is obsessed with war: "He carried the war with him; wherever D was, there was a war" (9). A dystopian society glorifies and justifies violence, therefore bringing upon itself violence. Hence, the modern world is also portrayed in *The Confidential Agent* as fraught with danger and interpersonal dissonance, which is a product of distrust: "The one person you trusted was yourself" (10). It is a world of anonymity. We keep on reading about D, K, L, the other man, etc. It is also a world of extreme individualism where there is a breakdown in communication as a result of the dissonant relationships among people. For instance, D and the other man "had nothing to say" (11). There is no phatic communion between them; D thinks "the other man" may rob or murder him.

The Confidential Agent is also a literary comment on the problem of disillusionment in the modern world. It is quasi-historical in the sense that it is about a civil war and the First World War. The novel dwells especially on the psychological effects of war on individuals. These include paranoia, distrust, and fear of the unknown. To reveal the painful and dissonant realities of the world, Greene makes use of setting as a constitutive element in the novel. It is a society plagued with the problem of espionage; it is a landscape of horror, victimization, treachery and lust. Ironically, a hotel, which is supposed to be a place of rest and relaxation, is depicted in the novel as a centre of horror, a hell of crimes, a violent place that encourages the brutal murder of innocent people like the attendant, Else. The world of the novel is also that of unhappiness, irrespective of sex, age, status, and race. This type of seedy setting is very realistic of the modern world where people engage one another in cut-throat competitions. The sub-titles of the novel also signify the problems of dissonance and pain – Part One is titled "The Hunted"; Part Three is "The Last Shot". It could be said, therefore, that the novelist conceives of the modern world as a jungle in which one either

kills or gets killed.

Greene, in the novel, does not hide his feeling that struggle is an existential reality of the modern man. D keeps on referring to his country as a place marked with “pain and violence” (127). It is a land where cases of murder are very rampant. Apart from the case of Else’s murder, fifty children are brutally killed on the same day. ‘Gun’, a central image in the novel, is an index of destruction. What makes the gun, in the text, most striking is its sudden change of function. It actually belongs to the security agents; but since it has been confiscated by D to torment his assumed enemies and execute jungle justice; it has then become an object of terror.

The novel also comments on what a war can turn a normal person into. Thus, in the text, Greene seems to be declaring that nobody is permanently sane in the modern world. The problems of the age are personified by D and other characters he encounters in his tedious struggles with fate and life. He is depicted as a pariah due to his circumstantial obsession with crime and violence. An originally sane person suddenly becomes a rogue due to the situations in his society; he is a victim of circumstances. He even becomes a thief, a murderer and a saboteur. This is a sort of Machiavellian tendency and an index of the tension in the society. To signify the profundity of Man’s pain in the modern world, a police cell is shown to be a better and more comfortable place than the outside world which is marked with starvation and hunger, symbolically shown in the struggle over a coconut between a man and a bird. The reader is informed of the peace in the police cell: “He had not experienced such peace for a long time” (180). This is similar to the experience of Meja and Maina and their cohorts in Mwangi’s *Kill Me Quick*. D “would rather stay in a cell than a hotel room” (190). There is no port of rest for him; he is alone in his excited and violent transactions. He is estranged by all, due to his political affiliation. His masters do not have faith in him; he is also in dissonance with those he deals with in England.

D’s ready predisposition to violence, most especially his torture and subsequent murder of Mr. K, like the predisposition of Maina to armed robbery in Mwangi’s *Kill Me Quick*, can be justified. D throws overboard the conventional morality of home and England. The latent antagonism between him and the rival party (led by L) becomes apparent when D reaches the Strand Palace and commences his struggle to buy the coal. The hotel does not have the basic necessities of life; this absence makes D’s stay there uncomfortable. His movements and deeds are also spied by his antagonists; worse still, the credentials for purchasing the coal mysteriously disappear from him. This marks a turning–point in his life. The loss of the credentials, as well as the sudden death of Else (his only friend), toughens him. Violence begets violence; he gets hold of the detective’s gun and declares; “I’ve had a gang of traitors after me ever since I came across. Now I’m going to do the shooting” (106).

Thus, destructive vices and dissonant temper of human beings are revealed in some of the characters who initially strike the reader as innocent. Examples of such characters are the manageress of Strand Palace, D and the youths. This suggests that violence is an inalienable part of human nature; it is only kept in check by the taboos of civilization. This is akin to the ideology of William Golding in his *Lord of the Flies*. In a society replete with instances of brutalization, class discrimination, and victimization, violence, in man,

is likely to break out soon, as we witness in D. D, 'the hunted', suddenly becomes 'the hunter'.

Through the character of D, Greene depicts the modern man as impoverished and disturbingly alone with himself. D's lack of food and fine possessions, and at a later stage, any amount of money, mirrors the physical, spiritual and economic conditions of man. He is bereft of any reassuring social status and of helpful social relationships. He travels light, with nothing but a leather wallet containing a brush and a comb, a toothbrush, and a few oddments. His condition is very disquieting. The hitherto important man, an erudite professor and famous author, is now reduced to the status of a beggar, a petty thief and an animal. Mr. K also belongs to the ravaged world of D. He is also anonymous, shabby, ink-stained and underpaid. He wears a ragged suit and, and his eyes were tired and evasive. Else, the fourteen-year-old hotel maid, is also a member of the suffering masses. She is described as having a peaky haggard face (22).

Indeed, *The Confidential Agent* is a parody of the modern world and man's lot in it. D can thus be described as Everyman, who personifies the human adventure on earth. His adventure has been a quest ending in nothing. The novel is thus one long cry of metaphysical despair. The capture of D and the court scene reveal that the supposed inevitable, known by D himself and the reader from the first moments of the story, has come about. He is now in the hands of the law agents, and pain, suffering and injustice are no longer inevitable but at hand. The brutality of the police, as well as its sadistic efficiency, is made vivid. To the police, power means the capacity to make people suffer.

In *The Confidential Agent*, Greene also critically interrogates the Victorian sense of unity, integrity, identity and a shared destiny in the light of the new realities of the modern age. Greene, in the novel, explores the fragmented and unsettling condition of modern life. He probes into the destructive and primitive nature that lies behind the civilized exterior of the individual. The dissonant relationships between D and his antagonists (L, K, the chauffeur and the manageress) reveal that modern civilization is unpredictable, excessive, uncontrollable and destructive. The reader is made to believe that the only period when man does not experience violence is in his sleep and dream. D's only opportunity of conjecturing peace is only in his dreams where he cogitates some romantic images of the idyllic past – compensation, wish fulfilment, his deceased wife, wine, flowers and food.

The effects of war on humans are also represented in the personality of D. We identify many differences between his life during the pre-war era and the post-war era. The former life was slightly idyllic, while the new one is plagued with pain and dissonance. He is an iconic representation of the plight of humanity in the modern world. Before the war, he was much younger in outlook and much happier. War, in fact, has telling effects on ageing, beauty, mood and physique. D has undergone a number of painful experiences. He has tasted imprisonment (six months in a military prison); he has lost his wife to the war; he has experienced air raid, his house is also burnt. His life has indeed been a labyrinth of pains; he is in dissonance with life and fate. War has killed his emotion; he feels nothing but fear. Thus, the previously handsome young professor now has grey moustache, with heavy lines around his mouth. There is a scar on his chin. He tells the detective who contends the genuineness of his photograph: "You know war changes people" (13). The plight of L is not significantly different from that of D. His own property has also been confiscated;

his manuscript and pictures have been burnt. He comments bitterly that horrible things do happen to the things one loves. Even the rich in the society do not know peace and happiness. For instance, Forbes, who is rich, influential and famous, is still unhappy because of unrequited love. The historical sense of the novelist does not elude our observation. He attempts a diachronic survey of “life then” and ‘life now’, with a view to contrasting and comparing the idyllic Victorian period and the painful war-ravaged modern world.

The world of the novel is also that of deceit and betrayal of trust. Mr. Forbes lacks sexual fidelity; he covets another girl (Sally) whom he subsequently marries. Rose is also an unfaithful partner to Forbes. She prefers D to Forbes. To pay Forbes back in his own coin, Rose decides to marry D. This, by inference, depicts an instance of the endemic domestic dissonance in the modern world. Domestic dissonance is also observed in the relationship between Mr. Benditch and his daughter, Rose. An archetype of the modern man, Benditch prioritizes his business over his domestic affairs. He has little or no respect for his family: “What my daughter may say is not evidence in this house” (92). Rose herself confirms the schism between her and her father in the following words: “Do you think father and I are on speaking terms?” (52). The psychological effects of this father-daughter conflict on Rose are disastrous. She has lost her mother and is also deprived of love and affection from her father. The agonies of bereavement and deprivation of love make her psychologically disturbed and create serious emotional turmoil and imbalance in her. This affects her general disposition to life and her own personality. Her home background and the relative peace in her own country, notwithstanding, Rose decides to elope with a nonentity (D), “of no account at all” (14). This suggests how painful it is to have an uncaring father. This is what the modern world has turned human beings into. It is a world of unceasing struggles for wealth, with no time for God and family.

The home is the first environment with which the child interacts after birth, and it plays a very significant role in shaping the personality pattern of the individual. Childhood experiences and training are very decisive determinants of personality in later life. A low-morale family setting cannot be a good training ground for a child to imitate and form an acceptable personality in society. This accounts for the problem which Rose has with her father.

Classism, social dissonance, is also portrayed in the novel. Indeed, the society is one riven by a hidden class war. The dissonant relationship between Else and the manageress of Strand Palace Hotel bears testimony to the claim that there exists class dissonance in the world of the novel. Fed up with the frustration and stress she suffers at the hand of her employer, Else commits suicide. Her death confirms the fact that the poor, in the modern world, are amenable to all forms of mistreatment; they can be brutally murdered at will.

Quite a number of psychological observations also abound on the dissonant relationships among the peoples of ‘Greenland’. Sigmund Freud (1953) believes that human behaviour is determined by unconscious motivations, irrational forces, biological, and instinctual drives and certain psychosexual events. The society is full of competitions, and some people are bound to win, while others are destined to lose. D’s desires are not gratified as a result of some entangling obstacles. The failure of D to accomplish his goal (getting the needed consignment of coal for his region) depersonalizes him and leads him to violence. The

losses are traumatic (credentials, coal and Else), and he does not ever recover from them. He therefore becomes a behaviour deviant. Also, he lacks meaningful relations. The effect of feeling lonely and isolated is disintegrating to him. He feels alone in an alien world. This feeling of being hated and unappreciated is indeed stressful. Since he lives in a violent environment, he becomes obsessed with settling scores in violent ways. Another psychological source of D's stress is pressure, a kind of force which compels him to achieve his goal. The pressure on D arises from both an external source and from within D himself. He is under severe pressure to save his sect from the impending doom of the civil war. This compels him to engage in a cut-throat competition with the rival group, symbolized by L, to get the coal. This is community pressure. His community places a high premium on victory in the ongoing civil war.

D's sudden degeneration into violence is also a case of ego-defence mechanism. His aggressive reactions are directed towards some innocent stimuli rather than the ones that actually cause his aggression. He is not able to direct his attack on the hostility-producing stimuli (L, Benditch, Forbes, etc) because he finds them rather impregnable and stressful. Since relief is desired by him, he has to direct his aggression towards the less impregnable person (K), who is a wrong but relatively safe target. After his bid to purchase the coal fails, frustration, which subsequently elicits anger, creeps in. This leads D to engage in aggressive actions against his antagonists, with a view to ridding himself of obstacles. When the frustration continues, and he is confronted with a succession of other excruciating situations, stemming from the same source, anger gradually blends with hostility, with a tendency to destroy, damage, hurt and kill. Human beings jealously guard their self-esteem, self-love and pride. D experiences serious and inexplicable threats to his self-esteem. This is reflected in his feeling of intense insecurity and hatred. In order to circumvent the discomfort and anxiety that arise from the threats, D develops and uses ego-defence mechanism to protect himself.

Actually, in *The Confidential Agents*, Greene has raised some vital questions on the helplessness and restlessness of the various kinds of people in the modern world. It seems he proselytizes in the novel. To him, no human being, however intellectual he or she might be, can solve the problems of dissonance and pain in the world. That is why Dr. Bellows' Entrenationo project fails, a victim of the problem of distrust.

Greene's *A Burnt-out Case* is also perceived in this paper as a dystopian novel that dwells on a universe of terror, a society where there is subversion of utopian ideals. It explores the enduring conflict between human affection and moral imperatives and its accompanying metaphysical suffering, human limitations and failures. Indeed, the thematic foci of Greene in the novel revolve around the dissonance in a world of free-will, the disruptive chaos of a continuously changing world and the injustice that people visit on one another. One of the central tenets of dystopian fiction that recurs in the novel is intentional miscarriage of justice. Greene insists, throughout the novel that the human beings in the modern world are encumbered with problems of dissonance and pain. These issues dominate the novel, whether the characters are the incurable leprous Africans, like Deo Gratias, or the careless and jealous English men like Querry and Rycker, respectively, or the spiritually barren people like Doctor Colin and Parkinson, or the temptress figures like Marie.

The pains, in the novel, arise mostly from the conflict between the ideal spirituality (as entrenched in the

Holy Bible, John 13: 34 – “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another...”) and the observed patterns of Christians’ acts. This is a textual depiction of the realism of the modern world that is characterized by atheism, passive piety, anarchy and fanaticism. There is a significant difference between expectation and observed tendencies in Christian life; what is observed falls short of the spiritual ideal. In the novel, the characters (most especially Query) are mostly extremists who doggedly prefer loving their neighbours more than themselves. They mostly insist on self damnation for the sake of salvation of others.

The ideal Christian virtues are entrenched in the creed of God. However, the ideals are not achievable in the modern world due to the existential realities of the period – erosion of old orders. It is a world which T.S. Eliot aptly tags “a wasteland”, populated by some “hollow men”. Anybody who attempts to live above board (like Query in *A Burnt-Out Case* and Baako in Armah’s *Fragments*) is mistaken for an eccentric, an iconoclast. This image of the Biblical Noah recurs in Greene’s fiction.

Undoubtedly, *A Burnt-out Case* is a very dark tale because it is filled with images of horror, destruction, dirt and disease. The world of the novel is also replete with images of solitude, plague and violent death. These include vultures and tsetse flies, which populate the usual ‘Greenland’ – a disturbing and brutal world, a world full of enormous shadows – setting sun, night, dark alley and the like. The only illumination occurs in the glare of Query’s benevolent deeds which are soon terminated.

Against the foregoing background, *A Burnt-out Case* lends itself to modernist critical probing because it foregrounds confusion, disillusionment and despair. The novel is Greene’s stock-taking of the problems of the post-world war era. Like the features of the period, the story deconstructs every established convention in society and critiques the rationale behind social institutions such as marriage, economy, politics, religion and education. The setting of the novel, a mimesis of the modern world, signposts confusion, bleakness of horizon, excessiveness of freedom, liberality in doing things and the collapse of human civilisation – all are a result of the aftermath of the world war. However, in the novel, Greene is not absolutely pessimistic; rather, he maintains a tolerable outlook on life.

The socio-economic and political realities of the period make the novelist take some painful and dissonant issues as his thematic preoccupations in the novel. The modern man, like the average Greeneman, tends to keep on asking the question: “Who am I?” This is with a view to reflecting the crisis and conflict between self-identity and society, through which Greene lays bare the strains and tensions of the modern world. Discomfort is the pervading metaphor he uses to depict the pains of man in the modern world. Anybody who does not feel the pain of discomfort is dead; the feeling of discomfort is the measure of man’s existence – hence, the parody of the famous Cartesian philosophical postulation, “Cogito Ergo Sum” (“I think, therefore, I am) by the Cabin-passenger in the novel: “I feel discomfort, therefore, I am alive” (9). Apart from pain and discomfort, there is “no more to record” (9). Therefore, in consonance with the character of dystopian fiction, the world of *A Burnt-out Case* is indubitably filled with pains and agonies.

Query, the protagonist of the novel, is an ambiguous character. Ward (1989) gives an insight into the multifarious ironies and polysemic nature of the name ‘Query’. Indeed, the name is an allegorical one because

the man is as ambiguous as the semantic significations of his name, which literally translates 'interrogation' or 'doubting the truth of'. A famous French Catholic architect, who visits a French Leprosy run by monks in Africa (Belgian Congo), Querry is a man who has undergone a lot of negative metamorphoses. He attempts to expunge from his life everything that he has got and meant; he seems to be in a state of emptiness. This signifies the meaninglessness of life in the modern world. He has lost his sense and capacity for creativity, imagination, sexuality, hope and belief. He is completely bare of symbols, of indeed everything. His room is devoid of photographs of a community or a parent; it is "like a grave without a cross" (77). He has forsaken both pleasure (sex) and job (designing a building). Also, he has abandoned his family, like Mwangi's and Wright's characters. He comments: "I once had, but they disappeared into the world a long time ago. We haven't kept in touch" (47). He is arrogant, culturally blind and infinitely weary in the ways of the world like Marlow in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. He is a run-away paterfamilias due to the burden and socio-economic encumbrances of the modern world. He declares: "I feel no pity" (79) for abandoning the family. The modern world has really turned him into a tramp and an irresponsible parent.

The character of Querry is therefore used to portray the frightening state of the modern world. He wants to enjoy a truce from the hurly-burly of life, which continuously proves abortive. His nervous expectation of a rest from his reputation and the uneasy departure towards an unnamed place reflect the seedy feeling of the modern world, which is very sinister. He thinks he has run away from his problems, but man is like a fly in the hands of God. Fate keeps on pursuing him. Father Thomas comments on this issue of inevitability of human fate: "For a good man, fame is always a problem" (142). He initially thinks that he has come to an end of all pains and conflicts; he does not know that he has only drifted towards his death in a quiet region. *A Burnt-Out Case* gives a vivid picture of the mood of the contemporary world and the plight of people living in it. W.B. Yeats, in his famous poem "The Second Coming", captures the dissonant and painful realities of the world. It is a world where old and supposedly exhausted unities have been fractured and dissolved. The disorderliness and dislocation of the world do not spare anybody. There is total breakdown of order in the previously organised world (Patricia Waugh, 1992). This recalls the Hobbesian "State of Nature" which centres on individuals without any moral sense or social obligation. In such an atavistic society, everybody is a boss and a sadist. Therefore, in *A Burnt-Out Case*, the individuals, most especially Rycker, display bestial tendencies. Indeed, the contemporary world, as portrayed in the novel, does not illustrate a society but a drastic return to the crude and raw state of nature where there is no respect for law and orderliness. The scars left behind by the two world wars and other minor wars have turned human beings in the modern world into destroyers and murderers. The traditional loyalties, ties, and associations have become lax or entirely dissolved. This erosion of human relationships informs the portrayal of a theatre of organised slaughter, dislocation, 'militarism' and revolution in the novel. It is a world of arduous tasks with little success: "A lot of effort it seemed for so slow a progress" (10).

Also, the novel portrays a restless life, a world where nature is actually in dissonance with human beings. Heat, mosquito, storm, and flying ants constitute a lot of agonies for the people of Greenland: "The mosquito has no pity for the thin man" (10-11). If the pains from tsetse flies and mosquitoes subside, there is not yet a respite for the people, because yellow butterflies will appear to torment them. Although leprosy alone is enough an illness for a person to bear, many other diseases still afflict the lepers, a complex

situation that makes death a welcome phenomenon in the society. An old man with blood disorders informs Dr. Colin: "... and in any case, there is no time because I am going to die tomorrow" (49). The world is depicted as one that encourages suicide. An old Greek Shopkeeper, in his late seventies, living in LUC is said to have taken "a gun from under the cushion and shot himself through the head" (108). The reason for this suicide is marital frustration resulting from the infidelity of his young illiterate African wife. There are other cases of suicide in the novel. It is stated that "there used to be a high suicide-rate among leprologists" (128). A man is also reported to have injected himself with a dose of snake venom; while another is said to have poured petrol over his furniture and his clothes and then set himself alight. Why do they prefer to commit suicide? The problems of the world have overwhelmed them. They prefer death to continuing living in a hell of dissonance and pain.

The novel is also replete with instances of domestic dissonance. This is mostly realised in the dissonant relationship between Rycker and his wife (Marie). In the family, we witness a very faulty husband-wife relationship. Both of them are spouse-rejecting, and their dissonant relationship manifests rejection in a number of ways - physical neglect, denial of affection, lack of mutual respect, understanding and trust, abusive treatment and flogging. Actually, the world of the novel is one where wives can be terrified by the iron hands of their husbands. Thus, Rycker asserts his masculine prowess and invincibility by victimising his wife. In the novel, Greene dwells on the problem of "malignant sexism" (Ali Mazrui, 1993) in human society. Rycker subjects his wife to economic manipulation, sexual exploitation and political marginalisation. Marie is depicted with some female stereotypes; she is signified with traits like docility, submissiveness, subjectivity, monstrosity and powerlessness. She is an archetype of the biblical Eve (evil), who destroyed Adam and human folk, in her destruction of Querry. This woman-as-devil image betrays Greene as a sexist in the novel. By so doing, Greene, the dystopian novelist, deconstructs the idea of the existence of a terrestrial paradise of harmony, contentment and peace. Through the dissonant relationship between Rycker and Marie, Greene is able to foreground the social and domestic order in the universe. He seems to be suggesting that woman is not so recognised in the scheme of things in the world.

The genesis of the domestic dissonance in the world can be traced to the post-Lapsarian Eden woman's progenitor (Eve), who is labelled a temptress (Chioma Opara, 1989). Marie, in the text, is a temptress who is responsible for the problem of her society and the world at large. It may be safe, therefore, to classify *A Burnt-Out Case* under the chauvinistic literary canon in which women are put in the fetters of patriarchy, in a world riddled with sexism. Marie is also depicted as a revolutionary figure against the male society (symbolized by Querry and Rycker) that has oppressed her. She is, in that sense, a prime woman who strives to attain autonomy by moving physically and psychologically from immanence to transcendence. Like an average Lawrentian woman (most especially in the Brangwen's family), she is antithetical to her husband.

The main cause of the domestic dissonance in Rycker's family is the disparity in ages. The woman is too young for her husband: "She said miserably `perhaps it was a mistake... marrying me. I was too young'" (69). Worse still, Rycker is patriarchal; thus the couple lead a cat-and-dog life for about two years. Rycker sees his wife as a child to be trained and retrained to his `taste': "You can see I've trained her to know

what a man needs” (37). This statement betrays the sense of male chauvinism in Rycker. Woman is portrayed as a malleable object of patriarchal control, with no will. To Rycker, Marie should be kept under constant control and guidance: “And now, my dear, you’ll change into a proper dress” (38). Also, marital satisfaction for Rycker is sexual gratification; but Marie does not like that because she believes it may not be the kind of love that the Saints feel. Therefore, although Marie wants another child, Rycker does not.

It is against the background of the cut-throat domestic dissonance that Marie abandons her sick husband and elopes with Querry who does not understand her intention. She despises her husband because of a new ‘lover’. She is thus a devil-figure, an irresponsible wife, a traitor, who is prepared to do anything to escape her despicable husband. She therefore sticks to her apparent lie that it is Querry, not Rycker, who is the father of the baby in her womb. She sees this as the only way of escaping the patriarchal home of Rycker. This is what the modern world has done to love and family life. Marriage has become a very fragile association that breaks very easily.

The conflict between Rycker and Marie is also ideological – between the fixed world of the adult and the flexible and kaleidoscopic world of the youth. It is in this sense a generational conflict. Marie’s (and extensively the youths’) sensitivity is in dissonance with the insensitivity of Rycker (the adult world). Therefore, their dissonance is not only due to gender disparity, or lack of affection and compassion, but also because of lack of understanding and knowledge of each other’s motives and social pressures.

The failure of one generation to understand another generation, as well as the absence of a common moral purpose in the family, is a metaphor for the crisis in the modern world. The inflexibility of the characters at the domestic level is an index of the virulent and menacing feature of the modern world. The young are shown to be corrupt and violent because the old fail to hold them in check. That is, the moral order of the young is perverted because of the differences in moral precepts. Therefore, the domestic conflict in Rycker’s family signifies Greene’s insistent irony that reconciliation in the modern world is simply impossible in the marriage of incompatibles. Instead of domestic consonance, what we experience in the family is elapsing dissonance (S.H. Kanu, 1974). The domestic, ideological and interpersonal dissonance in the family is brought into a painful tragic resolution. It is settled in the only possible way in this age of disillusionment and alienation – through violence.

However, the dissonant relationship between Rycker and Querry partly stems from class snobbery, and this reflects the problems of man in a philistine world, where interpersonal dissonance is always settled with arms. Greene’s primitivistic temper does not elude our observation. With the conflictual relationship between Rycker and Querry, Greene seems to be suggesting that civilisation has divorced people from their natural state. It is a period of wanton disregard for civilised values of the past and the present, of loss of faith in religion. Since conflict is the inescapable condition of man in the modern world, due to opposing philosophies and divergent personalities, Rycker brutally terminates the life of Querry to assert the supremacy of the order of the individual in the modern world over the conventional social order. This also exposes the tragic dilemma of freedom.

Query is despised by Rycker and his host community because of his queer nature; Rycker inflicts injury on him without a malicious intent. Although both have a common creed (reciprocal affection), their dissonance arises out of differences in background, temperament and life goals. It is a conflict between the self-respecting Rycker and self-surrendering Query. Therefore, in dissonance are the passions of the two volatile and impatient men, Query who wants to use his sense of pity for the benefit of others, and Rycker, who does not understand the motives of Query. To the inflammable passions of love and jealousy is added another very exasperating source of dissonance – that of class difference. Query is unable to read human motives. He does not know Marie can pose a threat to his living: “He thought rashly: poor frightened beast – this one was too young to be a great danger” (156). He has meddled too much in the domestic affairs of the Ryckers. He has a case to answer for playing into the devilish hand of Marie. One expects him to be more careful not to deprive his friend (Rycker) of his own conjugal bliss. Marie abandons her husband at a critical moment: “She went and left me ill with a high fever” (176). The only possession he values most (his wife) is ‘stolen’ from him. This leads him to become mentally dissonant. He suffers from excessive jealousy: “spent the night with Query and say nothing” (177). Worse still, he does not receive any mollification from both Marie and Query. They ironically compound his psychological problem with their laughter and jests. There is, therefore, the possibility of attenuation for his crime.

Query’s involvement in the domestic affairs of the Ryckers stirs not only the wrath of the husband but also the anger and suspicion of the church (Father Thomas, Mother Agnes, Doctor Colin, etc.). The experiences the reader gets from the interpersonal conflict give him or her an awareness of the social and metaphysical evil in the modern world. The reader is better informed of how to play safe in the dissonant society. Query’s conflict with the society stems from a variety of factors, which include the untamed goodwill in him, his unique but opaque temperament, complication in human affairs, and most especially the place of evil in human society. The once considerate and loving Rycker suddenly develops into a hardened and cruel blood-monger. Thus, through the help of Satan and psychological imbalance, Rycker takes the law into his hands and follows an aggressive path to the resolution of his mental and domestic dissonance. His experiences and expectations brutalize him, and in turn make him so brutally callous that he murders Query in cold blood.

Rycker’s narcissism stands out luridly in the scene where he murders Query. It is against the decorum of human society. In the modern world, science and technology are the household words for human development. In spite of the advantages of the technological breakthrough, Greene directs the reader’s attention to the ambivalent result of man’s progress in science and technology. This is a dystopian warning that the advantages derivable from technological feats could be submerged by the catastrophes that arise from the same feats. Therefore, the problem of the use of ‘gun’ by people of the modern world to kill one another is artistically depicted and pungently exemplified in Greene’s novels. Rycker is unreflective and precipitated. He is guided more by his feelings which are easily aroused. He feels lonely and miserable because of the burden of his domestic affairs and his inability to adjust to the new situation caused by the dishonest and recalcitrant behaviour of his wife. In fact, the dystopian society depicted in the novel is undesirable and horrifying.

A few psychological causes of Rycker's mental and interpersonal conflicts spring to mind. He lacks some visceral needs, including those of safety, avoidance of pains, stimulation, and sexual gratification. He lacks the basic necessities of life to survive and meet adjustive demands. Because of domestic agonies, he is unable to renew himself through rest; and by not having the chance to refresh himself, his ability to cope with normal adjustive demands is weakened. These painful stimuli predispose him to stress. Obviously, again, his marital dissatisfaction engenders frustration. His reaction to this is typically one of anger which leads to attack and aggression in a bid to rid himself of the causative agents of the frustration. He, therefore, beats his wife severely, venting his anger on her. When the frustrating situations, which stem from the same source (his wife's elopement) continue unabated, his anger suddenly dovetails into hostility, with a tendency to hurt and destroy Query.

The domestic dissonance also leads to paranoia on the part of Rycker which makes him misconstrue Query's personal habit (constant laughter) as being directly aimed at him. He feels that he is being mocked. Therefore, he is in mortal danger of attack; he jettisons moral, ethical and social restraints and becomes a psychopath. That is, his avalanche of misfortunes leads him into violence. Rather than committing suicide like his literary cousin, Scobie in *The Heart of the Matter*, he becomes hostile and seeks vengeance on his wife and his assumed antagonist, Query. His thought-processes become rather too chaotic; he is therefore out of contact with reality when he brutally murders Query for adultery which he has actually not committed.

The disaster of Query can be located within the modernist perspective of tragedy. Schopenhauer, cited by Raymond Williams (1966), describes modern tragedy thus: "the true sense of tragedy is the deeper insight that it is not his own individual sins that the hero atones for, but original sin, that is the crime of existence itself" (37). Thus, in *A Burnt-Out Case*, the tragedy of Query is not solely because of his tragic flaw; rather it is due to a combination of the existential realities of his milieu and his inherent flaw, the inability to perceive human motives. Actually, his tragedy bears some traits of the classical concept of tragedy – obsession with pity. He allows himself to be used as a scapegoat, and he has a bloated ego. Like the Master-builder (Solness) in Henrik Ibsen's play entitled *The Masterbuilder* and Scobie in *The Heart of the Matter*, Query's tragic end is a result of his pride. The flaws, coupled with the pangs of the modern period, subject him to a lot of pains of the type described by Raymond Williams: "The unspeakable pain, the wail of humanity, the triumph of evil, the scornful mastery of chance, the irretrievable fall of the just and innocent". (1966:37).

Finally, it might be worth pointing out from the above observations that, in Greene's fiction, the convention of dystopian fiction is used for aesthetic, thematic and ideological purposes. It is revealed that Greene's corpus of dystopian novels is a confirmation of the popularly-held view that textual production and reception cannot be conveniently separated from the socio-political, economic and cultural contexts in which the creative artist operates. Greene's novels have, therefore, been proved to be concerned with problems of the modern world. His dystopian novels extrapolate elements of the modern societies and are replete with images of dystopianism, including totalitarian powers, distortion of leisure, nightmarish world, subversion of utopian ideals, and the like. What Greene has offered in the two novels is a warning

against some trends in the modern world, most especially the threat of oppressive regime, in one form or another.

It has therefore been proved that Greene's *The Confidential Agents* and *A Burnt-out Case* fulfil the dystopian model of fictional creation. This claim is premised on the fact that the cosmos of each of the novels is very bad indeed; it is a world that is undesirable for many reasons. Also, in the dystopian contexts of the novels, current socio-political and interpersonal events are taken to nightmarish extremes. It is a frightening and provocative world, where a majority of people would fear to live in. It is a world that is incredibly imperfect, and it lacks the harmonious and egalitarian qualities of life depicted in utopian novels.

However, it should be concluded that Greene's novels refract the problems of the modern world; they do not just reflect what is wrong with the modern world. They therefore offer an alternative view of socio-political potentials of the world, where there would be social harmony, economic prosperity and political stability. In fact, Greene's *The Confidential Agents* and *A Burnt-out Case* offer some kind of implicit warning on what would happen should present trends in the modern world continue.

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Bird Citing: On the Aesthetics and Techno-Poetics of Flight.

By Christopher Schaberg

The first flash of a bird incites the desire to duplicate not by translating the glimpsed image into a drawing or a poem or a photograph but simply by continuing to see her five seconds, twenty-five seconds, forty-five seconds later—as long as the bird is there to be beheld.

—Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just*

In *The Open*, Giorgio Agamben illustrates how humanity and animality are bound together in an irreducible conceptual pairing. Throughout his aphoristic chapters, Agamben lingers on historical images of figures such as the humanoid *acephalous* that either remains headless or receives the cranium of a beast; such images illuminate caesurae between the elevated human and the lowly animal. It is this visible yet indeterminate space between subjects that Agamben probes:

...man has always been thought of as the articulation and conjunction of a body and a soul, or a living thing and a *logos*, of a natural (or animal) element and a supernatural or social or divine element. We must learn instead to think of man as what results from the incongruity of these two elements, and investigate not the metaphysical mystery of conjunction, but rather the practical and political mystery of separation.¹

In this article I would like to build on and contemporize Agamben's investigation of man/animal incongruities and the conceptual *space* necessitated therein. Here, I would like to suggest that we might also learn to investigate the practical and political mysteries of commonplace *figurations* that reveal how humans struggle to attain a *certain* animality. To this end, the following pages explore an aesthetic and poetic trend around human air travel that I call *bird citing*.

A first order bird citing appears as simple as the citation of a bird in an aesthetic object such as a poem, such as in Wallace Stevens's widely anthologized Modernist paragon, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird." The first paragraph stanza reads:

Among twenty snowy mountains,
The only moving thing

Was the eye of the blackbird.²

In these lines the blackbird is cited as a poetic object worth visualizing. Yet as the reader catches sight of the blackbird, the blackbird's own ocular perception is cited, and object becomes subject. In these lines, bird *citing* becomes a double bird *sighting*—the view zooms from panoramic to the point of a blackbird's eye, from distant topography, to intimate anatomy:



Over the following pages, my aim is to outline a network of allusive avian vectors and spectacles that intersect along lines of flight. Such lines of flight can be imaginative and imagistic, as in Stevens's poem; they can be straight forwardly symbolic, as in the bird insignias that appear on the tails of many commercial jets; or, bird citing can be starkly literal, as in errant birds flitting in and out of sliding doors at the baggage claim. In other words, I am particularly curious about how bird citing appears where many lines of flight converge: at airports. I want to suggest that there are curious overlaps in the multiple significations of bird forms that collide and collude in this networked space.

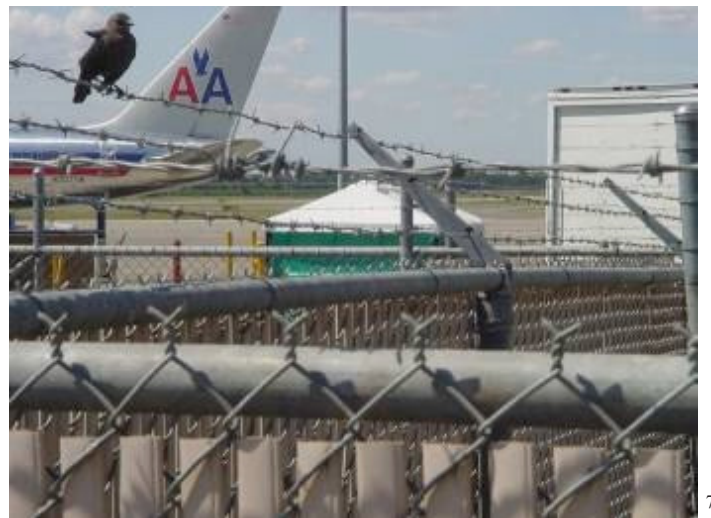
I will begin by examining airports as human sites that emanate a skein of animality via bird citing, and I argue that the technologies of human air travel rely on an animal imaginary that draws the human subject into play of wild and cultivated significations. For instance, In 1920, American journalist William G. Shepherd evoked bird citing as a way to describe the influx of air travel:

The Audubon Society knows every domestic whim o[f] every desirable American bird, and no farm home is complete without its neat little home for birds. What we need today is an Audubon Society of American cities and towns for the cultivation of the welfare of our linen-winged, aluminum-lunged, unfeathered friends.⁵

This passage reflects how ornithology and air travel have been historically linked: to promote airports is, in a way, to promote something related to the aesthetically oriented collecting mentality of the bird watcher. Yet via this analogy, Shepherd also implies how air travel disseminated across the nation—artificially, by a 'society' that might cultivate airports, as well as organically, as it were, through biological dispersion of 'winged' and 'lunged' aircraft. In other words, the call to birdlife is both a grasp at a natural order of things, as well as an enculturation of new technologies. Airport historian Martin Greif cites this case as unique: "Never before nor since, one imagines, has the airport been likened to a bird house."⁶ In fact, however, this ornithological impulse has haunted the histories of air travel, and along the way, airports hardly escape

comparison to birdhouses. Avian spectrality is a common airport strategy, and seemingly simple bird citing is often in the service of obverse aesthetics of aerospace technologies.

Airports involve many forms of bird citing. Around these sites, avian appearances can become layered, unpeeling where the real and the symbolic overlap. Readymade montages of bird sightings abound; for instance, in one recent photograph that I snapped at Sacramento airport, a common starling balanced on barbed wire, and in the background, the tail of an American Airlines jet flashes a bird icon between two capital As:



To rephrase Wallace Stevens, among twenty jet planes, everything moving is a bird.

To add another dimension to this multiplying figure of figuration, historically airports have been designed to resemble or allude to birds. Thus airports are also places for bird *siting*, through which location itself can be shaped like a bird. Consider Eero Saarinen's 1962 TWA Terminal in New York. Airport historian Alastair Gordon describes this piece of modernist architecture in reference to its bird form: "The larger sections were like the wings of a bird that stretched laterally in daring cantilevers to the north and south." The TWA Terminal exaggerates the scale of birdlife for effect:



8

Similarly, Berlin's 1941 neoclassical Tempelhof Aerodrome was created to look like a mighty eagle in flight. A Google Earth view shows the outward/upward curving concourses, which would be the wings of the bird. One can compare an aerial view of Tempelhof with the eagle icon in the Homeland Security logo to get a sense of the bird shape cited (the eagle's head at Tempelhof, which is not exactly perceptible in this schema, would be located on the white tarmac).



9

In the case of Tempelhof, this bird citing challenges notions of scale and point of view: an airport *on the ground* is supposed to look like it is a flying creature—but we can only see this from an *already elevated* aerial view. Airport bird citing through architecture ends to warp scale by magnifying birdlife, thus diminishing the human subject.

Bird forms become more confusing when airplanes—the obvious corresponding object of flight—are drawn into the semiotic mix. Take, for instance, the art installation “Rara Avis” (2001) by Ralph Helmick, at Chicago’s Midway airport:



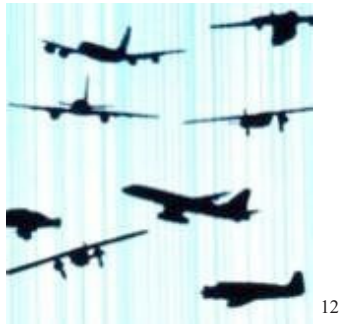
10

This diaphanous sculpture of a cardinal is suspended above a bank of escalators in the main terminal; a bird form is achieved by the careful arrangement of 2000 tiny metal airplanes. Miniature airplanes actually *comprise* this huge bird; the monstrous animal is made of toy machines—the airport itself is turned into a surrealist display case of sorts. The human viewer is both larger than the airplanes, and smaller than the great bird—a vertiginous subject position, indeed:



11

Internally, this sculpture twists scale one more time: contemporary airliners are made to appear the same size as antique bi-planes, WWII fighter planes, and helicopters from the 1960s:



12

As I have already hinted, perhaps one of the most banal acts of bird citing appears in the crest of the Department of Homeland Security, in the ubiquitous form of patriotic eagle.



13

This bird citing is absorbed into the unconscious, all-encompassing sign system of the airport, yet given its historical fascistic register, we might pause to put additional pressure on this icon. This particular crest was located on a flat screen hanging from the ceiling in the Sacramento airport as one approached the security checkpoint to Terminal A. The Homeland Security sign ‘welcomes’ me—but into what space or concept? Am I being welcomed into the airport? If so, it is too late—I have already entered and am about to be subjected to the absurd regime of post-9/11 security procedures, including removing my shoes and shuffling through a surveilled magnetometer. Furthermore, the bird citing on the Homeland Security crest undoes the inside/outside dichotomy so crucial to the sterile/non-sterile designations of airport security: these *must* be clear and distinct categories, and yet suggesting birdlife on the inside of the airport makes the site an aviary, at best, and a veritable wilderness, at worst. Might the sign, then, be welcoming me to the country? Again, too late—I’m here, and furthermore, I might be *departing* the country through this air-port. Perhaps I am simply being welcomed to this security stage, this identity checkpoint. If so, I would like to argue that bird citing works in the favor of this spatial initiation: bird citing posits a natural order in the guise of national security. The eagle on the Homeland Security crest asserts dominance and watchfulness, harnesses power and boundless knowledge. The eagle watches over the airport. The eagle

is the airport.

One can begin to see how birds are cited around airports as common yet strange figures that disorient the human in flight as well as the human in *viewing* flight. In these airport cases, I am articulating the ways in which birds are *cited*—observed, called upon, and indicted—and how they are *sighted* visually: birds are seen, represented in order to be recognized, symbolically appropriated, and used to re-mark acts of flight and acts of visualizing flight. Then, birds are also *sited* as locational, architectural, sculptural, and topographical registers. These tracts demonstrate the scope of bird citing: how airports confusingly reference avian imagery and ornithological visibility, creating an interpenetrating system of signification.

I now turn to several specific cases of bird citing that evince a Northern California ecosystem of localism, militarism, and the ornithology of air travel.

On California’s Interstate 5 nearing the Sacramento Airport, one will often see flocks of migrating birds in enormous V patterns undulating in the skyline beneath 737s on final approach. According to an article about “bird strikes” at the Sacramento airport, “Rice fields, the Sacramento River and the Yolo bypass create a paradise for waterfowl and wading birds, like herons. And above it all is the Pacific Flyway, a major migratory route for birds.”¹⁴ On the ground, the airport’s elaborate network of runways and taxiways interrupts and sprawls across this “paradise.” Because of its location, Sacramento airport has one of the nation’s highest numbers of “bird strikes,” or when a plane upon takeoff or landing hits a bird—a potentially disastrous clash.

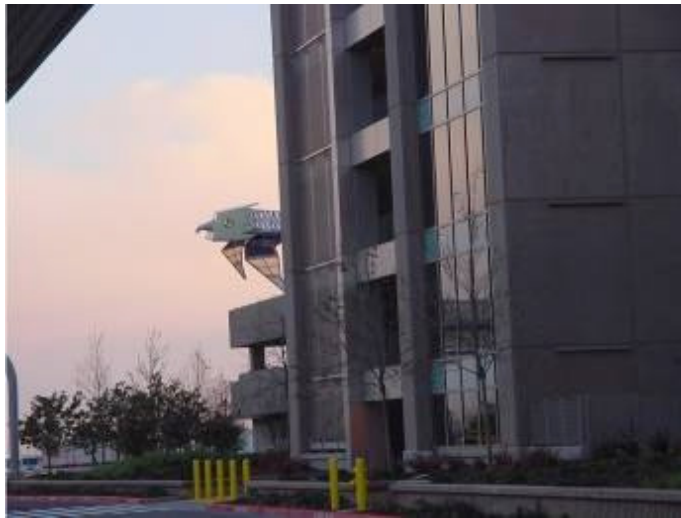
As if to reflect on this dangerous proposition, several huge birds come into view as one exits Interstate 5 and approaches Terminal A:



15

Dennis Oppenheim’s art installation “Flying Gardens” (2004) consists of twelve exoskeletal, car-size bird sculptures scattered around Terminal A—many of them are hanging off of the parking structure, actually

appearing to fly *out of* the building:



16

These sculptures are a postmodern pastiche of the phoenix myth: colorful, futuristically articulated birds fly out of the uniform wreckage of a parking garage—sunset glow and the interior lighting can make the structure appear to be a smoldering ruin.



17

The birds appear triumphant and sleek against the monochromatic stack of the parking structure. Originally the birds were designed to include foliage growing all over them, replete with climbing vines, as if to project an overgrown, post-apocalyptic aura. However, the airport authority forestalled this plan: as living gardens, these icons of wildness might have become a little *too* wild, allowing *real* birds to nest in the art, and thus incurring unnecessary labor costs of cleaning up bird poop.



Without any actual flora on the birds, the name of this installation is a non sequitur: there is nothing garden-like nor organic about these creatures aside from their avian shapes. Interestingly, there *are* plants growing beneath the sculptures, but to extend figurative logic to the sculptures we would have to imagine the birds themselves as growing out of the parking garage, their solid iron gray anchors serving as roots or shoots. In this schema, the birds become blooms, and the parking structure something of a potted plant. Or, the airport becomes a strange biology lab bloated in scale, in which hybrid bird plants are grown. What is interesting is that the construction materials and sutures of these sculptures are left exposed, as if ironically to demystify any organicized ideals about commercial air travel. In other words, while the homage to birds celebrates human aviation as if it is natural, the self-referring madeness of these sculptures undermines the very comparison implicit in the shape. Birds can fly, and human beings can fly airplanes; but a prefabricated bird the size of a minivan and tethered to a parking garage pushes the avian metaphor into a realm of absurdity.

Looking out at these birds from the *inside* of the parking structure, one might wonder: if these birds are flying *out* of the garage, are they then flying *into* the airport, in the notorious style of 9/11? Two camera-phone shots would suggest so:



19

This perverse view exposes comparable angles of banking that denote abrupt, tactical piloting. Oppenheim's birds are not aimed skyward, but rather are headed into the built space of commerce and privileged mobility. In other words, to put it plainly, "Flying Gardens" is eerily reminiscent of Boeing 767s banking into the World Trade Center; these hijacked birds mimic terrifying maneuvers. The installation thus reveals a double geographic imperative: the object of flight serves both as a harmless reminder of the airport's ecosystem (a bird migration zone), and also conjures other forms of anxious banking in New York City (World Trade/Global Terrorism). Designed as a pleasant distraction for passengers, these avian aesthetics in fact riff on repressed anxieties of flight and predation that leak out of a globalized unconscious.

As if to underscore this coupling, the article about bird strikes at the Sacramento airport puns its title as "Clear-cut for takeoff: Citing wildlife and terrorists, the airport wants to destroy more native oaks." The article goes on to explain that both migrating birds and calculating terrorists can use the cover of trees in ways that threaten to disrupt airport traffic. "Clear-cut for takeoff" highlights very real tensions that exist between airports and birds; indeed, the article frankly claims, "'Birds and aircraft don't mix.'"²⁰ Yet whether through art or ecology, mixtures of aircraft and birds are widespread around the Sacramento airport.

At this point I want to return to our original sense of bird citing: the simple noticing or mentioning of a bird. As in Wallace Stevens's perspectival poem "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird," bird citing often turns on visual disorientation. To further illustrate the problem of disoriented visuality, I turn to Gary Snyder's 2004 poem "No Shadow," which records the ornithological impulse in terms of foreground and background views. The speaker of the poem is looking out over the Sacramento River Valley; this panoramic landscape view initiates a bird citing that ricochets off a technosphere of military aviation.

The poem begins as a prose tour of the Yuba Goldfieds. The first paragraph focalizes a scene, "at the lower Yuba River outflow where it enters the Sacramento valley flatlands, a mile-wide stretch between grass and blue oak meadows. It goes on for ten miles."²¹ The second paragraph describes "a female osprey hunting along the main river channel. Her flight shot up, down, all sides, suddenly fell feet first into the river and emerged with a fish. Maybe fooling the fish by zigzagging, so—no hawk shadow."²² The poem proper commences shortly after this ornithological citation: two prose paragraphs give way to streamlined poetry

as a new object of perception comes into view:

Standing on a gravel hill by the lower Yuba
 can see down west a giant airforce cargo plane from Beale
 hang-gliding down to land
 strangely slow over the tumbled dredged-out goldfields
 —practice run
 shadow of a cargo jet—soon gone

no-shadow of an osprey
 still here ²³

This poem draws uneasy parallels between a mammoth Air Force cargo plane and an osprey. They both fly in the river valley, and at first glance they seem to beg comparison. Snyder, however, contrasts the “no-shadow” fishing technique of the osprey with the “strangely slow” vector of the aircraft “hang-gliding down to land”—in the end, the osprey is “still here.” The jet, on the other hand, will be “soon gone”—both in the immediate context and also, to take a deep ecological view, in the longer future of the planet in geologic time. In this schema, the osprey is a metonymy for animality in general, while the cargo plane seems to stand for a repressive state apparatus at large. Upon closer inspection, however, the division is not a reductive binary opposition of aggressive human and passive animal. The bird is not simply cited as more naturally aesthetic; nor is the air force cargo plane purely militarized. Remember, the poem contrasts the Air Force *cargo* plane, in all its silence (because “hang-gliding”) and spacious (even potentially humanitarian) capacity, with the stealthy tact of an *actually hunting* osprey. The osprey is paramilitary; the Air Force cargo plane is, in this instance, a benign object of perception—it is on a “practice run,” after all. What might seem to be a politicized critique of certain modes of flight breaks down, not in the least because the poem’s ornithological impulse conjures specters of empiricism and surveillance. It is this point of view that allows these two phenomena to exchange foreground and background throughout the poem; in other words, only from an already elevated vantage point can the viewer notice that these incommensurate lines of flight serendipitously share scale.

If we take Snyder’s elevated vantage point to the extreme, these lines lead to another nearby bird citing.



Google Earth’s “satellite view” of Beale Air Force Base captures the background topography of Snyder’s poem, and a “Blackbird” punctures the tarmac. Beale was the home base of the Lockheed SR-71 “Blackbird”—a supersonic, high-altitude spy plane developed secretly in the early 1960s and used for reconnaissance missions over North Vietnam. This is the black figure in the diamond-shaped, white center of the Google Earth image. The unofficial appellation off to the side, “Blackbird,” cites a link between avian classification and militarized air/force.

The Google Earth image, however, offers a disorienting satellite view of the spy plane. Aerial perception has been inverted and rendered horizontal: one stares at a computer screen in order to view the ground from high above. One essentially swaps subject positions with the Blackbird, so that the personal computer user now spies on the grounded spy plane. Yet this leads to a query inspired by Snyder’s “No Shadow”: we might speculate and wonder, is the plane in the satellite image really a plane, or could it rather be the *shadow* of the very plane from which we are spying? If we are viewing this base from the imaging technologies of a satellite (which could as easily be equipped on a spy plane), we could almost be seeing our own shadow on the ground. In one stock photo from a Google image search, we can see the Blackbird from a meta-aerial perspective, in which Beale Air Force Base lies somewhere near the edge of the frame, below the foothills:



25

To reformulate Wallace Stevens yet again: among twenty snowy mountains / the only moving thing / was a blackbird / taking pictures / of itself.

Furthermore, Google Earth displays a visual surface that becomes a palimpsest for the *textuality* of the “Blackbird.” As Snyder’s “No Shadow” cites the visual overlap of the osprey and the cargo plane, Google Earth registers a corollary overlay at Beale Air Force Base. Each text cites collusions between militarized flight and ornithological reference–perception: Snyder’s poem sights a bird, and then sees how an Air Force plane does *not* act like a bird; Google Earth overlays the word “Blackbird” on the topographical visual field of a military air base.

Through bird citing, these two texts also deploy distinct environmental aesthetics. Snyder’s lines on the page mimic the logic of a riparian ecology, at times mimicking the “springtime rush” of prose paragraphs, and elsewhere streaming like the “main river channel”—flowing enjambment creating bends, and short, widely spaced lines undulating like rapids:

My friend Denise took me into the Yuba Goldfields. That's at the lower Yuba River outflow where it enters the Sacramento valley flatlands, a mile-wide stretch between grass and blue oak meadows. It goes on for ten miles. Here's where the mining tailings got dropped off by the wandering riverbed of the 1870s—fifty miles downstream from where the giant beaver washed them off Sierra slopes.

We were walking on blue lupine-covered mounded hundred-foot gravel hills of ore spoil, over the springtime rush of water. Watched a female osprey hunting along the main river channel. Her flight shot up, down, all sides, suddenly fell feet first into the river and emerged with a fish. Maybe hooking the fish by snagging, so—no hawk shadow. Carole said later, that's like trying to do extra without your self moving into it.

Standing on a gravel hill by the lower Yuba
 as we drove west a giant osprey cargo plane from Beale
 hang-gliding down to land
 strangely slow over the scrubbed dredged-out goldfields
 —grainy eye
 shadow of a cargo jet—soon gone
 no shadow of an osprey
 still here

26

Beale Air Force Base, on the other hand, places the SR-71 Blackbird on display in the middle of a grassy lawn right next to the tarmac, suggesting connections between militarized pavement and verdant domesticity:



27

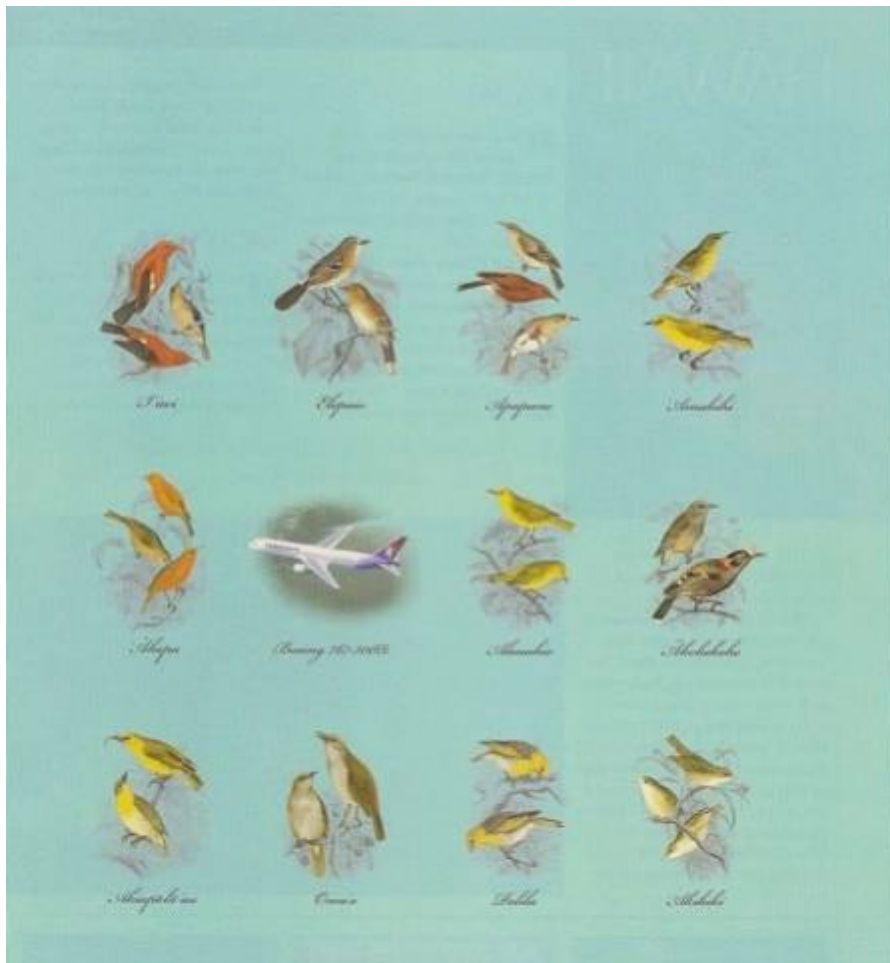
The topos of the military airfield is multiply superimposed: first with a neat grass lawn; then with a not-so-secret spy plane; and finally with the word “Blackbird.” What emerges is a chiasmic imbrication of avian and techno-cultural forms: No mapping without the airbase; no airbase without grass; no grass without spy planes; no spy planes without birds; no birds without open space; no open space without mapping. Google Earth’s scopic economy of Beale Air Force Base implicates a looped chain of referents with no stable ground. As if self-reflexive about this blackbird citing, look what happened when I searched for blackbird images on Google:



28

Which came first, the blackbird or the bomb? Which has priority, a military spy plane, or a common blackbird? Contra Wallace Stevens, a Google Image search suggests that there are “about 1,020,000” ways to look at a blackbird, and this includes everything from military spy planes to a T-shirt that metaphorically depicts a person with a migraine headache who is unzipping his skull in order to let out a flock of blackbirds.

I wish to end, if inconclusively, with the image from a magazine advertisement for Hawaiian Airlines from 2003:



29

In this image, an airliner is cleverly folded into a grid of native Hawaiian bird species. The Hawaiian Airlines Boeing 767-300ER is juxtaposed with snapshots of resident bird species; the wide-body jet is figured into native framework by way of catalogued birdlife. The reader becomes a naturalist, however, only to come across an object that is indisputably out of scale and out of place: while these practically weightless birds rest on tree branches, the 400,000-pound jet full of human beings is not at its arrivals gate, but is flying. From this basis of scalar inversion, the birds must either be monstrous, or else the airliner has undergone incredible miniaturization. Either way, the scale is inescapably *off*, and as I have tried to show, this is a common trope of bird citing. We cannot find our bearings in this ad; to take one subject position is to be caught in the absurdity of another corollary subject position. Meanwhile, flight has been cited as a naturalizing linkage between indigenous ecologies and commercial airlines.

We then must grapple with the splintered point of view assumed by the Hawaiian Airlines ad. The birds suggest that we are on their level: observing them from a tree, perhaps, or from on the ground. Yet the 767 lies at a great distance *beneath* the viewer—and it is also captured *in flight*, cruising, most likely, at upwards of 30,000 feet. So we have assumed an impossible bird's eye view of a jet in flight: we are positioned far above the plane, spying from an oxygen-depleted altitude. It would almost seem that we have found ourselves looking down from a high altitude bomber—back in the cockpit of the SR-71, as it

were. We have swung from the naturalist comportment of collecting and cataloguing, to a vantage point of military aerial perception. The ad in fact suggests that subject positions in flight are dangerously indiscriminate, and endlessly overlapping.

Furthermore, the birds all appear as collectives in groups of two or three, presumably as female/male identifiers, with an occasional juvenile sharing the branch. On the other hand, the aircraft is singular, seen alone. One might extend collectivity to the interior of the plane, and envision happy families eating Hawaiian Airlines breakfasts on the way to their vacations, but then the lonely subject position of the viewer is revealed: ‘we’ are outside of and alienated from the imaginary groups of human beings. Thus, the ad holds naturally occurring collectives (even at the level of the mind’s eye) against an isolated culture machine.

The Hawaiian native species are presented on template of empirical knowledge (they suggest ornithology at work), or as collectible pleasure objects—the Audubon book as luxury item to be viewed leisurely in the comfort of an armchair. Both of these presentations are complicated by internal disparities of power. The jet trumps the birds, but is also surrounded and contained by their comfort and pleasure-inducing qualities.

This can be seen as well in the copperplate typeface under each ‘bird’ image: this script historically displaces the currency of the ad, transporting us, as it were, not westward across the Pacific Ocean in the 21st-century, but rather eastward, back toward styles of 19th-century textual production and consumption. This ad dabbles in diagrammatic constructs for empirical knowledge production as well as for armchair enjoyment: the birds are gridlocked in matrices of capital and global expansion.

Google’s image search and Hawaiian Airline’s ad campaign are driving at a similarly associative end: the visual equation of birds and planes is achieved by attaining the view of the surveilling, Googling outsider. Google, in other words, evokes something of a ‘window-seat’ or ‘airport reading’ comportment, where fields of knowledge and power unfurl outside and below. All the familiar marks of bird citing are in play: Scale is inescapably skewed, point of view is disoriented, and a local ecology is fetishized. The birds put the reader on the ground or in an armchair, as naturalist or collector; but that airliner is cruising at upwards of 30,000 feet, which places the reader in the gaze of the spy-plane—the moving eye of the Blackbird.

Bird citing involves high stakes, as birds and humans in flight do not go together easily: planes can crash; carpet-bombing can *take place*. Yet as ideas, icons, and animals, birds and humans in flight find themselves linked in many perplexing ways. Bird citing then becomes utterly quotidian: planes and birds share the sky everyday; and birds are used as symbols of national identity (recall the Photoshopped image of an eagle with a tear in its eye after 9/11). These linkages reveal the implications of bird citing, or the startling proximity of human progress and what we might call a raw state of nature, where various animals vie for space, perception, and priority. Bird citing emerges as a series of figurations at the brink of a significant yet impossible separation; bird citing is no simple matter.

¹ Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal* trans. Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 16.

² Wallace Stevens, “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird” *The Palm at the End of the Mind* Ed. Holly Stevens (New York: Vintage, 1991), 166.

³ Photo by Greg Keeler: “Twenty Snowy Mountains, Bridger Range, Montana” (2005).

⁴ Public image viewed at http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3064/2296987387_3aefb37685.jpg?v=0 (accessed 1 November 2008).

⁵ Quoted in Martin Greif, *The Airport Book* (New York: Mayflower Books, 1979), 41.

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ Photo by the author.

⁸ Public image from *The Observer* viewed at <http://www.observer.com/files/imagecache/article/files/Terminal.jpg> (accessed 1 November 2008).

⁹ Images provided by Google Earth and <http://www.tsa.gov/>.

¹⁰ Photo by James Weston Schaberg.

¹¹ Detail of Rara Avis viewed at <http://www.handsart.net/raraavis.html> (accessed 16 May 2008).

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ Photo by author.

¹⁴ Paul Ferrell, “Clear-cut for takeoff” *Citing wildlife and terrorists, the airport wants to destroy more native oaks* <http://www.newsreview.com/sacramento/Content?oid=oid%3A47274> (accessed 24 December 2006).

¹⁵ Photo by author.

¹⁶ Photo by author.

¹⁷ Photo by author.

¹⁸ Photo by author.

¹⁹ “Flying Gardens” camera-phone shot by Daniel Glass; anonymous 9/11 camera-phone shot viewed at <http://www.apfn.org/apfn/unmasking.htm> (accessed 16 May 2008).

²⁰ Paul Ferrell, ““Clear-cut for takeoff” *Citing wildlife and terrorists, the airport wants to destroy more native oaks.*” <http://www.newsreview.com/sacramento/Content?oid=oid%3A47274> (accessed 24 December 2006).

²¹ Gary Snyder, “No Shadow” *Danger on Peaks* (Emeryville: Shoemaker & Hoard, 2004), 85.

²² *ibid.*

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ Image by Google Earth.

²⁵ Image viewed at *Wiki Media* “Blackbird” http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/97/Lockheed_SR-71_Blackbird.jpg (1 November 2008).

²⁶ Snyder, 85.

²⁷ Images provided by Google Earth.

²⁸ Retrieved from Google image search at <http://images.google.com/images?q=blackbird> (11 October 2008).

²⁹ Hawaiian Airlines advertisement in the 2003 journeys issue of *The New Yorker*.

State Violence and the Writer: Towards the Dialectics of Intellectual Militancy in Transcending Postcolonial Nigerian Contradictions.

By Uzoechi Nwagbara

Take justice
In your hands who can
Or dare, insensate sword
Of power
Outherods Herod and the law's outlawed
... Orphans of the world
Ignite! Draw
Your fuel of pain from earth's sated core

---- Wole Soyinka, *A Shuttle in the Crypt*, 1972

The Nigerian State as Epiphenomenon of Violence: A Prolegomenon

Nigerian history since colonial incursion is awash with political violence, crude use of power and deepening socio-economic crises. The principal factors that shaped this tradition are couched in hegemony, capitalism and politics of exclusion (Nwosu 2006:24; Kukah 1999:16), which underpin the logic of imperialism. Fundamentally, this pattern has left an aftertaste of lingering State violence, which is an epiphenomenon of this culture clash. Simply put, imperial violence and its concomitants are replicated in Nigeria's postcolonial State violence and political culture. The tyrannical State violence replicated is a function of colonial administrative subterfuge, which was modelled upon administrative convenience – even when the colonialists have left the Nigerian political space. Accordingly, "... the processes of the establishment of Western hegemony were designed in such a way as to make their stranglehold survive

well beyond the period of their stay” (Kukah 1999:15). Thus, the compliant system of administering the colonial amalgam, Nigeria, is what Ogundowole in his book, *Colonial Amalgam, Federalism and the National Question* dubs “denationalisation policy” (1994: viii). This phrase is correlative of the British “Indirect Rule” policy in colonial Nigeria, which is largely the bane of the Nigerian State; and arguably, Nigeria’s postcolonial contradictions stem principally from this policy. Since colonial Nigeria was ground on the anvil of violence, its corollary, the postcolonial Nigerian State is not lacking in crude use of power and violence as well as “coercion and hegemony” (Dirks 1994:4) in the execution of its grisly political objectives.

As a consequence, the Nigerian political class has appropriated the mechanics of political operation left by the colonialist; this has given rise to postcolonial political elite, whose business is to advance the under-development project initiated by the imperialists for the furtherance of its interests. In this vein, Richard Joseph sees this political opportunism as “clientelism” (1992:55) or prebendalism, which is a penumbra of “alliance of the purse and the gun” (Soyinka 1973: 134) and postcolonial tragedies. It is in the context of this national malaise that Claude Ake in his important book, *Democracy and Development in Africa* illuminates the nature of the postcolonial Nigerian state:

Since the colonial State was for its subject, at any rate, an arbitrary power, it could not engender any legitimacy... At independence, the form and function of the State in Africa did not change much. State power remained essentially the same: immense, arbitrary, often violent, always threatening. (1996: 3)

Since Nigeria’s political independence in 1960, ensuing administrations have virtually towed the path of violence – as ensconced by the colonialists in order to contain people’s dissatisfaction as well as to muscle opposition arising from the masses. Consequently, the most effective way to guarantee domination as well as private accumulation of wealth by the ruling class is the creation of the totalitarian State (Sklar 1979:537; Diamond 1987:569). These regimes have equally run the State as a private business, thereby personalising State power and liquidating constitutional authority. Since independence, Nigeria has passed through eight military jackboots in this order: Major-General J.T.U Aguiyi Ironsi, General Yakubu Gowon, General Murtala Mohammed, General Olusegun Obasanjo, Major-General Muhammadu Buhari, General Ibrahim Babangida, Generals Sani Abacha and Abdusalami Abubakar. Accordingly, the civilian governments have taken the public space as a private business, thereby militarising the public sphere to ensure compliance from the masses. This is evidenced in the failed state status of Nigeria – which civilian governments have demonstrated even in democratic dispensations.

As politics is reduced to mere zero-sum game, in which the winner makes a sweepstake, leaving the loser prostrate, the political class in postcolonial Nigeria maintains that politicking by the wholesome tenets of democratic principles and the bettering of the condition of the masses are nothing short of sheer luxury that it cannot afford. Hence, the unbridled political schism and socio-economic exploitation in Nigeria characterise her politics: politics of violence, which the state furthers. On this score, “the state is viewed as the agent of the productive relations between a class of exploiters and a class of the exploited” (Jinadu

1980:100). It is against this backwater that the postcolonial Nigerian novelists' art is forged. It is an artistic commitment aimed at transcending the postcolonial realities engendered by State violence. Herein lies the fact that the mainstay of this kind of literature is "to cognise and problematise the contradictions and alienation in human and social relationships from bourgeois ethics and psychology" (Lenin 1970:85). In this connection therefore, Martin Albrow has reasoned in his book, *The Global Age: State and Society beyond Modernity* that the "inability of the State to shape the aspirations of individuals and to gather them into collective political aims" (1997:75) have animated the dialectics of text and terror. This is so because the (Nigerian) writer in Niyi Osundare's perspective,

is a person that people look up to, in whose works people are trying to see how they relate to the social, cultural and political problems that we are facing... (Na' Allah 2003:470).

Text and Terror in Nigeria: An Overview

A violent action is one which entails doing harm or damage to a person or thing; and this usually elicits pain from the receiver of the action, which violence produces. There is a reverberation of this in Gerald Priestland's statement in his *The Future of Violence*: "... the essence of violence is that physical power is deliberately employed with the ultimate sanction of physical pain ..." (1974:11). Considered in the minimalist sense for the purpose of convenient discursive mould, violence, the sheer use of (physical) force to cause harm thereby creating emotional distress, physical pain and psychological desolation, spans the continuum of history. As indicated in the preceding argument, violence shaped Nigeria's historiography and political architectonics; this experience percolates its literature, thereby linking the texts produced in this social space to terror (violence) therein. Hence in Trotsky's notion, each literary work is a product of the materials drawn from a writer's ambience or social facts in a writer's social environment (Siegel 1970:13). Technically, the Nigerian novel is an upshot of social experience in Nigeria.

By extrapolation, the understanding of the dialectics of terror and text in postcolonial Nigeria is inhered in engaging with the dynamics of State violence and its fallout. It is within this matrix that Edward Said maintains that it is essential that a work of art (literature) be inscribed into its world so as to reveal the silenced interactions that unfold within it (Udumukwu 2006: 20). Moreover in order to negate terror, violence and dictatorship in the postcolonial Nigeria, writers, which include Chinua Achebe, Niyi Osundare, Odi Ofeimun, Wole Soyinka, Femi Osofisan and Tanure Ojaide, among others, have taken literature as a platform for the negation of postcolonial tragedies. To this end, Bill Ashcroft considers African (Nigerian) literature as a function of "conflict between a dominant discourse and a local reality" (1). Accordingly, for a novelist (writer) to be relevant, there should be "a close relationship between his writing and his world, his society and life" (Kehinde 2005: 88). Here lies the dialectical nexus between terror and text. It is within this rubric that Joe Ushie x-rays the responsiveness of artists to the actualities in their social space:

In assessing their responsiveness therefore, it is necessary to gauge their art against the actual

physical conditions of the society at the time when they compose. (2005:15-16)

Text and terror are indissoluble in the literary production of postcolonial writers, necessitated by the pressures of the moment to articulate the forces in society in their works through the creative process, thereby harking back to their traditional roles as moulders of thought and social commentators. This idea is in tandem with Achebe's preoccupation in his artistic enterprise:

In Achebe's view, the African (Nigerian) writer of our time must be accountable to his society; if he fails to respond to the social and political issues of his age, to espouse the 'right and just causes' of his people, he is no better than 'the absurd man in the proverb who deserts his burning house to pursue a rat fleeing from the flames. (Roger 1976:1)

In addition, postcolonial Nigerian writers appropriate art to delineate the mode of power relations between "the economically exploited, underprivileged masses of the society" (Ojaide 1996:24) and the State; this again crystallises in text and terror rhetoric. The internecine relationship between text and postcolonial realities (terror) is a function of the nature of a writer's society (Lindfors et al 1972:8). The abortion of the bargained dividends of democracy, political independence and nationalist ideals in the wake of incessant military intervention in politics as well as political violence in Nigeria, (even during democratic regimes) has elicited aesthetics of intervention. Consequently, as Frederic Jameson asserts "... all Third World texts are national allegories..." (Aijaz 1994:95). To this end, the pestilential, despotic system in Nigeria since her creation till date provides an interesting material for the writers – which translates into their reconstruction of these events in society.

Aware of their oracular responsibility, Nigerian novelists (writers) have continued to produce a body of literature that adumbrates alternative values and political culture that eschew state violence and postcolonial disillusionment. This artistic mould saw the publication of the novels that decry the depraved state of Nigeria's nationhood. These works include *A Man of the People* and *Anthills of the Savannah* by Chinua Achebe; *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Purple Hibiscus* by Ngozi Adichie; *Season of Anomy* and *The Interpreters* by Wole Soyinka; *The Heroes*, *The Contract* and *Violence* by Festus Iyayi; and other works that chart a new historical course away from Nigeria's postcolonial political turmoil. For these writers, their artistic commitment to art that questions the legitimacy of Nigeria's postcolonial system bears testament to how this kind of literature is a correlate of terror; this nexus is made possible by the umbilical relationship that the former has with the latter. So, "art is the representation not of the body but of the forces which created the body" (Kazantzakis 1961:150). It is within the premise of using literature to refract the conjunctures in society as well as using it as a compass to navigate out of State violence that the connection between the text and terror finds resonance.

In portraying the forces at work against nation-building in Nigeria, the Nigerian writers have faced harsh and violent conditions; some of them have been exiled, incarcerated, terrorised, and cowed by the State. These writers include Wole Soyinka, Niyi Osundare, Ken Saro-Wiwa, among others. However, the Nigerian writer cannot balk at their responsibility to use art (literature) to contest the public space – this

is an integral facet of their vocation as moulders of thoughts, chroniclers of history, conscience of their age and critics. In this light, they believe “literature can play a great role in straightening the patterns of change in Africa” (Maduka 1984:13) – and Nigeria in particular. Commenting on the resolve of these writers to use art (text) to engage with the horrors in their society, Achebe dwells on the roles of writers in times of tyranny and political violence – and challenges them in this manner:

We must seek the freedom to express our thought and feeling, even against ourselves, without the anxiety that what we say might be taken in evidence against our race. (Roscoe 1971:122)

The Nigerian Novel and Form: Engaging Postcolonial Politics

In *The Political Unconscious*, Fredric Jameson remarks that the “form is immanently and intrinsically an ideology in its own right” (1981:141). Preoccupation with the realities of violence as well as its implication in governance in Nigeria, has conditioned the craft of Nigerian novelists (writers) as well as their ideological persuasion. Therefore, form is shaped by the realities in a given social space – and this ultimately conditions the ideo-aesthetic colouration of a writer. Udentia’s statement lucidly bears up this position:

Man is variously understood and depicted from the perspective of the artist’s ideo-political impulses and weltanschauung. Form in art does not condition idea-content; it is idea-content that breathes life into the specific artistic forms used in Working them out. (31)

A diachronic survey of this artistic position shall be relevant in apprehending the import of this form of aesthetics.

Historically, the overarching consequences of slavery on African identity and heritage as well as the inhumanity meted to African slaves provided an artistic form that was inevitably focused on aesthetics of cultural re-affirmation: a literary culture that functions at the crossroads of an external struggle against cultural deracination. This animated the works of Phillis Wheatley, Olaudah Equiano, Ottobah Cuguano, and Ignatius Sancho, *inter alia*. Their writing was essentially steeped in the narrative of psycho-cultural and somatic violence they faced as a result of slavery and dehistoricisation project by the West that considers Africa as the Other. In their narrative style, they refracted in penetrating cadences their sanguinary experiences on the slave ships and on colonialists’ plantations. The concern and impact of cultural erasure and displacement of the Africans, crystallises in what Bill Ashcroft *et al* describe as the burden of “place and displacement” (1989:8). In like manner, the logic of the Senghorian and Cesairean Negritude movement was basically an ideo-aesthetic project of re-inventing the black race. Thus, this movement orchestrated a literary response that engaged with colonialist violence. Accordingly, writers like Birago Diop, David Diop and Aime Cesaire, among others directed their aesthetic dart to attenuating and erasing the impact of colonialism, which finds testimony in cultural violence.

In Nigeria as well as other African nations, the ledgers of postcolonial writers are replete with issues ranging from political corruption, State violence, to despotic governance, among others. In Nigeria particularly, the mode of governance in place has conditioned the form of writers' craft; Nigerian writers' quest for democratic and purposeful governance has been unwavering and unalloyed. All the military governments in Nigeria have ruled with Gestapo force, cruelty and intense violence against the subaltern and human rights activists; this is also true of civilian dispensations, which are mere cloning of militarised governments. The killing of the Nigerian ace journalist, Dele Giwa by letter bomb; the death of Kudirat Abiola; the hanging of the activist-writer, Ken Saro-wiwa with other Ogoni eight and the maltreatment of the Nigerian Nobel laureate, Wole Soyinka by the powers that be are cases in point. This national tragedy in the thinking of Ihonvbere has consequently made the Nigerian State a wielder of immense power and violence, and this has left crisis of confidence in the State thereby creating a lingering flavour of violence and political contradictions (Raji 2000:76).

It is against this morbid, vertiginous landscape that Nigerian writers have used their craft to engage with the excesses of State and its machinery. In addition, the Nigerian writers' commitment to depict the faces of State violence in their works stems from the fact that they see themselves as repositories of history, education and criticism (Ojinmah 1991: vii). In Festus Iyayi's *Violence*, we witness a reconstruction of State violence and vicissitudes of life among the urban poor in postcolonial Nigeria petro-dollar. The protagonist of the novel, Idemudia and his wife, Adisa, objectify the subaltern and marooned that are at the last rung of societal stratification, but who are determined to change their condition in the face of tyranny. Achebe's political novels: *A Man of the People* and *Anthills of the Savannah* bear testament to the act of using literature to address socio-historical issues that border on state terrorism, dictatorship and political corruption. In Soyinka's *Season of Anomy* and *The Interpreters*, there is decry of Establishment ideologies, societal anomie and monopoly of State violence. Within this seam, the portraiture of Tanure Ojaide's nameless protagonist, The Activist in his novel, *The Activist* distils ideo-aesthetic effort to transcend State terror and environmental exploitation.

The form of the Nigerian novel is a reflection of an intriguing interface between it and Nigeria's traditional values (Nnolim 1992:234). Thus, form is informed by the context or content of a work of art. A more radical facet of this argument is that the Nigerian novel is not essentially an independent entity that makes reference to nothing outside itself; it is not autotelic. In this connection therefore, in his *The Novel and Change in Africa*, Onyemaechi Udumukwu argues that

(...) critics who analyse a work in the light of its effects on social experience, agree that there is a connection between form and content. The novel brings together different aspects in one unit, i.e. the subject matter and the technique. (2006:7)

Deductively, the form of the Nigerian novel mediates the dialectics of a writer's responsibility to his environment; hence, form in this context is teleological – its architectonics is informed by social realities. In addition, Nigerian novelists recognise the blinding subjectivities of the day and the terror unleashed by the State in their works; their art is a protest against State excesses and anti-people politics. Crucial to this

perspective is that the Nigerian novel is a child of social transformation; a genre that offers a blueprint to transcend the Nigerian experience.

Faces of Intellectual Militants in Nigerian Novel

In an interview with Donatus Nwoga, Chinua Achebe brings to the fore the drive of Nigerian (African) writer:

I think we might be neglecting our proper function if we take anything for granted instead of thinking what exactly is our society, what are its needs, what can I do, what can I contribute; that is what I was trying to get at, and I think we have a very important function... this is only one of the roles of the writer... (Duerden & Pieterse 1972:7)

The essential duty of a writer in Nigeria, as gleaned from Achebe's statement above resonates with gross portrayal of the strategies to upturn justice as well as to fight for the downtrodden in the society. This creative preoccupation imbues writers with the fervour to see themselves as fighters for the marginalised and marooned – those at the fringe of the social space. Incidentally, one of Africa's postcolonial predators, Sekou Toure, stresses this position the writers have taken; in his opinion, there is no other platform for writers than to agitate for the rights of the de-humanised in the society (Fanon 1967:166). There is an exemplification of this aesthetic bent in the characters portrayed in the Nigerian novel – the faces of intellectual militants. Since the Nigerian writers may not be overtly political or engage in the political process per se, they could participate in the politics of the day through their artistic works.

Also the writers' formalist aestheticisation has undergone serious radicalisation, which finds expression in disengaging from the dreamy, farcical literature that looks at art from the inside rather from the outside. The writers' engagement in politics and fighting for the masses through their fictive works is crucial in critiquing as well as contesting the social space in the postcolonial era, when the pressures of tyranny has been redoubled in the wake of corporatist thralldom and state violence. Accordingly, the reaction of writers as they woke up from their "... opium dream of metaphysical abstractions ..." (Wanjala 1983:348) to depict reality in their social ambience is manifested in their works. Hence, "the reading of a text is intimately engaged in certain social, historical and ideological consciousness" (Udumukwu 2006:20). To this end, in Soyinka's *Season of Anomy*, Aiyero, the primeval status quo, which Ofeyi and the Dentist accept as the *modus operandi* for good leadership, is what is needed to put the society back on track on the heels of postcolonial brigandage and brutality. Thus the face of intellectual militancy is seen in the portraiture of The Dentist and Ofeyi, who are on the vanguard to better their society through their intellectual bent and agitation to espouse change by a call to the status quo ante. Similarly, in "Gabriel Okara's novel, *The Voice*, there is a strident interrogation of the prevailing state of cant in the nation in the 1960s" (Udumukwu 2007:9). In the novel, the face of intellectual militant is made manifest in the characterisation of Okolo, the protagonist, whose sense of search for the ideals of true nation culminates in people's conscientisation

and political education.

In Achebe's political novel, *Anthills of the Savannah*, there is a conscious effort in the craft employed to dramatise the power of intellectual militancy in transcending the trammels of State violence and inept order. We see this in Ikem and Chris – especially in the former. In espousing his intellectual militancy in order to change the militarised, elite-salving landscape in Kangan, the setting of the novel – an imaginary West African nation, Ikem has written a novel and a drama piece. And as the editor of the paper, *National Gazette*, “he has a more militant attitude towards the dictatorship” (Zapata 1993:224) in Kangan – aimed at changing the depraved status quo. Furthermore, unlike his fellow intellectual, Chris, “Ikem is militant and very outspoken” (Udumukwu 2007:77). Ikem's intellectual militancy culminates in his giving a lecture at the University of Bassa titled, “The Leopard and the Tortoise” (Achebe 152-161), which is an intellectual invective against Sam's dictatorship as well as a message to sensitise the masses about the nature and dynamics of His Excellency's (Sam's) State violence and chicanery. His speech is crucial in galvanising political development (Ojinmah 1991:102). As Chukwudi Maduka notes, as Ikem engages in this militancy, “he incarnates the spirit of social justice in Kangan” (Udumukwu 2007:77).

Odili in Achebe's *A Man of the People* symbolises another face of intellectual militancy in the Nigerian novel. His characterisation in the novel shows a foil between him and other intellectuals in Achebe's works like Professor Okong, who is portrayed as an agent of the political class in *Anthills of the Savannah*, and Obi Okonkwo, the extension of colonialism in *No Longer at Ease*. In this light,

What Achebe has done in *A Man of the People* (and *No Longer at Ease*) is to make it impossible or inexcusable for other African writers to do other than address themselves directly to (contemporary social realities) their audience in Africa ... and to tell them that such problems are their concern. (Ngugi 1972:54)

The essentials of the situation highlighted above regarding the duty of African (Nigerian) writers reside in intellectual militancy, which is being orchestrated through the characters they create – intellectual militants. In exemplifying this, Odili Samalu, the intellectual militant and protagonist of *A Man of the People*, mediates Achebe's vision that the masses must not “give up” (Duerden & Pieterse 1972:13) in their fight to bring healthy change in society. In this connection, “Nanga, the villain, acts as a foil to Odili” (Dwivedi 2008:3); Odili's intellectual militancy, finds resonance in the turf of good governance as against the elitist brand of politics that Nanga and his cohorts espouse in the novel. Achebe's portraiture of Odili silhouettes intellectual militancy – particularly in the area of political participation to upturn social justice and good governance.

Also, in enervating the tragedies of postcolonial Nigeria sired by the instrumentality of State violence and misrule, Ngugi has re-echoed the need for the fictionalisation of postcolonial Nigerian realities through characters that foreshadow intellectual militancy as a means of socialising the people as well as challenging the mess made of leadership in Nigeria. According to Ngugi, this is a means to confront as well as transcend the leadership crises in Nigeria:

I believe that the African intellectuals must align themselves with the struggle of the African masses for a meaningful national ideal. For we must strive for a form of social organisation that will free the manacled spirit and energy of our people so we can build a new country... (1975:50)

Furthermore, intellectual militant characters like the ones Soyinka paints in *The Interpreters*, who routinely gather together to deliberate on how to move their country (Nigeria) forward, dramatise the place of paid-up intellectuals in effecting societal transformation. *The Interpreters* is a tale of five young Nigerian militant intellectuals trying to fit into the depraved Nigerian society to which they return after a period abroad. These militant intellectuals include Sekoni, Kola, Egbo, Bandele and Sagoe. Their views and militancy in critiquing as well as challenging the situation in modern Nigeria mark them off as agents of change. Also, Tanure Ojaide, takes a swipe at Nigeria's failed leadership and sleazy oil politics through his militant intellectuals: Omagbemi, Ebi and the Activist. The Activist is the nameless protagonist in Ojaide's *The Activist*. His image and portraiture – which find accommodation in political activism and intellectual militancy, constitute an ideo-aesthetic desire to change Nigeria's moribund political leadership. Towards the end of the novel, intellectual militancy paid off: The Activist becomes the first elected governor of Niger Delta State – which was unprecedented (Ojaide 2006: 318); and State structure was reformulated. Essentially, intellectual militancy in *The Activist* amounts to public lectures held by The Activist; sensitisation programmes he initiated to educate the community and his ideal by founding *The Patriot*, a Newspaper, which illuminates the minds of the inhabitants of the Niger delta concerning State violence, oil politics and environmental despoliation of their environment by the multinationals in cahoots with the political elite.

Transcending State Violence and Politics: The Writer and Change

In *Martin Heidegger*, George Steiner argues that “to question truly is to enter into a harmonic concordance with that which is being questioned” (1978: 69). What is being questioned in the postcolonial Nigerian experience is its politics of State violence and general misrule. Since Nigeria's political independence in 1960, there has been palpable failure of political leadership; this is largely why it has been characterised as a failed state (Wunsch and Olowu 1995) or as having collapsed (Zartman 1995). Nigeria has witnessed more military government than civilian – and this has immensely contributed to State violence – hence the military rule by sheer force, which resonates with decrees and hegemony. The Nigerian state uses violence to silence opposition and to maintain compliance from the masses. In *State and Revolution*, Lenin presents a manifestation of state violence – which dramatises the nature of the Nigerian state, particularly during the heinous regimes of Generals Abacha and Babaginda:

The state is a special organisation of force: it is an organization of violence for the suppression of some class. A standing army and police are the chief instruments of state power. But how can it be otherwise? (1917: 2)

Lenin's question above finds answer in the literary productions of Nigerian writers (novelists), who use their artistry to sensitise the masses to match right with wrong; this dovetails with the Lukacsian theory of transforming the consciousness of the pauperised citizenry in his *History and Class Consciousness*, in order to galvanise change (Lukacs 1970: 80).

For a committed writer, his duty amounts to creative and ideo-political engagements that illuminate the mechanism and means of transforming his world. And this technically mediates articulating fictive works that offer insights into the inner workings of the instantiated that needs change. By inviting readers (and the people) to his world – though fictive – the writer will be imbuing the people with the necessary stimuli to effect change. Hence, lived experiences are sheer reification of artistic conjunctures. The idea of political commitment by a writer, which emerges from the realities in his environment, is shaped largely by the dynamics of State violence and its fallout. In their provocative works, *Toward the Decolonisation of African Literature*, Chinweizu *et al* touched on this unequivocally:

None can decide for the writer, as none can decide for the cook, the teacher, the soldier, doctor, merchant, lawyer... or politician. Each would have to decide which cause to serve by donation of his or her skill ... (The writer) can defend or attack the state, if that is where his impulse leads him... (1980:254)

Accordingly, the writer's approach and aesthetic predilection are steeped in the spirit of the time. Thus, in congruence with this commitment, in Nikos Kazantzakis words, the writer has to "make decisions which harmonise with the fearsome rhythm of our time" (1961:4).

Furthermore, in transcending the postcolonial Nigerian malaise, the Nigerian novelists have opted for a change of consciousness through a body of literature that catalogues the ideals of the desire to alter the dynamics of power relations between the State and the citizens. They have also demonstrated the philosophical scaffold that underwrites the rhetoric of intellectual militancy. In like manner, Udumukwu has appropriately argued that

(...) in the current overwhelming desire for change the novel as a literary form has become both the channel for communicating the pattern of change and a powerful tool for fashioning out the desired change. (2006: 272)

In this respect, societal transformation amounts to what Ngugi in his *Penpoints, Gunpoints, and Dreams* referred to as "absolute art", which is a logical antithesis of State violence and tyranny (Rodrigues 2004: 165). The art referred here in order to negate Nigeria's problems, should have utility value through its energies to contest the public sphere. This is the hallmark of Ngugi's thesis. As this type of literature distils ways of circumventing national morass, it would be foreshadowing Wole Soyinka's perspective in his *Myth, Literature and the African World*: "one of the social functions of literature is the visionary reconstruction of the past for the purpose of a social direction" (1976:106).

Through history, the ability of the written word to transcend the ephemeral power of brute force and violence is well known. This brings to the fore the oft-quoted statement by Edward Bulwer-Lytton, who said that “the pen is mightier than the sword”. The analogy of the pen and the sword is a metonymic sound bite and does offer insight into the long-lasting and transformative energies of art in societal re-engineering. In his Nobel lecture entitled “Crediting Poetry”, Seamus Heaney, the Irish poet noted persuasively the dynamics of art in circumventing State repression; art for him is a harbinger of ethical depth and values necessary for the masses to rise above the shenanigans of absolutism. This again points a flambeau to the form and character of artistic creation. Thus, the literary

(...) form is both the ship and the anchor. It is at once a buoyancy and a steadying, allowing for the simultaneous gratification of whatever is centrifugal and whatever is centripetal in mind and body. And it is by such means that Yeats’s work does....: the power to persuade that vulnerable part of our consciousness of its rightness in spite of the evidence of wrongness all around it, the power to remind us that we are hunters and gatherers of values... (1995:9)

Pushing the Boundary: Intellectual Militancy and Nigeria’s Underdevelopment

The concept of intellectual militancy is neither a call to arms nor an effort at passivism or withdrawal to inaction; rather it is aimed at critically and intellectually questioning the basis and legitimacy of State violence, oppression and dictatorship, thereby replacing it with just and equitable order. It entails laying the groundwork for change, upturning truth – “the silent force”, in Gandhi’s locution; and effecting the redistribution of power. In “Men of the People: Chinua Achebe’s Postcolonial Intellectuals and Politicians”, Zapata offers a homologous view concerning the essence of intellectual militancy: this concept

(...) emphasises the potentialities of educated and competent professional civilians who should be instrumental in building a new democratic African society. (1993:227)

Following this, in *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire insightfully argues that a “revolution is achieved with neither verbalism nor activism rather with praxis, i.e. with reflection and action divided at the structures to be transformed” (1970:96). Although the reflection Freire talks about is not tantamount to a programme of praxis per se, rather, it is meant to conscientise the people about the inhuman world made possible by postcolonial Nigerian realities. The structure to be transformed in this instance is the dictatorial and repressive power relations between the State and the masses in Nigeria.

In Soyinka’s contention, intellectual militancy is more potent and efficacious than the crude and transient “victory” that violence engenders. This is because it borders on the mind and the intellect; this process is capable of going beyond the realm of the physical: it is ethically and morally based, thereby touching the very foundation of truth. This mirrors Steve Biko’s concept of intellectual militancy, which he says is deposited in the mind. In Biko’s opinion, the mind is the most effective weapon in the hands of the

oppressed people in order to change their condition and world. Thus, engaging with the oppressor's mind galvanises lasting change. Also, this idea inheres in Gandhi's principle of "non-violence resistance", which is hallmarked by Satyagraha, a philosophical and intellectual movement of non-violence, which utilises conversion instead of coercion in order to reach a just end that the oppressor is unknowingly obstructing. This pattern helped galvanise change in the Apartheid South Africa, where Mandela incarnates this ideal; it did foster change through Martin Luther King's efforts during America's Civil Rights Movement; and India's independence was ground on its anvil. This is what Gandhi called "the force of truth". In the Soyinkan parlance, "the route to the mind is not the path of the bullet nor the path of the blade, but the invisible, yet palpable path of discourse that may be arduous but ultimately guarantees the enlargement of our private and social beings" (2).

As the high hopes Nigerians evaporated in the wake of post-independence disillusionment, Nigerian writers stated creating political-cum-artistic works to engage with the heartbeat of the times. This period of grand disillusionment, which eclipsed the bargains and dividends of Nigeria's political independence, resonates with what Neil Lazarus refers to as Nigeria's "preliminary overestimation of emancipatory potentials" (1986: 50). However, this period called forth literature of engagement, which is a correlative of intellectual militancy needed to elicit change in the polity. In his *A Month and a Day*, Ken Saro-Wiwa delineated the power of literature to save the nation from postcolonial contradictions and State violence. He asserts:

Indeed, literature must serve society by steeping itself in politics, by intervention, and writers must not merely write to amuse or to take a bemused, critical look at society. They must play an interventionist role. (1994: 81)

This act of "intervention" celebrates the import of intellectual militancy. The militancy referred here is not physical (armed) violence, but pragmatic sensitisation via discourses, art and approaches that engender ethical withdrawal of consent by the people. This amounts to what Francis Waffert terms "the awakening of critical consciousness" (Freire 1970: 16), which exposes the intricacies of social discontents of oppressive order, thereby making societal change possible. Hence, people's consciousness that is raised animates them to question the essence of State power, in that way challenging oppressive system therein. In Sharpe's contention, this kind of process, which is "non-violent" in outlook, diffuses power as well as tears down the walls of unjust order. And over and above all, it brings lasting solutions to the problems made possible by brute force and state terrorism (1980: 62).

Consequently, to move Nigeria forward, intellectual militancy is a sine qua non; it is an alternative to tyranny – it ushers in real development, populist governance and for the foremost part, the consolidation of her fledgling democracy. This approach will in the final analysis reduce the incidence of national crises. To this end, Edward Said, one of the foremost intellectual militants in the Third World, has pointed out as follows:

The problem of democracy, development and destiny are real ones, attested to by the

persecutions of intellectuals who have carried on their thoughts and practice publicly and courageously. (1986:45)

Therefore, intellectually committed militancy, the one that Nigerian intellectual militants (writers) illustrate in the novel is crucial to Nigeria's national development. So, what these writers contend is that since such brand of militancy saw the withering of State violence and oppression in the fictive world, which is a simulacrum of the lived world, it could happen in the real world; after all, art refracts reality. This shores up the fact that intellectual militancy could be the antidote to Nigeria's State violence.

Conclusion

The main concern of this study is moored in transcending the beleaguering postcolonial Nigerian contradictions; and this attempt finds accommodation in the liberating energies of literature (the novel), to engage with postcolonial contradictions. This process crystallises in intellectual militancy, a concept that utilises radicalised intellectual engagement, ideo-aesthetic edification and political education to engage with inept order so as to upturn social justice. The strength of the foregoing resides in the fact that the Nigerian novel (art) is capable of generating the necessary stimuli for wholesome societal transformation. In its fictiveness, literature proffers disparate perspectives of existential problems and their solutions. Therefore, intellectually militant literature or discourse, the one that Tanure Ojaide, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, and Ngozi Adichie, *inter alia* write, is a veritable instrument for conquering State violence and postcolonial contradictions. Thus, postcolonial Nigerian writers' preoccupation is to illustrate through their works that change is possible through art on the heels of State terrorism and anti-democratic culture widespread in Nigeria.

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“Put Not Your Trust in Princes”: *Fables* and the Problematisation of Everyday Life.

By Wilson Koh

Abstract

DC Comics’s *Fables* is a postmodern pop culture pastiche which involves both the extraordinary vision of fairytales and a carnivalesque counter-cultural subversion of Disney- inflected norms. Accordingly, this paper explores the ways in which *Fables*’s narratives and semiotics reveal everyday life to be a construct normalised by its subjects. Issues such as intertextual dialogue, carnival, active audiences, and the neo-Victorian prosocial diadecism of the fairytale genre are discussed.

Fables is an ongoing comic book series published by DC Comics’s mature-audience-targeted Vertigo imprint. It has proven popular enough to warrant a spin-off companion series, a prestige-bound hardcover collection, and a script order for a television pilot (Futoncritic.com np). The series is written under two central conceits: that public domain fairytale heroes and villains—such as Snow White, The Big Bad Wolf, Baba Yaga, Sinbad, and Prince Charming—all exist in a shared narrative continuity, and that they live in present-day New York, having been driven from their homelands by the evil Adversary. It thus subverts the traditional fairytale structure where the hero(ine) is plucked from a comforting domesticity, and called to adventure in a wonderland that becomes curiouser and curiouser with each turn of the plot (Campbell 12): the *Fables* adventure and live their immortal lives in a quotidian—for the audience—chronotope characterised by all-night diners, deserted back alleys, and apartment buildings. This paper thus explores the ways in which the narratives and semiotics of *Fables* problematises everyday life, and reveal it to be a construct normalised by its subjects. As a postmodern pop culture pastiche which involves both the extraordinary vision of fairytales and a carnivalesque counter-cultural subversion of Disney-inflected norms, *Fables* provides a uniquely potent case study around which to do so. Issues such as intertextual dialogue, carnival, active audiences, and the neo-Victorian prosocial diadecism of the fairytale genre will be discussed.

To begin, both the everyday and the extraordinary are mutually-reinforcing contradictory constructs; they depend largely on being their opposite number’s Other to define themselves. Where the everyday is the

sphere of ‘routine, repetitive taken-for-granted experiences, beliefs and practices; the mundane, ordinary world’ (Featherstone 160), the extraordinary is an ever-changing sphere where imagination and possibility are both given free rein and which ‘[does] not claim to be definitive or knowing. Lacking finality, it interrogate[s] authoritative truths and replace[s] them with something less certain’ (Jackson 15). The extraordinary is thus ‘the sphere of danger, violence and the courting of risk’ (Featherstone 165) where its ‘juxtaposition of incompatible elements and resistance to fixity’ (Jackson 15) serves to ‘threaten ...the possibility of returning to everyday routines’ (Featherstone 164). It also dramatically contrasts the notion that ‘the characteristic mode of experiencing the everyday is that of habit’ (Felski 18), and that this familiarity further ‘combines with the promise of protection and warmth to create the positive everyday association of home’ (Felski 22). Yet, the everyday remains integral to understanding the extraordinary; it ‘constitutes a base, a taken-for-granted grounding which allows us to make forays into other worlds’ (Felski 22), and foregrounds the latter’s associated exotic points of departure from it.

The theories of Henri Lefebvre thus bear exploring. Lefebvre sees everyday life as an experience intertwined with modernity, and as an exploitative, oppressive ‘bureaucratic society of controlled consumption’ (*Everyday Life* 68); it is the site of (and the crucial condition for) the reproduction of the relations of production (*Everyday Life* 41). He asserts that the everyday is marked by ‘two modes of repetition: the cyclical, which dominates in nature, and the linear, which dominates in processes known as “rational”’ (Lefebvre, *Everyday and Everydayness* 10); ‘the activities of sleeping, eating, and working conform to regular diurnal rhythms that are in turn embedded within larger cycles of repetition: the weekend, the annual holiday, the start of a new semester’ (Felski 18). This repetition—along with the mass production that industrialisation engenders—invests everyday life with conformity (Lefebvre, *Everyday and Everydayness* 10). Organised passivity thus dominates: ‘in leisure activities, (it means) the passivity of the spectator faced with images and landscapes; in the workplace, it means passivity when faced with decisions in which the worker takes no part’ (Lefebvre, *Everyday and Everydayness* 10).

For Lefebvre, the advent of the “total person”—created via the de-alienation of human beings from the everyday—will herald the positive transformation of everyday life (*Everyday Life* 72). As such, fleeting intimations of the sublime are needed, ‘moments of vivid sensations of disgust, of shock, of delight and so on, which although fleeting, provide a promise of the possibility of a different daily life, while at the same time puncturing the continuum of the present’ (Highmore 116). The utopianly classless space of Mikhail Bakhtin’s carnival, marked as it is by its ‘atmosphere of joyful relativity’ (107) through its topsy-turvy abolishment of everyday power relations, thus holds great attraction for Lefebvre:

During [those] feasts there was much merry-making: dancing, masquerades in which boys and girls changed clothes or dressed up in animal skins or masks — simultaneous marriages for an entire new generation — races and other sports, beauty contests, mock tournaments... It is the day of excess. Anything goes. This exuberance, this enormous orgy of eating and drinking - with no limits, no rules... (Lefebvre, *Critique* 202)

While this carnival could be read as ultimately restrictive rather than emancipatory—after all, authorities

may co-opt it into official culture so as to provide a pressure valve where malcontents release their frustrations in ways harmless to the hegemony—Lefebvre maintains that it remains effective so long as it is seen as alienated from the quotidian; invoking carnival's tropes signals the viability and possibility of alternative lifestyles and mindsets. In the case of *Fables*, its use of carnivalesque reversal signals that the everyday sphere which fairytales attempt to socialise their readers into may not be such a perfect construct after all: the archetypal Prince Charming is re-imagined as a sleazy Lothario who unhesitatingly seduces every pretty girl he meets, and who earthily boasts (mid-coitus) that his 'cocksmanship (sp) is as good as [his] swordsmanship' (Willingham, *Legends in Exile* 22), while The Big Bad Wolf, traditionally a villainous Other, is portrayed as a devoted mate and caring father.

Fables also undermines entrenched notions of decorum through this use of crude humour to engender laughter; it displays the (in contemporary popular imagination) benign, genteel heroes of fairytales gleefully doing things very much beyond the social pale: in addition to its unrepentantly hyper-libidinous Prince Charming, it also features tiny talking animals holding guns and saying 'fuck' (Willingham 2003: 85), and has Goldilocks in an interspecies relationship 'because Papa's li'l Boo Bear is hung like [an enjoyably big bear]' (Willingham, *Animal Farm* 31). These easily-understood jokes—at the expense of everyday propriety—thus allow a communitarian and resistant laughter which 'demolishes fear and piety before an object ...thus clearing the ground for an absolutely free investigation' (Bakhtin 23). For example, Goldilocks's immediate lofty protest that her choice of mate is 'a vital and powerful political statement' (Willingham, *Animal Farm* 31) is captured in a traditionally textually-privileged head shot where she stares out of the page to address audiences directly with intellectually polysyllabic prose. Yet, Willingham's use of shockingly crude humour encourages audiences to distrust her rationalisations. Such an anarchic liberation from conventions is in marked contrast to what Lefebvre sees as the depressingly stratified hierarchal confines of the everyday (*Everyday and Everydayness* 10).

Another key way in which *Fables* carnivalesquely subverts the construct of everyday life is through its repeated depiction of the grotesque body. Building on Lefebvre's notion that the routines of daily life 'are reconstructed in caricature' (Moran 129) within post-war consumer society, Joe Moran finds that a certain embarrassment about the workings of quotidian life has resulted in the hypermarginalisation of effluvia (131). 'Extractor fans take away kitchen smells, disposal units incinerate waste in a few seconds ...this has allowed the middle classes to embrace a comfortable version of the below-stairs life of the servants they might have employed in a previous era' (Moran 131). Thus, Moran argues that everyday life is focused on appearances rather than intentions; it conceals not only the mundane life of the house, but also the labour that goes into maintaining it (131-32). The dominant Disney version of Snow White quite literally embodies this slant towards outward appearances and abstracted antisepticity. As 'fairest of them all' (Cottrell et al. 1937), she is an idealised body with 'lips as red as the rose. Hair as black as ebony. Skin as white as snow' (Cottrell et al. 1937); older versions of the folktale which obliquely reference the messier inner workings of the body — through comparing her to being 'as white as snow, [and] as red as blood' (Ashliman np) — have thus been whitewashed.

Fables, however, includes scenes where Snow White is the victim of a high-powered sniper rifle, and

where Goldilocks shambles around with a bloody axe wedged in her head. Vast amounts of blood and brain matter feature, and these grotesque images are often given pride of place within *Fables*'s narrative. The Snow White illustration, for example, occupies an extra-large panel which spatters across two-thirds of an entire page, and also serves as a cliffhanger visual for Willingham to end that particular issue with (Willingham, *Animal Farm* 90). In it, Snow White falls towards the audience, blood spurting copiously from her head, eyes glazed and unfocused; as her sister says later, "I was standing right next to you as half of your head was blown all over my fucking shirt" (Willingham, *Animal Farm* 108). While this particular visual is a marketing ploy on one level—by gruesomely depicting severe injury to a lead character, it would have served to drum up reader curiosity for what happens next—it also allows for a paradoxically constructive degradation. Bakhtin sees this invocation of the grotesque body, with its effluvia and its degradation of 'all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract ...to the material level, to the sphere of earth and body in their indissoluble unity' (19), as a deeply positive subversion of the aforementioned antiseptic everyday. To degrade an object thus 'does not imply merely hurling it into the void of non-existence ...[but] to the reproductive lower stratum, the zone in which conception and a new birth take place' (21). Similarly, Snow White's messy near-death experience not only affords her a more positive relationship with her sister, but also the ability to contact a clairvoyant pig's head on a stake which allows her valuable insights into the future (Willingham, *Animal Farm* 91).

This view of carnival as utopian and progressive, though, is problematised by Anna Krugovoy Silver's findings that carnival has in fact a sinister side, in which 'fantasy serves as a vehicle for moral lessons' (728). In this, carnival is 'a learning process whereby we all learn how to behave in certain situations and [internalise] the [already-dominant] expectations which go with a given role or status in society' (McQuail 494). It puts forth a particular socially-sanctioned model of behaviour, and through its narrative providing symbolic reward for this model, supports the formations of in-groups and out-groups in everyday life; following this ethical code affords an individual with membership in the in-group and its attendant benefits of loyalty and respect from other in-group members, while disregarding these rules of proper conduct relegates one to an out-group where negative discrimination against its members is socially justified (McQuail 494).

An awareness of this revolution-dampening effect of carnival is indispensable when considering *Fables*'s Arabian Nights and Days storyline. In it, the leader of the Arabian Fables, Sinbad the Sailor, seeks aid from the American-based Fables against the Adversary's invasion of Baghdad (Willingham, *Arabian Nights* 21). However, when negotiations fail, an archetypally treacherous Grand Vizier releases a genie—here explicitly labelled as a 'Weapon of Magical Destruction' (Willingham, *Arabian Nights* back cover)—to kill Sinbad and the Fabletown dignitaries so as to install himself as 'the highest-ranking minister among the refugees' (Willingham, *Arabian Nights* 51). Eventually, however, this crisis is averted, and with the help of King Cole and Prince Charming, the Arabian Fables set up Fabletown East, which 'adopt[s] many of the vital provisions of [the main] Fabletown compact' (Willingham, *Arabian Nights* 89).

It is arguable that Arabian Nights and Days is liberating insofar as it provides a carnivalesque glimpse of utopia. It restages the motives and outcomes of the real-life Iraq war in gloriously utopian tones: the

Fabletown heroes suffer no casualties, the Grand Vizier becomes the victim of his own hubris, Sinbad willingly learns English to better co-operate with the main Fabletown outpost, and the motivations of the American Fables for helping the Arabs are born mainly from (meta)human decency as opposed to the former party understanding that Baghdad affords its governors both a tactical military advantage and a wellspring of magical resources. *Fables*, in this zealously Lefebvrian reading, thus supports change in the status quo—after all, this fleeting vision of a much better world highlights weak points in America’s current military efforts, casting the dreariness of quotidian news stories stating that ‘[the war’s] toll would include tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians killed, as well nearly 4,000 American troops; [and] that America’s financial costs, by some recent estimates, would rise above \$650 billion by 2008’ (Burns np) into sharp relief.

However, as a storyline which justifies the changing of an old regime for a new, and which, with the Grand Vizier as a Saddam Hussein analogue, similarly localises the threat to everyday order in the person of a sole deranged individual—a common theme in newspaper headlines regarding the Iraq war invokes ‘Hussein [as a] symbol of autocracy [and] cruelty in Iraq’ (CNN.com np)—*Arabian Nights and Days* is undoubtedly laden with jingoistic ideas of manifest destiny and the superiority of the neo-conservative American way of life. It is a ponderously pro-war creation with a diadectly Disney tone, borrowing elements of the carnival not in a playful subversion of the dominant political hierarchy but in order to maintain it’ (Silver 728), and to dramatise the social benefits of the Bush administration’s real-life hardline support of the war on terror. Carnival, in the *Arabian Nights and Days* arc, can consequently bring subservience rather than subversion, and is therefore insufficient in itself as an argument that *Fables* problematises the construct of everyday life.

The viewpoint of Michel de Certeau, focused as it is on the concepts of active audiences and tactical poaching must thus be called upon to provide a fuller account as to how *Fables* ruptures the quotidian. While also concerned with everyday life as an ensemble of practices, de Certeau disagrees with Lefebvre’s Marxist position that everyday life alienates the condition of its subjects, and that only carnival provides brief, shining moments of freedom from it. By contrast, he sees its subjects as actively ‘subvert[ing] the fatality of an established order’ (de Certeau 17), and focuses his gaze on the ways in which these users operate; he discusses the pedestrian who, while crossing the cityscape, confronts its structured order via taking pointless shortcuts or pointless detours (de Certeau xiv). He further sees this subversion of order as tactical in nature, where ‘the weak must constantly turn to their own ends forces alien to them’ (de Certeau xix) and that these tactics are guerrilla-like: they are ‘always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized “on the wing”’ (de Certeau xix), and must stealthily ‘insinuate [themselves] into the other’s place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance’ (de Certeau xix).

For de Certeau, then, resistance and subversion in everyday life are both non-synonymous with being “oppositional” or “progressive”. Rather, the tactics of resistance intimate a different and pluralised form of power which simultaneously preserves the existing order, yet creates something new as a by-product (Highmore 153). As John Fiske notes, these tactics are deployed under the aegis of self-interested

empowerment; by ‘enlarg[ing] the space of action for the subordinate; they effect shifts, however minute in social power relations’ (125), and ‘in making do within and against the system ...they are concerned with improving the lot of the subordinate rather than with changing the system that subordinates them’ (125). Everyday life for de Certeau, thus, ‘invents itself in countless ways by poaching in countless ways on the property of others’ (de Certeau xii). In this light, the very existence of *Fables* is a sustained exercise in textual poaching: it is an intertext which megalomaniacally consumes tropes and archetypes from a well-established literary genre, reconfigures them for its own purposes, yet—since it arguably draws most of its narrative affect through subverting audience expectations of “proper” fairytale behaviour—does not seek to replace the Disney version.

De Certeau’s idea of active and constant poaching consequently allows for the visualisation of *Fables* as a representative text in a larger popular culture that problematises the abovementioned alienating conceptualisation of everyday life. This popular culture is ‘made from within and below, not imposed from above as mass cultural theorists would have it’ (Fiske 119); it is produced by subordinated and disempowered people as they consume dominant culture and mixes ‘the ideology of the ideologically and economically dominant ...[with] resources embedded in dominant culture which ordinary people use in everyday life to erode, subvert, or refashion hegemonic culture to their own needs’ (Fiske 118). *Fables* is thus simultaneously a site where these rakish textual poachers practice ‘the art of making do’ (Fiske 120) with whatever materials they can procure from Disney’s strategically authoritative texts, and a site of struggle where the ability to create meaning is recognised as a significant form of power (Fiske 121).

This idea of necessary co-existence is significant considering that Walt Disney’s widely released, well-attended, and endlessly recirculated animated movies have made his didactic tone synonymous with popular perceptions of fairytales (Stone 43, Zipes 193); *Beauty and the Beast* alone has grossed \$377.5 million US dollars (Boxofficemojo.com np) since its 1991 release. While these fairytales originated from a bawdy and popular oral storytelling tradition that was created and cultivated for both adults and children, ‘Disney began insisting on taming if not instrumentalising the imagination to serve the forces of law and order’ (Zipes 200), and thus pressed fairytales into service as instructive tools for ‘maintain[ing particular] social norms rather than for anarchical, revolutionary, or socially progressive ends... [and] tuck[ed] moral lessons within the entertaining context of fantasy’ (Silver 737). *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Cottrell et al. 1937), for example, has its heroine taught to be kind and catatonically patient since someday her prince will come seeking such a bride, and even *Beauty and the Beast*’s (Trousdale and Wise 1991) much more independent Belle eventually joins the other Disney heroines in the gowns and trappings of morally-edifying princesshood and does not share her Austrian counterpart’s prowess in decapitating evil old men (Ashliman np). In a de Certeau reading, then, fairytales—through the unstinting efforts of Disney—are now a strategy through which powerful producers attempt to justify the status quo in society—with particular regards to female subordination—through replicating and rewarding these idealised models of conduct within their narratives; the conformist Disney princesses are invariably rewarded with handsome princes and happily-ever-afters. *Fables* cannot hope to achieve such a Disney-esque domination. In marked contrast to the sales figures above, sales of a typical issue of *Fables* are limited to around 25,000 US \$2.50 units across the board (Frisch np). However, through this tactical co-existence with Disney

products, *Fables* further inflects upon the construction of identities and ideals in everyday life, most notably by allowing audiences to positively identify with characters whose actions fall beyond the Disney pale. Its Snow White saves the day by ordering her dragon to torch the headquarters of her gun-toting captors, and to additionally ‘burn the town, everyone in it, and everyone who tries to escape’ (Willingham, *Animal Farm* 85) should anything bad happen to her. The fact that these captors are cute, waistcoated talking animals only serves to highlight her unsentimental practicality to audiences.

Also, the idea of the active audience intimates that they will specifically cross-compare the Disney version of characters against the *Fables* one. Willingham thus deliberately provides “access points” for them to do so. Its Beauty takes a page from *Beauty and the Beast*’s uniquely bibliophilic Belle by working at Nod’s Books, yet bluntly mentions that Prince Charming ‘exudes a dress-hiking, panty-dropping musk that would make us all rich if we could bottle it’ (Willingham, *Arabian Nights* 31). Its Rose Red references her absence in Disney’s genre-defining *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* to make the case that she is all but forgotten in popular memory:

The [humans] adore you by the millions. By the hundreds of millions! They keep making their godawful animated movies about you... But who remembers me? Not one in a million of them! It used to be Snow White and Rose Red. Now it’s just Snow White, period. (Willingham, *Animal Farm* 109)

By actively positioning itself within this larger intertextual nexus, *Fables* plays on the extratextual knowledge of audiences—that, for example, Disney movies lack both Rose Red and sexually scarlet prose—to colour the way in which they approach the comic. Their preconditioned perspective on fairytale characters both adds to and is affected by the narrative; Beauty is no longer simply a sheltered young girl who believes that ‘there must be more than this petty, provincial town’ (Trousdale and Wise 1991), but is also a shrewd new Deputy Mayor able to allocate jobs for Arabian immigrants. Disney’s contemporary dominant depiction of Beauty as an asexual bookworm is thus subverted in the minds of both the audiences and her Fabletown social circle by her frank discussion of Prince Charming’s aphrodisiac effects and by her capable governance. More than this, the new and improved Rose Red eventually appropriates the mannerisms and *modus operandi* of an archetypal comic book character. And while audiences can appreciate her story without knowing that the trope of the wondrously Amazonian avenger recurs and recurs again in the medium, knowing this only brightens the *Fables* reading experience.

The subversive potential of *Fables*, thus, is better understood in such a dialogically postmodern referential context; it further places its fairytale characters in storylines ranging from the ham-fisted political allegory mentioned above to a pulp-style murder mystery, to a World War II-era battlefield flashback, to an updated version of Romeo and Juliet. In fact, the closest that *Fables*’s narratives ever come to resemble fairytales is when Boy Blue, armed with magic sword and cloak of invisibility, slashes his way across the fairy tale Homelands—and even this is more in the vein of a *Lord of the Rings*-esque heroic fantasy epic rather than fairytale. Yet, Willingham treats these gross genre juxtapositions as all viable additions to the sphere of action of fairytale characters; this sustained dialogue between genres, fairytales, and the audience’s

preconceived expectations encourages audiences to reinterpret the hegemonic Disney narratives, and the parameters it sets for everyday behaviour. Any subsequent viewing of the Beauty and the Beast tale, for example, would thus be coloured not only by a Disney pastel, but also by the abovementioned frank admission of *Fables*'s Beauty. Through selectively poaching materials from the everyday Disney culture, and reassembling these materials in a coherent and appealing narratives, *Fables* thus paves a path for the viability of whatever non-hegemonically-aligned materials may follow it.

The idea of dialogue, however, resurfaces in the “Burning Questions” issue of *Fables*, where DC Comics sanctioned Willingham to spend its entirety providing answers to questions posed by his readers. Eduardo of Argentina, for example, gets to find out if ‘Hakim ever manage[d] to get a regular job’ (Willingham, *Sons of Empire* 181), while Angela from Philadelphia uncovers the naked truth as to the number of romantic conquests that Prince Charming has had (Willingham, *Sons of Empire*: 181). The issue does not necessarily oblivate the desire of users to potentially poach the text for their own purposes, and Willingham remains as gatekeeper over the answers that appear in the issue; the questions were ‘strictly limited to enquiries about past events in the fifty-plus issues of *Fables* published to date’ (Willingham, *Sons of Empire* 180). Still, this willingness of producers to engage in a dialogue—however mediated—with their audiences does problematise de Certeau’s abovementioned intimation of everyday life as involving a binary opposition between producers and users: in these examples, users have had an opportunity to inflect upon official iterations of the *Fables* text, and have further seen their concerns answered by the author himself. When coupled with the fact that Willingham maintains a *Fables*-centric message board at www.clockworkstorybook.net, and personally participates in discussions there, everyday life can now include the possibility of a mutually-productive meeting between de Certeau’s heretofore disparate twain.

Further, while *Fables* does not enjoy the level of mass market saturation of Disney’s fairytales, it ultimately remains a commercial product produced by the DC Comics company; it borrows and problematises elements from both Disney and public domain fairytale texts for not only its own financial profit, but the entertainment of audiences as well. Its existence, thus, also speaks of a hierarchy among media producers, and is an example of tactical textual poaching not being confined to a ‘subordinated and disempowered people’ (de Certeau 118) outside this hierarchy of official media production.

Lastly, feminist theorist Rita Felski synthesises the work of Lefebvre and de Certeau to argue that everyday life is a tripartite construct—grounded in ‘time, space, and modality’ (18) — through which the zeitgeist is adopted and naturalised; it is ‘a way of experiencing the world [as opposed to] a circumscribed set of activities within the world’ (31). She builds on ideas of repetition and home as structuring ‘an essential feature of everyday life: its familiarity’ (Felski 26), and sees this familiarity as the result of—and concurrently encouraging—habits. As much attitudes as they are actions, habits and their associated performance ‘in a semi-automatic, distracted, or involuntary manner’ (Felski 26) help construct the identity of their performer (Felski 27). As the sphere of these naturalised habits, everyday life is thus ‘for the most part automatic, conducted with a constant, but semi-conscious vigilance’ (Felski 27). Felski stresses, however, that habits are not necessarily a bad thing; she feels that while they ambivalently ‘emphasise the comfort and boredom of the ordinary’ (Felski 26), they also ‘constitute an essential part of our embeddedness in

everyday life and our existence as social beings' (28). She points out that to be deprived of personal routines—such as for residents of old-age homes, hospital patients, and jail prisoners—‘can be a source of profound disorientation or distress’ (Felski 28).

Felski’s notion of comfortable repetition supports the most blatant way in which *Fables* defamiliarises everyday life—culture shock. Red Riding Hood, for example, has seen her grandmother eaten, and warlocks perform ‘the foulest sort of magic’ (Willingham, *Arabian Nights* 185). Yet, as a newcomer to Fabletown, she waxes rhapsodic over a bag of store-bought candies (“Oh, these are most delicious! No one’s ever bought me such delicacies before, Ambrose!”) while her friend quizzically responds that they’re ‘nothing much ...nice things are common in this world’ (Willingham, *Arabian Nights* 95). Elsewhere, the artificiality of the modern everyday life is stressed even more when two wooden soldiers from the fairytale Empire are sent incognito to New York as elite spies: their training includes learning what motorcars are, an immersion course in colloquial English, and converting the American dollar into dimes and pennies (Willingham, *Arabian Nights* 138). Thus, as refugees from a (formerly) utopian quasi-medieval milieu for whom ‘the rhythm of [their] personal routines’ (Felski 28) has been sharply disrupted, certain *Fables* find New York a stranger and more magical place than the kingdoms they’ve left behind, and acclimatising to the quotidian a chore; as one of the wooden soldiers notes, ‘we work hard at being ordinary’ (Willingham, *Arabian Nights* 140).

As seen above, *Fables*’s juxtaposition of extraordinary elements into quotidian spaces has helped show that there is nothing ordinary about the everyday. Rather, the everyday is a sphere where even texts as seemingly benign as Disney animated movies can be read and harnessed as strategies for social control: girls should behave like princesses, wolves should be hunted because they are big and bad, and Prince Charming is just so. Yet, the fact that *Fables* has become popular by liberally poaching tropes from both Disney and the public domain (and then gleefully inverting them) does not just open up a dialogue between these texts; it also helps audiences visualise both Lefebvre’s utopianly egalitarian carnival and de Certeau’s idea of the possibility of sustained resistance against the status quo. *Fables* is thus a magic mirror which underscores that the everyday is an ideologically-charged construct normalised by its subjects, and also a frame around which various discourses of resistance to this construct can accumulate.

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Writing Irish Nationhood: Jonathan Swift's Coming to Terms with his Birthplace.

By Afrin Zeenat

“Swift can...combine contraries of the most compelling kind.”¹

Seamus Deane.

“... the Janus-faced ambivalence of language... in the construction of the Janus-faced discourse of the nation.”²

Homi K. Bhabha

Echoing Bhabha's statement, Jonathan Swift's “Janus-faced ambivalence” toward his birthplace Ireland has puzzled many readers making it difficult for them to identify him as an Irish patriot.³ Despite Swift's works on Ireland in which he rallies for Ireland and the native Irish, many critics continue to stress Swift's anathema and contempt for people of his native land.⁴ Such an essentialist reading of Swift would fail to understand the innate ambivalence that is a salient feature of his works. Swift's Irish tracts point to a change in his attitude towards his native land, which asserts itself forcefully as his love for England and things English ebb, and can be attributed to personal, political and historical reasons. Swift's life and works presage the ambivalence that is later pronounced in the works of post-colonial writers, who often vacillate between the country of their colonial overlords and their native countries. Based on Frantz Fanon's ideas on the formation of a national consciousness,⁵ this chapter will trace a similar formation of Swift's national consciousness for his native country, which finds a voice in his works on Ireland.

Critics of Swift and his works can be categorized as “hard” and “soft”, depending on how they evaluate him and his work.⁶ Critics belonging to the “hard” school comprise some of his contemporaries and those who come later, like Samuel Johnson, Lord Orrery, Sir Walter Scott, George Orwell and Edward Rosenheim, Jr. For them, Swift remains till his death disgruntled and unhappy with his life as Dean of St. Patrick's and in Ireland. Because he was an Anglo-Irish and a Protestant, his works on Ireland have been looked upon with suspicion. Citing his comments on the deplorable condition of the Irish, these critics brand him anti-Irish. In this regard John Richardson suggests “it is commonplace that an observer's context limits

his or her perception of another's situation sometimes to the point of total blindness. This kind of contextual limiting, though not blindness, seems to have played a part in modern account of Swift."⁷ According to Richardson this kind of "contextual limiting" make critics understand Swift merely as an elitist who could only take sides with people of his kind, the Anglo-Irish and not the native Irish. They believe that the natural affiliation he felt for the Anglo-Irish or the English remained unchanged till his death. These critics ignore his works like *The Drapier Letters*, *A Modest Proposal* and *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture*, which are sympathetic to the plight of the native Irish, instead see them as resulting from Swift's conscious desire to create a mythologized persona of a pro-Irish Englishman.⁸ This chapter identifies a change in Swift's outlook that resulted in these works and in Book 3 of *Gulliver's Travels*, where Swift takes up the cause of the native Irish.

Conversely, critics of the "soft" school—namely Edward Said, Irvin Ehrenpreis, Claude Rawson, Samuel Holt Monk, Carole Fabricant, John Richardson—read his Irish tracts as an indictment of the eight-century-long English conquest of Ireland.⁹ This school relies primarily on Swift's use of irony and satire, to state that Swift's writing displays his desire to slip away from being assigned any particular political position. John Richardson notes, "Swift is wary of being perceived and pinned down by others, and of thus being their thing. The result is that the reader who tries to find Swift in his shifting pronouncement... is likely that he or she has 'still to seek.'"¹⁰ Therefore, instead of trying to 'pin' him down according to modern standards of equality and democracy, we could as 'judicious' readers interpret his affiliations and his works in their actual historical and social context. Summing up Swift's life, Said gives us an unbiased view of him:

No doubt Swift wanted more out of life than to be Dean of St. Patrick's, or that he hoped Harley and St. John would some day make him a minister, or that he would acquire more wealth and position than his modest station allowed him initially. But these ambitions, however much their frustration angered him, did not prevent him from being energetic, powerful, and effective when he did his writing.¹¹

Bringing within its ambit the criticism of both schools, this paper will establish that Swift's contempt for the Irish, imbibed from his Anglo-Irish community and his love for England, informs his writings on Ireland as he attempts to transcend his prejudices.

In Swift's time, when an English colonial ambition was taking shape, Scotland and Ireland became the first victims. Untrained in their vocation of colonization and settled in foreign climes, the English settlers in Ireland and Scotland felt an acute sense of displacement from their homeland. Memories of England and English culture may have heightened their dislike for life in foreign lands and the natives in the new lands. These English settlers had to be content with that life. Swift's own life mirrors the life of these settlers who oscillated between England and Ireland.

Reports suggest that Swift's childhood in Ireland was quite a traumatic one.¹² Fatherless and abandoned by his mother, who settled in England, Swift saw England as the land of promise. His earliest experience of life in Ireland was one of "loss and insecurity."¹³ Ireland, then, for the young Swift was the place where

he suffered hardships. Swift went to England for the first time at the age of twenty-two when he visited his mother at Leicester in 1689.¹⁴ Immediately afterwards, he took employment under Sir William Temple, a renowned diplomat, residing in Moor Park where Swift spent considerable time. London and its many attractions had an impact on Swift, as it would have had on any Anglo-Irish visiting England for the first time. The immense opportunities and the intellectual atmosphere that Swift experienced in London, first under Sir William Temple and later in the literary circle of the likes of Alexander Pope and Joseph Addison, propelled him to nurture ambitions of his own. Though dazzled by the brilliance of London life, Swift still returned to Ireland during his service under Sir William Temple. After a year of residence with Sir William Temple Swift took “holy orders” in a church in Kilroot.¹⁵ Swift probably could not make up his mind regarding the course of his life. Vacillating between England and Ireland became a recurrent pattern in Swift’s life. Attributing a sense of nostalgia that Swift may have felt for Ireland, Carole Fabricant observes “that if Swift’s stays in England rendered him susceptible to the enticements of a permanent settlement there, they also impressed upon him the sacrifices such a settlement would entail by making him acutely conscious of what he would be leaving behind in Ireland.”¹⁶ In these oscillations we can trace Swift’s divided loyalty for England and Ireland.

Swift’s political life in England, too, follows a similar pattern. He started his political career, influenced by his mentor Sir Temple, as a Whig. But he differed with the Whigs on religious issues and later became a Tory propagandist. According to F. P. Locke, Swift is “Whiggish by nurture but Tory by nature.”¹⁷ But as he matured, he became disillusioned by both parties. David Oakleaf remarks, “As Whig and Tory positions changed around him, he found himself neither Whig nor Tory in the terms of Queen Anne’s reign.”¹⁸ These changes in Swift’s ideologies and political affiliations pave the way for Swift’s changed feelings for Ireland as he matures.

Aligning with the Anglo-Irish community and harboring pro-English feelings are the oft-mentioned charges leveled against Swift. Thomas Moore and Seamus Deane see him primarily as an Anglo-Irish who cared hardly cared for the fate of the native Irish.¹⁹ The stereotypes of the Irish created by English and the Anglo-Irish may have contributed in Swift’s initial or lifelong (as many critics would have us believe) dislike for the Irish.²⁰ Being a product of the community, Swift’s allegiance to the Anglo-Irish and the English is understandable. But his attempts to speak on behalf of the native Irish in *The Drapier Letters* and *A Modest Proposal*, are commendable. In *A Modest Proposal* Swift reverses the stereotype of the Irish as cannibals and accuses the purveyors of this stereotype, the English, of being the real cannibals.²¹ At a time when taking sides with the Irish would have been harmful for him personally and professionally, Swift undertakes to protest English inequalities. Charles Hinnant observes, “Any attempt to evaluate the conclusion of *Gulliver’s Travels* should recognize that this special kind of individualism lies at the heart of Swift’s vision of human nature and inspires his assaults, throughout the four voyages, on parties, factions, professions and the herd mentality.”²² In *Gulliver’s Travels*, criticizing the English conquest of Ireland, Swift writes: “If a Prince sends Forces into a Nation, where the People are poor and ignorant, he may lawfully put half of them to Death, and make Slaves of the rest, in order to civilize and reduce them from their barbarous Way of Living.”²³ Summing up English colonization, Swift tells readers how the English legalize their conquest. By declaring the natives barbaric and ignorant, the English justify to themselves

and the people in England the need to civilize them by force. Swift's narrative attempts to critique the 'herd mentality' among the English which would accept the Prince's justification to conquer another land on the basis of the natives barbarity. Swift is pointing at the natural inclination to group around one's own kind as the reason for the members of such a group to accept blindly whatever is said about the natives. In his works, Swift attacks this 'herd mentality' by writing on behalf of the Irish natives.

Aspiring to a preferment in England, Swift first woos Whig and then Tory politicians but to no avail. Disappointed, he returned to Ireland as Dean of St. Patrick's, where he served for the next fifty years. Swift's contribution to St. Patrick's and the Protestant community made him a known figure. Slowly he rose to prominence as a figure in Ireland. Nominated to represent Ireland in negotiations with the Whig government in England to get a remission of the First Fruits, taxes imposed on the Irish church by England, Swift is unsuccessful in 1707 and but then in 1710 succeeds. Immediately after this success he joined as editor of the Tory weekly, *The Examiner*. He enjoyed many privileges in this phase of his life, but this too was short-lived and did not result in the much-wanted opportunity Swift was seeking. F. P. Locke observes that Swift was aware that "As an Anglican Churchmen he belonged to a group that would exert less political influence than it had...As a member of the alien English colony in Ireland, he was condemned to perpetual insecurity."²⁴ Thus, Swift's experience in England was a mixture of contentment and frustration. Later in *A Modest Proposal* he recounts, "But, as to my self; having been wearied out for many Years with offering vain, idle, visionary Thoughts; and at length utterly despairing of Success, I fortunately fell upon this Proposal..."²⁵ Embittered with failure, Swift settles in England and spends the fifty remaining years of his life in Ireland. He dedicates himself to the service of his community and his birthplace.

Referred to as the "Irish tracts," Swift's writings on Ireland were considered in his own time and even today as a form of protest against England, making him an Irish patriot. Contrary to the views of some of his detractors like Samuel Johnson, Macaulay, Lord Orrery, George Orwell and F. R. Leavis, Jonathan Swift's name finds its place in the pantheon of Irish nationalists. Celebrated as an Irish hero who "served human liberty" and seen "consistently (as) a champion of liberty," Swift acquires greater prominence as the Irish Struggle movement gathered steam.²⁶ According to Patrick Kelly, following Swift's *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture*, "there was the extraordinary flowering of economic publications in the Ireland of 1720s and 1730s after two decades of near silence on the subject."²⁷ Echoing Mark Antony's patriotic speech in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Swift addresses all Irish as "Brethren, Friends, Countryman, and Fellow Subjects:" in the first letter of *The Drapier Letters*. He goes on "I will therefore first tell you the plain Story of the Fact; and then I will lay before you, how you ought to act in common Prudence, and according to the *Laws of your country*."²⁸ By invoking the "laws" of Ireland Swift writes Irish nationhood much before Ireland becomes independent country and instills the sense of nationhood among the Irish.

As he is an Anglo-Irish and a Protestant, Swift's anti-British diatribe in *The Drapier Letters*, *A Modest Proposal*, *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture* and *The Story of an Injured Lady* may be considered insincere and an outcome of his frustrations against the English. Some scholarship considers

Swift to be speaking only for the Anglo-Irish community and not for the native Catholic Irish. John Traugott remarks, “Swift as a Church of Ireland priest had no sympathies for the Catholic religion—he had experienced at firsthand the last spasms of the wars of religion in Ireland—but he had profound sympathies for the cruelly deprived Catholic people and hatred of their oppressors, his own class.”²⁹ Traugott also points out that “the class Swift despised—his own—slaves to the English, slave drivers to the papists.”³⁰ Anyone who has religious ideals of any sort would understand that as a Protestant cleric, Swift’s lack of sympathy for the Catholic religion was quite natural. We need to see him as a human being with his own limitations and not expect him to be all-inclusive. Swift, however, manages to rise above his prejudices and includes the “whole of Ireland” in the *Drapier Letters*. He writes, “Therefore I do most earnestly exhort you as Men, as Christians, as Parents, and as Lovers of your Country, to read this Paper with the utmost Attention, or get it read to you by others; which that you may do at the less Expence, I have ordered the Printer to sell it at the lowest Rate.”³¹ The intended audience is the poor illiterate native Irish who may need to get the letter “read . . . by others” and since Swift had made it a point to keep its price low, these native Irish could afford it. Reading Swift merely as obsessed with his own community and religious belief all his life, and against the Irish based on some individual remarks he made, would be reductive. David Macaree sheds light on this aspect, when he writes: “Swift, of course, was himself an Anglo-Irish clergyman of the state church and as such possessed the prejudices natural to one of his background, yet by his *Drapier Letters* he united Irishmen of all classes, by giving them a sense of community which is a prime condition for nationhood.”³² Hence we can sense a change in Swift’s attitude towards the Irish. This empathy for their condition in Ireland may have existed along with his disgust at their habits, but in no way should that discredit Swift as the foremost Anglo-Irish to acknowledge the presence of the native Irish in his works. Therefore, in the fourth Letter of *The Drapier Letters*, by “address[ing] [it] to a demographically inclusive Irish audience,”³³ Swift tries to overcome both his Protestant and Anglo-Irish prejudices by “uniting the Irish.”³⁴

Edward Said’s appreciation for Swift’s works helps dispel some harsh scholarship that does not do justice to Swift. According to Said, Swift is criticized on account of the time in which he wrote, the eighteenth century, the people he associated with, and because his works deal with “contortions of the mind, acrobatics of spirit that intrigue and debate with us but that tend to refuse us in the end, since so often Swift impersonates people we would not like to resemble.”³⁵ Said praises Swift’s contribution to Ireland and his representation of the marginalized native Irish.³⁶ Lavishing praise upon Said, Swift refers to him as “pre-eminently a reactive writer,” and refutes George Orwell’s remarks against Swift—“he [Swift] did not like democracy”—by pointing out that in Swift’s times even the most progressive people “were not believers in democracy.”³⁷ For Swift, Said is “a self-conscious” and “courageous” intellectual whose contribution to the Irish cause goes unrecognized because he writes much before his time.

On a similar note, Swift’s works prefigure the notions of an “intellectual,” “a patriot” and “nationhood.” Modern critics who expect him to be aware of modern definitions of equality and democracy, succumb to a “contextual limiting” when they judge him according to their time. Since the “notion of an intellectual is not usually associated with any period before the late nineteenth century,” not many critics have viewed Swift as an intellectual.³⁸ Said considers Swift to be both a “traditional intellectual”—on account of being

a priest—and an “organic intellectual” in Gramscian terms. Swift is also a native intellectual as defined by Frantz Fanon. I would argue, that Swift is an intellectual in the mold of Gramsci and Fanon. Swift becomes an “organic intellectual,” as he opposes English domination of Ireland. His development is especially praiseworthy because of Swift’s position as a church priest and a member of the ruling class, with not much precedence of the Anglo-Irish elite rallying for the native Irish they were trying to expropriate into their culture.³⁹ Swift expresses the unofficial and unrecognized “needs and aspirations of the class that are not officially represented.”⁴⁰ In *The Drapier Letters* and *A Modest Proposal* Swift’s role as an “organic intellectual” comes to the fore succinctly. In the guise of Mr. Drapier, in *The Drapier Letters*, Swift critiques the English decision to circulate the Wood’s halfpence in Ireland. Immediate action by the British resulted in the arrest of the publisher and the new viceroy, Lord Carteret, was sent to Ireland to make investigations.⁴¹ The patent was cancelled and Swift succeeds in uniting the Anglo-Irish and the native Irish, against their oppressors, the Anglo-Irish landlords who collaborated with the English and the English.

In *A Modest Proposal*, the black humor Swift invokes to criticize England’s policies that caused a plague in Ireland, also qualifies him as an “organic intellectual.” Swift inverts the English stereotype of the Irish as cannibals to implicate the purveyors of that myth, the English. While colonial accounts of natives as cannibals have thrived into the twentieth century,⁴² very few accounts of anti-colonial or post-colonial writing ascribe this attribute to the colonial powers. Said, then, is right in calling him a “courageous intellectual.” Urging his readers to partake of Irish infants, Swift’s satire instills disgust even in modern readers. Though his incisive satire includes both the English and the Irish, Swift’s attack is primarily on the “cannibalistic” desires of England.

In Book III of *Gulliver’s Travels*, the Lindalinian rebellion hints at Ireland’s anger. Swift’s depiction of a hostile relationship between the flying island Laputa and Lindalino the second city in the Kingdom symbolizes the relationship between England and Ireland. Swift’s representation of the ingenuity of the Lindalinians is expressed in *Gulliver’s Travels*,

Three days after his [the Laputian king’s] Departure, the Inhabitants who had complained of great Oppressions, shut the Town Gates, seized on the Governor, and with incredible Speed and Labour erected four large Towers one at every Corner of the City...they had fixed a great Loadstone, and in case their design should fail, they had provided a vast Quantity of the most combustible Fuel, hoping to burst therewith the adamantine Bottom of the Island, if the Loadstone project should miscarry.⁴³

Swift’s narrative points out the failure of the Laputians to stave off the Lindalinian rebellion. Instead of being critical of the rebellious Lindalinians, Swift’s narrator, Gulliver informs us that the Lindalinians were united, organized and far-sighted, as they make a project that would ensure their victory over the Laputians.

In addition to being an “organic intellectual,” Swift doubles as a “native intellectual.” According to Frantz Fanon, a “native intellectual” “at the beginning... produce[s] his [works] to be read exclusively by the

oppressor, whether with the intention of charming him or of denouncing him through ethnic or subjectivist means,” but later “the native writer progressively takes on the habit of addressing his own people.” In this respect critics have variously interpreted the intended audience of Swift’s *The Drapier Letters, A Modest Proposal* and the other Irish writings to be the English, Anglo-Irish landlords, the Anglo-Irish community and also the native Irish. Irrespective of its audience, these works created a furor when published because they reached across social groups. In the fourth letter addressed “To the Whole People of Ireland,” Swift informs us that “*Money, the great Divider of the World, hath, by a strange Revolution, been the great Uniter of a most divided People.*”⁴⁴ Hence, through his works Swift creates “a struggle which mobilizes all classes of the people and which expresses their aims and their impatience,” and such a native intellectual who, in Fanon’s opinion “is not afraid to count almost exclusively on the people’s support, will of necessity triumph.” Swift does triumph in his project to present a united Irish front to oppose English inequalities. Furthermore, Fanon explains that these native intellectuals “feel the necessity for a planned economy, the outlawing of profiteers.” Swift’s success in repealing the Wood’s halfpence is Swift’s way of ‘outlawing the profiteers.’

In achieving a wide readership, *The Drapier Letters* manages to garner support for the cancellation of Wood’s halfpence in Ireland, as it brings together both the Anglo-Irish community, who resented the English policies in Ireland, and the native Irish who were the most abject. Swift foreshadows Fanon’s advice: “The settler and the native are old acquaintances,”⁴⁵ as they have “suffered together.”⁴⁶ Similarly *A Modest Proposal* achieves its writer’s aim in addressing the oppressor in its own ‘language,’ at the same time informing the native people of their deplorable condition and goading them to improve their lot. In *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture* Swift best performs his role as a native intellectual. He insists “...that Ireland would never be happy ‘till a law were made for burning every Thing that came from England, except their People and their Coals...”⁴⁷ Calling the Irish to boycott English products and increase their dependence on their own, Swift foreshadows Fanon’s pronouncement in *The Wretched of The Earth* that “...a national economy is an economy based on what may be called local products.”⁴⁸ The “cult of local products” that Swift espouses later becomes a popular form of resistance in many colonial countries fighting for their independence.

As a result of the popularity and success of *The Drapier Letters* in Ireland, Swift was honored with the title of “Hibernian Patriot.” In spite of the apparent anonymity of the author of the letter, it was known to everyone that the Dean of St. Patrick was its writer. Contradictions recur in Swift’s life and his writing. In spite of his being an Anglo-Irish, Protestant and pro-English, the Walpole administration in London suspected Swift of colluding with the Jacobites and Catholic Irish. Being aware of these suspicions, Swift may have finally realized that in England he would always be an outsider. Whether the Tories or the Whigs were in power, Swift did not benefit personally. The much-sought preferment in England that he had hoped for never materialized, even when the Tories were at the helm. F. P. Locke informs us that following the death of Queen Anne in 1714, Swift reflected on “his Political ideas and philosophy that had been denied him while caught up in the day-to-day affairs of political life between 1710 and 1714.”⁴⁹ Both *Gulliver’s Travels* and *The Drapier Letters* written after this period of reflection. Perhaps Swift had come to a realization that he belonged to Ireland and hence decided to play a greater role in Irish politics. This marked

change in Swift's political career was an outcome of serious deliberations and was to reinvent Swift as a patriot.

The concept of a patriot, understood in modern terminology as a nationalist, was not available to Swift. But interestingly his literary friends and political patrons were writing about being the concept of patriotism. Simon During notes:

The word 'patriotism' first became current as part of the Tory resistance to Walpole headed by Bolingbroke, author of *The Idea of a Patriot King*. Here a patriot is a person defined in a classical sense by his love of country rather personal ambition... The patriot king (who, unlike the Hanoverians, should be a native) would communicate directly to the people, without mediation by state or politicians, in unison with the aristocracy... Thus the word 'country' here tends to oscillate between naming the sum of estates in the realm and the object of sentiments self-consciously borrowed from Roman formulations of *patria*.⁵⁰

Referring to Bolingbroke's concept of a 'patriot' as narrow, During tells us that he employed it to gain political mileage, as a patriot should be concerned for his country. According to Ernest Renan, "the abdication of the individual to the advantage of the community..." should be considered the essence of a true patriot. Swift may have been more influenced by Alexander Pope's idea of a "patriot wit" in his *Epilogues to the Satires*. Pope's 'patriot wit' rises above the Tory Patriotism to become a "proto-nationalist symbolization." Simultaneously, the Whigs Addison and Steele's idea of a separate cultural sphere, which During calls "the civil Imaginary," counters the Tory attempts to create the notion of 'patriotic Englishness.' During explains that the 'civil Imaginary' is "ethical," "secular," "not political," and "reproduces everyday life in the public domain."⁵¹ In his Irish tracts, Swift collapses the two practices of the Tories and the Whigs and through his writings accomplishes a dual task. Having actively participated in the political repartee between the Tories and the Whigs, Swift uses his knowledge for the benefit of Ireland. First he creates 'civil society' in Ireland through his writings, to create awareness against English coercive practices in Ireland. In doing so, he fashions himself as an Irish 'patriot.'

The most prescient of all Swift's contributions to Ireland is his writing of Irish nationhood at a time when the very notion of it was not in circulation. After committing himself to the Irish cause, Swift's writing after 1720 increasingly focuses on Ireland. Contrary to the belief among some Swift scholars, Swift worked towards the amelioration of the native Irish. His concerns were not merely to extract some advantages for the Anglo-Irish community. Yet again placing Swift in his context, the definition of nationhood in Swift's works does not correlate to that available to us in our present time. Hence, contending on that basis that Swift was opposed to an Ireland separate from English control would not be appropriate.

An examination of the origin of nation states and the parameters of its scope would be useful in understanding the extent of Swift's ideas. According to the French social historian, Ernest Renan:

...what things are not adequate for the creation of such a spiritual principle, namely, race,

language, material interest, religious affinities, geography, and military necessity...A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form...The nation, like the individual, is the culmination of a long past of endeavours, sacrifice, and devotion.⁵²

The Ireland of Swift's time unites through Swift's writings in spite of the vast disparities among its inhabitants. In writing the Irish nation, Swift attempts to wipe off his association with England, which had been unfruitful, and writes himself into the tradition of Irish nationalists. Foreshadowing Renan, his Irish tracts are "the culmination of a long past of endeavours, sacrifice, and devotion." Conjuring the Irish struggle for independence in the past in *The Drapier Letters*, Swift writes

It is true, indeed, that within the Memory of Man, the Parliaments of *England* have *sometimes* assumed the Power of binding this Kingdom, by laws enacted there; wherein they were, at first, openly opposed (as far as *Truth, Reason* and *Justice* are capable of *opposing*) by the famous Mr. *Molineaux*, an *English* Gentleman born here; as well as by several of the greatest Patriots, and *best Whigs* in *England*;... But in *Fact, Eleven Men well armed, will certainly subdue one single Man in his Shirt*.⁵³

This culmination is not entirely Swift's, but it also incorporates the various attempts by both Irish and Anglo-Irish writers in Ireland to protest English control over it. It is the culmination of Swift's entire career. Immersed in English politics and the Scriblerus Club, Swift early writings on English politics, his training as a political writer combined with his disappointments in a successful professional career culminate in his writing for Ireland. Swift's political endeavors and devotion for a foreign country (England) that would never accept him as its own culminates in future endeavors for the unified Irish people.

Swift's attempts at 'writing the Irish nation' maybe fraught with contradictions based on Ireland's inherent disparities of race and economics, but it still can be counted as an attempt by a patriot at serving the cause of his nation. Homi K. Bhabha's explication is pertinent to Swift, as it illustrates how "The barred Nation *It//Self*, alienated from its eternal self-generation, becomes a liminal form of social representation, a space that is internally marked by cultural difference and the heterogeneous histories of contending peoples, antagonistic authorities, and tense cultural locations." The presence of cultural difference and the history of contention between the antagonistic groups do not restrict the formation of nations. Nor can it be the reason to deny anyone's aspirations of creating his nation. Seen in this light, Swift's 'writing of Irish nationhood' cannot be denied solely on account of him having ambivalent feelings for his native place.

The concept of an Irish nation that Swift propagates through his writing may not sound revolutionary to modern times and readers, but coming at a time when parliamentary democracy was in its infancy it does offer hope for Ireland. F. P. Locke points out that Swift "wanted to put forward some moderate ideas for practical reforms," and "to attack political corruption, not just its particular contemporary embodiment

in the Walpole administration.”⁵⁴ While Seamus Deane contends that Swift was not in favor of “dissent against the state,”⁵⁵ F. P. Lock tells us that Swift was “firmly opposed to Hobbes’s doctrine of absolute sovereignty.”⁵⁶ Swift’s idea of a good government then is: “a strong central government, but one that would be subject to strict scrutiny to prevent the erosion of the liberties of the subject,”⁵⁷ and a constitution “that balanced the powers of prince, nobles, and people.”⁵⁸ Therefore, for Swift human liberty was important to governance, as he writes in the fourth Drapier Letter:

Those come over hither to us from *England*, and some *weak* People among ourselves, whenever, in Discourse, we make mention of *Liberty* and *Property*, shake their Heads, and tell us, that *Ireland* is a *depending Kingdom*; as if they would seem, by this Phrase, to intend, that the People of *Ireland* is in some State of Slavery or Dependance, different from those of *England*: ...For in *Reason*, all *Government* without the Consent of the *Governed*, is the *very Definition of Slavery*:⁵⁹

Swift’s indignation against domination of Ireland is reflected again in *A Proposal for the Universal use of Irish Manufacture*:

I WOULD be glad to learn among the Divines, whether a law *to bind Men without their own Consent*, be obligatory...because, I find *Scripture, Sanderson and Suarez*, are wholly silent in the Matter. The Oracle of Reason, the great *Law of nature*, and general Opinion of *Civilians*, wherever they treat of *limited Governments*, are, indeed, decisive enough.⁶⁰

Swift’s views with respect to the form of governance he hopes for Ireland is one based on ‘consent’ and ‘liberty.’ Though not democratic in its entirety, it resembles modern notions of democracy as practiced in the different nations of the world.

The charge against Swift that he despised the native Irish would be unpardonable if it was something he had consciously cultivated and stuck to till his death. Instead it was predominant in all members of the Anglo-Irish community and the English. But Swift’s attempt to give the native Irish a voice in his Irish writings is laudable. In *A Modest Proposal*, Swift unsettles his English and Anglo-Irish readers by reminding them of their own savage past, when he says “They look upon us as a sort of Savage Irish, whom our Ancestors conquered several Hundred Years ago: And if I should describe the Britons to you, as they were in Caesar’s Time, when they *painted their Bodies, or cloathed themselves with the Skins of Beasts*, I should act full as reasonably as they do.”⁶¹ Critics mainly cite excerpts from Swift’s writings as proof of Swift’s loathing for the native Irish, but there are few instances where he showers praise on them. One such example is the following:

I cannot but highly esteem those gentlemen of Ireland, who, with all the Disadvantages of being Exiles and Strangers, have been able to distinguish themselves by their Valour and Conduct in so many Parts of Europe, I think above all other Nations, which ought to make the *English* ashamed of the Reproaches they cast on the Ignorance, the Dulness, and the Want

of Courage, in the *Irish* Natives; those Defects, wherever they happen, arising only from the Poverty and Slavery they suffer from their inhuman Neighbours, and the base corrupt Spirits of too many of the chief Gentry, etc.⁶²

This excerpt, from Swift's reply to Catholic Charles Wogan, a Jacobite, points that Swift was not biased against the Irish all his life. Nor will it be appropriate to believe that all his life Swift considered the English and the Anglo-Irish to be superior to the native Irish. Speculating the origin of the Yahoos in Houyhnhnmland, Gulliver toys with the idea of them having an English antecedent. He says:

I mean, if the Inhabitants ought to be believed; unless a Dispute may arise about the two *Yahoos*, said to have been seen many Ages ago on a mountain in *Houyhnhnmland*, from whence the Opinion is, that the Race of those Brutes hath descended; and these, for anything I know, may have been *English*, which indeed I was apt to suspect from the Lineaments of their Posterity's countenances, although very much defaced.⁶³

Swift's constant inversion of antithetical ideas, whether the English or the Irish are savages, is a technique to escape being pinned down. Hence, assertions of his anti-Irish feelings are also questionable.

Recent scholarship has traced in Swift's Poetry and later works a love for things Irish. While Carole Fabricant informs us that Swift incorporated Irish words in his poetry, McHugh and Harmon document that he also translated some Irish poetry.⁶⁴ McHugh and Harmon also inform us that writing satire has been an Irish literary tradition and that *Gulliver's Travels* has parallels with some Gaelic literature. Swift's portrayal of Mr. Drapier, "an ignorant, unlettered [Irish] shopkeeper"⁶⁵ who yet displays knowledge of law and scripture is Swift's answer to English stereotypes of the native Irish. According to Traugott, Swift creates "a world upside down in which a slavish people suddenly become savvy to political games and machinations..."⁶⁶ Swift wants his readers to know that "savages" can also use their reason and acquire knowledge. In this way, Swift humanizes the Irish and gives himself a literary space within Irish tradition.

Looking at Irish tracts, and its reception in Ireland and England, Swift's contribution to the Irish Freedom Struggle becomes significant. Other Irish patriots and literary figures since Swift have all acknowledged his role in creating awareness among the native Irish and instilling dread in the English rulers. Among the foremost patriots of Ireland, Swift continues to be celebrated by the nation that is now free. Encapsulating Swift's Irish connection, Carole Fabricant explains: "Ireland did not simply provide an inert background for Swift's life; it was an integral part of his, an essential ingredient in the way he viewed the world."⁶⁷ Swift's initial dislike of Ireland and the native Irish, however, does not decrease his glory. What matters is that he had the courage to initiate resistance to English oppression.

Notes

- ¹ Seamus Deane, "Classic Swift," *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Swift*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 245.
- ² Homi K. Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), 3.
- ³ John Richardson, "Still to Seek: Politics, Irony, Swift," *Essays in Criticism*, XLIX (1999)
- ⁴ Joseph McMinn, "Swift's Life," *Cambridge Companion*, 29.
- ⁵ Frantz Fanon, "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness," *The Wretched of the Earth*, (New York: Grove Press Inc., 1961), 119-162.
- ⁶ J. Paul Hunter, "*Gulliver's Travels* and the Later Writings," *Cambridge Companion*, 233.
- ⁷ John Richardson, "Still to Seek: Politics, Irony, Swift," *Essays in Criticism* XLIX (1999): 300.
- ⁸ Ann Cline Kelly, *Jonathan Swift and Popular Culture: Myth, Media and the Man*, (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 81.
- ⁹ Carole Fabricant, "Swift the Irishman," *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Swift* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 48-72.
- ¹⁰ Richardson, "Still to Seek: Politics, Irony, Swift," 309. Richardson further notes "its [Swift's irony] elusive quality fends off commitment to what might be false self- definition, keeps the dogs of interpretation at bay, and leaves the reader always 'still to seek.'"
- ¹¹ Edward Said, "Swift as Intellectual," *The World, The Text, and The Critic*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1983), 79.
- ¹² Joseph McMinn, "Swift's Life," *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Swift*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 16.
- ¹³ McMinn, "Swift's Life," *The Cambridge Companion* 16.
- ¹⁴ McMinn, 16. In *Family of Swift*, Swift writes that he was abducted and taken to England by a nurse when he was one year old. In the absence of evidence this account has not received credence.
- ¹⁵ Fabricant, "Swift the Irishman," *Cambridge Companion*, 49-50.

¹⁶ Fabricant, “Swift the Irishman,” 50.

¹⁷ Qtd. in David Oakleaf, “Politics and History,” *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Swift* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 35.

¹⁸ Oakleaf, 36.

¹⁹ Seamus Deane, “Classic Swift,” *Cambridge Companion*, 251, and Seamus Deane, *A Short History of Anglo-Irish Literature*, (London: Hutchinson, 1986), 46.

²⁰ Claude Rawson, *God, Gulliver, and Genocide*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), and F. P. Locke, *The Politics of Gulliver’s Travels*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 9.

²¹ Christopher Fox, “Introduction,” *Cambridge Companion*, 6, and J. Paul Hunter, “Gulliver’s Travels and the Later writings,” *Cambridge Companion*, 227.

²² Charles Hinnant, *Purity and Defilement in Gulliver’s Travels*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987), 96.

²³ Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*, 227.

²⁴ F. P. Lock, “The Politics of Pessimism,” *The Politics of Gulliver’s Travels*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 14.

²⁵ Jonathan Swift, “To The Whole People of Ireland,” *The Basic Writings of Jonathan Swift*, (New York: The Modern Library, 2002), 332.

²⁶ W. B Yeats translates Swift’s Latin phrase he intended to be his epitaph, and F. P. Locke, *The Politics of Gulliver’s Travels*, 10.

²⁷ Patrick Kelly, “Swift on Money and Economics,” *Cambridge Companion*, 130.

²⁸ Swift, *The Basic Writings of Jonathan Swift*, 319.

²⁹ John Traugott, “‘Shall Jonathan Die?’ Swift, Irony, and a Failed Revolution in Ireland,” *The Politics of Irony; essays in Self Betrayal*, (1992), 33.

³⁰ Traugott, “Shall Jonathan Die?” 34.

³¹ Jonathan Swift, “The Drapier Letters,” *The Basic Writings of Jonathan Swift*, (New York: The Modern Library, 2002), 318.

- ³² David Macaree, “Drapier’s Letters and the Language of Political Protest,” *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 2 (1976), 49.
- ³³ Sean Moore, “ ‘Our Irish Copper-Farthen Dean’: Swift’s Drapier Letters, the ‘Forging’ of a Modernist Anglo-Irish Literature, and the Atlantic World of Paper Credit Preview,” *Atlantic Studies*, 2 (Apr. 2005), 78.
- ³⁴ Macaree, “Drapier’s Letters and the Language of Political Protest,” 49.
- ³⁵ Said, “Swift as Intellectual,” 74.
- ³⁶ Said, “Swift as Intellectual,” 80-84.
- ³⁷ Said, “Swift as Intellectual,” 77-78.
- ³⁸ Said, “Swift as Intellectual,” 79.
- ³⁹ Deana Rankin, “Conclusions,” *Between Spenser and Swift: English Writing in Seventeenth-Century Ireland*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 277. Rankin lists some Anglo-Irish who wrote against English dominance of Ireland. They are: Richard Hadsor, Patrick Darcy and William Molyneux.
- ⁴⁰ Antonio Gramsci, “ The Formation of the Intellectual,” *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Vincent B. Leitch, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001), 1136.
- ⁴¹ John Traugott, “ ‘Shall Jonathan Die?’ Swift, Irony, and a Failed Revolution in Ireland,” *The Politics of Irony; essays in self betrayal*, 43-45. Traugott mentions that Swift and Carteret were friends and that Carteret knew the identity of the author of *The Drapier Letters* before he arrived in Ireland as he had received a copy of the *Letters* from Swift.
- ⁴² Achebe’s reading of Joseph Conrad’s *The Heart of Darkness* in his seminal essay entitled, “An Image of Africa.
- ⁴³ Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*, 160-161.
- ⁴⁴ Jonathan Swift, “To The Whole People of Ireland,” *The Basic Writings of Jonathan Swift*, (New York: The Modern Library, 2002), 332.
- ⁴⁵ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 30.
- ⁴⁶ Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation?” *Nation and Narration*, 19.

⁴⁷ Swift, “A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture,” *The Basic Writings of Jonathan Swift*, (New York: The Modern Library, 2002), 302.

⁴⁸ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 123.

⁴⁹ F. P. Lock, *Politics*, 22.

⁵⁰ Simon During, “Literature –Nationalisms Other?” *Nation and Narration*, ed. By Homi K. Bhabha, (London: Routledge, 1990), 140-141.

⁵¹ Simon During, “Literature –Nationalisms Other?” *Nation and Narration*, 142-44.

⁵² Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation?” *Nation and Narration*, 19.

⁵³ Swift, “To The Whole People of Ireland,” *The Basic Writings of Jonathan Swift*, 333.

⁵⁴ Lock, *Politics*, 89.

⁵⁵ Seamus Deane, *A Short History of Anglo-Irish Literature*, 44.

⁵⁶ Lock, *Politics*, 10.

⁵⁷ Lock, *Politics*, 37-38.

⁵⁸ Lock, *Politics*, 53.

⁵⁹ Swift, “To The Whole People of Ireland,” *The Basic Writings of Jonathan Swift*, (New York: The Modern Library, 2002), 332-3.

⁶⁰ Swift, *A Proposal for the Universal use of Irish Manufacture: The Basic Writings of Jonathan Swift*, 304.

⁶¹ Jonathan Swift, “To The Whole People of Ireland,” *The Basic Writings of Jonathan Swift*, (New York: The Modern Library, 2002), 334.

⁶² Qtd. in Claude Rawson, “Introduction,” *The Basic Writings of Jonathan Swift*, (New York: The Modern Library, 2002), xxiv.

⁶³ Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*, 270.

⁶⁴ See Fabricant, “Swift the Irishman,” *Cambridge Companion*, 64 and Roger McHugh and Maurice Harmon, *Short History of Anglo-Irish Literature*, (New Jersey: Barnes and Nobles, 1982), 57.

⁶⁵ Traugott, 40.

⁶⁶ Traugott, 49.

⁶⁷ Fabricant, "Swift the Irishman," 48.

Nights at the airport

By Alice Mills

There are rules at the airport. You must not settle down for the night too early. The last plane leaves just after midnight so you must circle, hesitate, go for another circuit with your creaking trolley. It would never do to be seen as a regular. The choice of seats is important. I have seen the meekest, most inoffensive of sleepers prodded with the gun and made to walk out into the wet dark: his mistake was to choose an isolated chair, away from the neon and the soldier prodded him out like dirt from a fingernail. The trick is always to lie in the light.

The trick is to find a woman. The soldier never touches a woman with his gun, never pokes her awake and orders her outside. But if you are a man, you have to sit next to the woman, preferably with her head lolling against yours, so that they will leave you alone. It's not enough to be on the same row of seats. A child would work even better, but it is not possible. A woman is impossible.

The rule is to look like a traveller with a suitcase and a trolley. Every so often, of course, you have to leave the airport to collect your dole and wash your clothes, otherwise the police will sniff you out. The suitcase, the trolley, the look of a reluctant sleeper, the airport does not mind these at all, in fact it takes pleasure in making sleep difficult, the noise, the lights, the patrol. That is why I have my own special chairs to sleep on, the row of three with the third one raised and cushioned with a label reserving it for the elderly and infirm and pregnant. A sleeper can lie on those three seats with feet on suitcase on trolley and head on the high chair. My seats. My sleep.

Great was my rage when I saw the woman take my three seats for a second night. I do lose my seats from time to time as I idle along, pretend to search for a boarding pass, visit the toilets, survey the shuttered cafes. In fact it does me good not to sleep on the three seats every night, not a regular at all, and sleeping on the other hard seats, I savour my own place more.

So that first night I watched her experiment how best to position her trolley and herself around the passport and handbag. The soldier with the long gun came by and looked at me, crouched under my scarf, but never at her, the woman lying on my seats. I could have been asleep if only I had the cushioned seat under my head, my feet comfortably on the suitcase on the trolley. She woke up and turned over awkwardly. I could have told her that she was in no danger of having her passport stolen. Honour among sleepers.

All the next day I thought about erasing her with my own suitcase, my little blanket, my trolley. Great was my rage when I saw her claim my seats for a second night. She was there long before sleeper time, and I had missed my chance as I circled the airport as always, up the lifts, look at the board, check the

watch, down the lifts. She must be a professional. There was no way to move her on. Man against woman, regular against freshface, she would probably claim that she was elderly and unwell and pregnant, and the soldier's gun was at her disposal.

Great was my rage as I sat on the hard plastic seat looking at her. Twice she went to the toilets and I could have claimed my place once she had creaked her trolley down the corridor, my place, my soft cushioned seat for my head, the other seats just the right height for my legs to stretch out on suitcase on trolley, but I was afraid of the soldier and the cleaners and the cold dark asphalt. There was no help for it.

Today I walk with a purpose. It is my clothes washing day, but never mind that. Something delightful I am planning for tonight's contest. A true professional, I am looking for trouble but I do not see her anywhere in the airport as I collect my ammunition. A plastic bag I already have, knotted around my dirty clothes. Now I risk letting them simmer uncontained. I spot a discarded icecream. Someone nods approvingly as if I were a public benefactor. Macdonalds is always good for a half-eaten burger and today I risk it three times, loading my plate with ketchup and mustard until the girl behind the counter sends the cleaner in my direction. The other cafes cost more, less crammed with eaters, too difficult to pick the plates.

The plastic bag is getting nicely heavy, even so. I would like to fill it with spikes and itching powder but there is not even a pin to be found, a dropped ballpoint is no good to anyone, bring back the fountain pen. When I was little, there were always pins on the floor. Not any more. The bag sits nicely on top of the suitcase on my trolley. I hold off going to the toilet as long as I can in case the bag smells the place out. People wrinkle their noses as they pass, change direction. I sit on a dark chair waiting.

I keep an eye on the three seats, waiting for her to arrive and settle, trundle off, come back, sleep. A nice surprise it will be, lying against her, under her, bursting, leaking. They will have to throw her into the outer darkness, however elderly and infirm and pregnant she is. I wait for her to claim my seats. I wait. I reek. I wait.

The Prevalence of Hypokinetic Disorders Among Workers in Tertiary Institutions in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

By J.A Adegun, and E.P. Konwea

Introduction

Physical activity was enjoyed throughout everyday prehistoric life as an integral component of religious, social and cultural expression. Food supplies for the most part were plentiful, allowing ample time for both rest and recreational physical endeavours (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 1996). Historically speaking, the majority of the populace in Nigeria were farmers, moving from home to farmlands near and far. People were used to hard work, intense and strenuous exertion. Life depended on rigorous physical activity both in occupation and recreation. But the advent of western education that resulted to white collar jobs and pleasure seeking life had drastically reduced exposure to physical activity.

The public servants are the set of people affected by the industrial revolution and urbanization which resulted to sedentarism and associated problems. Hypokinetic disorders are the resultant effect of the decrease in physical activity. McArdle, Kalch and Kalch (2007) reported that inactivity alone resulted in a constellation of problems and conditions eventually leading to premature death. They further noted that sedentary death syndrome (SeDS) relates to high blood cholesterol, high blood glucose, hypertension, myocardial ischemia, arrhythmias, congestive heart failure and obesity.

There is overwhelming scientific evidence highlighting the health, social and psychological benefits associated with an active lifestyle. However, physical activity remains the most underutilized low cost health resource in the world (Travis, 2003). Increased exposure to western lifestyle and eating habits which are characteristics of urban African environment and decreased participation in physical activity are contributing factors to increase in health problems. According to Brundland, (2003), there has been a shift away from traditional diets to high density diets with high levels of fats, sugar, and salts. Although under nutrition and food shortages are still major problems in Africa, Nigeria in particular, diet related chronic diseases are on the increase.

A sedentary lifestyle has been linked to development of coronary artery diseases of adulthood that are major causes of death and disability. (Nelson, Goldberg and Harris, 1992; Ridloch, Savage, Murphy, Cran and Borehan, 1991). Modern technology has also lessened the physical demands of everyday activities like cleaning the house, washing clothes, mowing the lawn and traveling to work. As a result, more time is available to pursue leisure activities. The unfortunate fact, however, is that many individuals pursue sedentary activities. What would have once required an hour of physical work can now be accomplished in just a few seconds by pushing a button or setting a dial. Hence Physical inactivity has led to a rise in hypokinetic diseases. The prefix hypo means “lack of” and kinetic refers to movement. Although the human body is design for movement and strenuous physical activity, exercise is not part of the average lifestyle of most Nigerians who have also not develop the culture of attaining fitness through regular exercise (Akindutire, 1994). One cannot expect the human body to function optimally and to remain healthy for extended periods if the body is abused or not use as intended (Bouchard and Depres, 1995).

Individuals who do not exercise regularly have a greater risk of developing hypo-kinetic diseases, such as coronary heart disease, hypertension, cancer, obesity muscular skeletal disorder (Washborn and Figoni, 1998). Although exercise is only one important factor associate with reduced risk of hypokinetic disease and condition, nutrition, smoking, lifestyle, hereditary, stress, age and environment cannot be overlooked as important risk factors. However, Corbin & Lindsey, Heyward, (2002) reported that scientist and health fitness professionals affirm that physical activity is the best defence against many diseases and disorders. Studies have shown that physically active people have lower incidence of myocardial infraction and mortality from coronary heart disease (CHD) and tend to develop CHD at a later age compared to other sedentary counterpart (Berlin and Colditz 1990). An inverse relationship between blood pressure and physical activity level in men and women were also reported (Hagberg, 1990, Reaven, Barrett- Connor, and Edelstein 19991). Physical activity also reduces ones risk of developing non-insulin, dependent diabetes mellitus through its association with weight loss (Wells, 1996) Akindutire, (1994) reported a high incidence of hypokinetic condition amongst secondary school Administrators. There was indication of malaise , feeling too weak to get up in the morning (57.27%), manifestation of profused breathing with little physical exercise among respondents. Studies are somehow scarce in this important area of life of people.

Regular physical activity is linked to enhance health and to reduce chronic disorders of negative physical activity lifestyle. The benefits of physical activity include helping to build and maintain healthy bones and muscles, control body weight, reduce body fat, reduce feeling of depression and anxiety and promote psychological wellbeing. However most people are not inclined to participation in exercises. Workers in tertiary institution spend eight hours of their day on the job, most spend considerable part of heir time sitting down with little physical movement. The staff in tertiary Institutions are sedentary in nature and are being exposed to pressure, tension, union problems and others psychophysiological combatment due to inadequate facilities and over populated institutions. So it is highly relevant to study the prevalence of these sedentary life disorders among them in order for recommendation to be made for checkmating these diseases. This study therefore examines the prevalence of hypokinetic disorder among workers in the tertiary institution in Ekiti state, Nigeria. It also examined difference in the prevalence based on age,

gender, job description and job status as well as the implications on the health of individuals.

Research method

The study population consists of members of staff of the three tertiary institutions in Ekiti state. Proportionate sampling technique was used to select the respondents based on sex (male or female), job designation (academic staff or non academic staff) and job status (senior staff or junior staff). A total of 490 responses were used for the study. (Composition of sample presented in table 1)

Instrument: The Physical Activity Questionnaire (PAQ) adapted from Corbin and Lindsey (1991) and Akindutire (1994) was used for data collection. The questionnaire had two sections, section A consists of items on demographic data of respondents while section B consists of 19 items used to elicit data on nature of hypokinetic disorder experienced by the respondents. A three point rating scale of Yes, No, and Not sure was used. A test-re-test reliability using twenty respondents gave a reliability coefficient of 0.79 which was considered high enough.

Data collection and Analysis:

The instrument was administered personally through a team of research assistants. Out of 650 questionnaire distributed a total of 490 were completed and returned. Reflecting a response return rate of 75 %.

RESULTS

Table 1 – Analysis of sampled data on demographic characteristics of respondents.

Sex Respondent		AGE		Job Description		Job Status	
Sex	f (%)	AGE	f (%)	Designation	No (%)	Status	f (%)
Male	256 (52.2)	25-39	252 (51.4)	Academic staff	257 (52.4)	Senior Staff	242 (49.4)
Female	234 (47.8)	40 and above	238 (48.6)	Non Academic staff	233 (47.6)	Junior Staff	248 (50.6)
Total	490 (100.0)		490 (100.0)		490 (100.0)		490 (100.0)

Table 2- Percentage of hypokinetic disorders reported by respondents

Type of hypokinetic disorder	Yes (%)	No	Not sure %
Experiencing Chest pain	385 (78.6)	59 (12.0)	46 (9.4)
Regular back pain	254 (51.8)	127 (25.9)	109 (22.2)
Too fat and heavy or overweight	155 (31.6)	319 (65.1)	16 (3.3)
Having traumatic emotional experience	63 (12.9)	59 (12.0)	368 (75.1)
Having persistent body weakness	300 (61.2)	109 (22.2)	81 (16.5)
Having high blood pressure	105 (21.4)	16 (3.3)	369 (75.3)
Tendency to have heart failure/heart attack	93 (19.0)	254 (51.8)	43 (29.2)
Experiencing feeling of uneasiness	178 (36.3)	249 (50.8)	63 (12.9)
Experiencing uneasy breathing (suffocation)	375 (76.5)	99 (20.2)	16 (3.3)
Breathing profusely with little physical activity	389 (79.4)	59 (12.0)	42 (8.6)
Having continuous/ stomach pain (ulcer)	135 (27.6)	250 (51.0)	105 (21.4)
Experiencing drowsiness (sleeping always)	99 (20.2)	359 (73.3)	92 (6.5)
Having diabetes	101 (20.6)	330 (67.3)	59 (12.0)
Feeling too weak to get up in the morning	303 (61.8)	187 (38.2)	-

Feeling too dull (not lively)	289 (59.0)	201 (41.0)	-
Having pain in the eye (blur vision)	222 (45.3)	139 (28.4)	129 (26.3)
Having persistent headache	329 (67.1)	86 (17.6)	75 (15.3)
Feeling dizzy (most times)	262 (53.5)	165 (33.7)	63 (12.9)
Experiencing insomnia (inability to sleep)	257 (52.4)	131 (26.7)	102 (20.8)

Table 2 shows that the respondents generally indicated evidence of hypokinetic disorders. Three hundred and eighty five (78.6%) were experiencing chest pain, 51.8% indicated that they usually have back pain, 61.2% experienced persistent body weakness, 76.5% experience uneasy breathing, 79.4% breath profusely with little physical activity, 62.86% feel too weak to get up in the morning, 59.0% reports feeling too dull, 67.1% reports having persistent headache, 53.5% feel dizzy most times and 52.4% experiences insomnia

Table 3 – Sex difference in the prevalence of Hypokinetic disorder/disability

Sex	N	X	SD	df	T value	Table t	p
Male	256	20.74	9.5	488	0.48	1.96	>0.05
Female	234	20.35	9.9				

Table 3: revealed that calculated t (0.48) is less than table t (1.96), there is therefore no significant difference in the prevalence of hypokinetic disorder between male and female respondents.

Table 4 – t-test on age differences in the prevalence of hypokinetic disorder/disability

Age	N	X	SD	df	T value	Table t	P
25-29	252	17.4	12.4	488	7.97	1.96	<0.05
40 and above	238	23.9	2.9				

Table 4: shows that calculated t (79.7) is greater than table t (1.96). therefore there is a significant difference between the two age groups and the prevalence of indicated hypokinetic disorder.

Table 5 – t-test on differences in the prevalence of Hypokinetic disorder based on job designation

Job designation	N	X	SD	df	T value	Table t	P
Academic staff	257	21.5	8.6	488	2,29	1.96	<0.05
Non – Academic staff	233	19.5	10.6				

Table 5: shows that calculated t (2.29) is greater than table t (1.96). Therefore there is a significant difference in the prevalence of hypokinetic disorder between academic and non- academic staff.

Table 6 – t-test on differences in the prevalence of Hypokinetic disorder based on job status

Job status	N	X	SD	df	T value	Table t	P
Senior staff	242	22.3	8.2	488	4.16	1.96	<0.05
Junior staff	248	18.7	10.5				

Table 6: revealed that t calculated (4.16) is greater that table t (1.96). The null hypothesis was therefore not accepted there is a significant difference in the prevalence of hypokinetic disorder between senior and junior staff.

Discussion

The findings from the study show that a high percentage of the respondents indicated evidence of each of the hypokinetics conditions cited in the study. This is not surprising since Akindutire (1994) affirmed that exercise is not part of the average lifestyle of most Nigerians and that they also have not developed the culture of attaining fitness through regular exercise. Bouchard and Depress, (1995) also confirmed that the human body cannot be expected to function optimally and to remain healthy for extended periods if it is abused or not used as intended.

These findings are similar to those of Corbin and Lindsey (1991) where the authors claimed that it is only an active lifestyle through regular physical fitness exercise that can reduce the early manifestation of such disabilities.

A major finding in the list of hypokinetic disorders was that about 75% of the respondents were not sure of the status of their blood pressure and if they have traumatic emotional experience. Adelowo and Amos (2007) confirmed that most Nigeria do not see the need for medical checkup until they fall sick. This could explain the reason why most of the respondents in this study stated that they were not sure if they had high blood pressure or not. It has been observed that most Nigerians do not also want people to read or understand how they feel about issues related to their health and emotions until they are very sick. Generally, Hypokinetic disorders are highly associated with life style and the senior staff in tertiary institution in Nigeria. The disorders are indicators of unpromising health of the staff. There is tendency of having low productivity, incapacitation of subjects. The staff needs a lot of attention by individuals and the various governments. Because of the negative consequences of these needs for exposure of the subjects' to physical activity problems individuals and cooperately.

Hockey (1996) also clearly emphasized that the sedentary way of life has had a negative effect on the human body and has been associated with hypokinetic diseases like hypertension, obesity, diabetes, low-back pain, osteoporosis and cardiovascular disease. These disorders are highly associated with inactivity among people of all ages.

The study also revealed that there is no difference between male and female respondents in the prevalence of reported hypokinetic disorders. This finding is different from that of Akindutire, (1994) where the female subjects had a slightly higher incidence of disability, however Corbin and Lindsey (1991) reported that some disabilities are common in adults especially in women because of long sedentary working hours. But the prevalence of regular substantial activity was somewhat higher among men than women. (US Department of Health and Human services 1996).

The findings show that there was a significant age difference in the prevalence of hypokinetic disabilities. This is not surprising because findings of Butler (1975), Klump (1975) and Bucher and Thaxton (1981)

also indicated that decline in physical ability in man begins during the ages 36 to 64 years and that the older a person becomes the less he is able to adjust to physical and physiological stresses and the more susceptible to both hypokinetic and infectious diseases. Reddy and Reddy (2007) reported that people at old age home suffer from hypertension and stress but come to normal and expressed being stress free after exposure to simple walking and exercises.

It is very important to note that ageing can bring about degeneration in the body with the prevalence of degenerative diseases like the disorders reported in the results. However inactivity that induce early onset of these diseases and the degree of severity can also occur. Physical activity definitely reduces the debilitating effects of these diseases in the body. It was revealed that the prevalence of hypokinetic disorder among academic staff is higher than those of non academic staff.

Conclusion and Recommendation.

Based on the findings of this study it was concluded that there is the prevalence of varying degrees of hypokinetic disorders like chest pain, breathing profusely with little physical activity, uneasy breathing, persistent headache and body weakness, e.t.c. There is no difference in the prevalence of hypokinetic disorders between male and female respondents but a difference exist among the two age groups as those above 40 years reported a higher prevalence of the disorders. Academic staff also indicated a higher prevalence of the disorders than non academic staff and the senior staff indicated a higher prevalence than the junior staffs of the three tertiary institutions.

Based on the finding it was recommended that the staff of tertiary institutions should be encouraged to create time for recreational exercises this can be done by providing staff recreation centers both in the premises of the institutions, the staff quarters and close to places where the can be reached.

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