

# nomad

2017



# nomad<sup>2017</sup>

Chaos

The Department of Comparative Literature's  
Journal of Undergraduate Writing  
University of Oregon

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## SPECIAL THANKS

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COVER ART

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# EDITOR'S COMMENTS

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**This edition of the *nomad*** journal represents a year's worth of work by our intrepid authors and mentors exploring the mysterious, disorderly theme of "Chaos." Our students found chaos in a range of media, including literature, film, television, and even podcasts.

It is always rewarding when we can invite students from across campus into the COLT family. Our authors come from majors in the social sciences, hard sciences, journalism, and humanities, including from our own discipline, Comparative Literature. Their efforts resulted in an engaging conference in the spring and this impressive collection of essays. We are extremely proud of this year's Nomad participants.

I am fortunate that my year serving as editor was not too chaotic, thanks to a dedicated and supportive team of people. Nomad would not be possible without our graduate student and faculty mentors, whose efforts working one-on-one with students serve as the foundation of this program. The Nomad program and the Comparative Literature department remain strong because of their willingness to share their time and expertise with our students.

I give hearty thanks to this year's Mentorship Coordinators, Martha Bannikov and Devina Sindhu. Your enthusiastic efforts kept the program strong, and it was a joy to work with you.

I also extend thanks to our COLT faculty and graduate students who presented at our Nomad Speaker Events. These talks offered our students thought-provoking scholarship and a range of topics and approaches to this year's theme. Thank you to our faculty speakers Professor Kenneth Calhoon, Dr. Katy Brundan, and Professor Steven Brown, and our graduate student speakers Michelle Crowson, Anna-Lisa Baumeister, and Ying Xiong.

The Nomad Program grows stronger each year, and I am honored to have served as editor of this edition of the *nomad* journal. I look forward to watching the program continue to flourish in the years to come.

With gratitude,

BESS R. H. MYERS



nomad<sup>2017</sup>  
Chaos

# LAUREN ALLEN

Lauren Allen majors in comparative literature and minors in comic and cartoon studies. She overuses the phrase “liminal space” in her everyday writing and speech. Lauren keeps things funky with her unique humor and style in both her fashion and writing.

Mentor: **Justine Parkin**

## COURTING CHAOS: THE AMBIVALENCE OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FRANKENSTEIN AND HIS CREATURE

**MANY CAN RELATE TO ME WHEN I SAY** that this paper has been far from easy. I have on countless occasions told my friends that I hate writing this paper. However, with this word “hate” comes a strange ambivalence. Writing is what I love to do. I love being able to be so passionate about something that I can have the paradoxical opinions of love and hate toward the same thing. This constant tug-of-war is an ever-present sensation when it comes to the pursuit of knowledge; the process of acquiring knowledge is inherently chaotic in its duality. In Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein or, the Modern Prometheus*, Victor Frankenstein fails to recognize this fact of knowledge with which I am well familiar. Victor lacks the understanding that the pursuit of knowledge is far from undisturbed. It is a dynamic process, a push and pull. Knowledge is nowhere near orderly—it is chaotic. The dual nature of knowledge brings a chaotic dynamism to Victor’s life and the relationship with his product of knowledge: the creature. However, Victor is not able to fully grasp the irregularity and chaotic nature of knowledge and therefore fails himself. He becomes victim to the power of the knowledge he has produced, neglecting to recognize the ways that power both constrains and enables, as Michel Foucault theorized. Through a largely Foucauldian reading, I aim to show how knowledge is a chaotic duality comprised of both positive and negative forces, creation and destruction. I argue that Victor’s fate is ultimately sealed by the disconnect he has

from what knowledge truly is, a disconnect that runs parallel with Victor's relationship with the creature.

Victor Frankenstein's initial pursuit of knowledge is considered taboo by his father. Just as the creature desires, Victor simply wants support from his father, but the lack thereof is the catalyst dictating the chaos that ensues throughout the course of Victor's scientific pursuits. Early in the novel, in a letter from Walton to Mrs. Saville, Frankenstein illustrates that "In my education my father had taken the greatest precautions that my mind should be impressed with no supernatural horrors" (Shelley 47). However, this heeding of knowledge by Frankenstein's father sparks the flirtatious relationship that Frankenstein has with the supernatural. With the impression that knowledge is a taboo, Victor begins to toy with the dual concepts of life and death. Victor's passion for the taboo of knowledge "afterwards ruled my destiny, I find it arise, like a mountain river, from ignoble and almost forgotten sources; but, swelling as it proceeded, it became the torrent which, in its course, has swept away all my hopes and joys" (32). Victor's upbringing in this knowledgeable chaos is depicted as a beautiful yet ominous spectacle. The romantic metaphor of knowledge as "the torrent which, in its course, has swept away all my hopes and joys" depicts Victor's personal opinion of his demise. "Torrent" emphasizes the aggressive nature of the chaos that Victor is toying with in his academic pursuits. Victor teases himself with this idea of chaos but, as the novel unfolds, it is precisely this experience of chaos that he fails to embrace. Though the etymology of chaos stems from the ancient Greek for "void," it also took on a theological meaning, "the void at the beginning of creation" in the 1503 English Vulgate version of Genesis (Harper). Because Frankenstein is often associated with the creation myth and the story of the Fall, the theological meaning of *chaos* is more relevant to my reading of *Frankenstein*. Chaos lies in this space that encompasses both the beauty of creation and the darkness of a void. Victor develops an obsession with creation and neglects the space from which creation springs, which is inevitably a void. He thereby fails to recognize that the chaotic duality of knowledge envelops both creation and void.

Anything that is desired with strong ardor comes with its own consequences. Despite the warning from his father, Victor proceeds with his acquisition of knowledge to an extreme. Victor highlights, "That application, which at first had been a matter of duty and resolution, now became so ardent and eager, that the stars often disappeared in the light of morning whilst I was yet engaged in my laboratory" (45). With sleepless nights and a deprivation-like hunger for knowledge, Vic-

tor courts chaos. Too much of anything comes with its own ramifications, which in Victor's case stem from his own self-punishment. The addictive component of knowledge eats away at Victor. After two years of excessive work on his creature, it comes to life. Victor remarks that "I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart" (52). Victor craves a level of perfection in his pursuits that is only a dream and is essentially unattainable. This kind of excessive drive and madness has inevitably presented a brilliant formulation of scientific knowledge, but a formulation that Victor will fail to recognize as positive because he cannot accept the inherently chaotic nature of knowledge. Victor faces a unique ambivalence toward knowledge: he shows an internal obsession while displaying an outward disgust. However, this is different from the inherent chaotic duality of knowledge. Knowledge and knowledge-seeking pursuits are both hindering and advantageous for the individual, and Victor fails to understand that he must accept the chaos that is required for his scientific endeavors to unfold.

French philosopher Michel Foucault illustrates a kind of nexus between power and knowledge which, in fact, produces some form of truth. Power, for Foucault, is something that both constrains and enables. He describes knowledge as a form of discipline and a means of production. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault explains:

We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes,' it 'represses,' it 'censors,' it 'abstracts,' it 'masks,' it 'conceals.' In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production. (*Foucault Reader* 204–5)

Regardless, there will be a level of power superior to us. However, with that height of authority, knowledge becomes the innate counteraction. Foucault believes that this form of power is depicted in "negative terms", when, in reality with this kind of subjugation, the people are given particular kinds of knowledge and discipline. The roles of disciplined individuals are not just "atoms" or parts that build the whole, but these individuals are the whole and the means of production. Therefore, knowledge is dual in its nature; it is regarded as the negative counterpart of power, but also seen as this positive mode of production. The Foucauldian depiction of knowledge and its relation to power is analogous to the misunderstand-

ing that Victor has with his knowledge and the consequent lack of power he is afforded. Victor cannot grasp the irregularity of knowledge, which for Foucault means the dual sides that consist of both negative and positive perspectives. Victor chooses to focus on only the “disgust” and negative aspect of the production of power through knowledge and fails his hope for himself.

In “Making a Monster: An Introduction to *Frankenstein*,” Anne Mellor addresses how the creature is a figure for knowledge in the Foucauldian sense, and that knowledge is constructed and embedded within structures of power. In Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, the relationship between Victor and the creature is parallel to the relationship between Victor and knowledge. Mellor writes, “Shelley’s novel outstrips the eighteenth-century idiom of sublimity, powerfully anticipating the insights of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault: human knowledge is the product of invented or linguistically constructed forms or grammars which societies have imposed over time on an unknowable (or, as Derrida would put it, absent) ontological being” (22). By drawing on the ideas from both Derrida and Foucault, Mellor alludes to the idea that neither power nor knowledge have a destination or an end-point. Both are unfixed entities with irregular natures and chaotic dualities. Both Mellor and Shelley would argue that the nature of knowledge is neither straight forward nor a one-sided concept. Mellor notes:

In the 1831 Introduction [to *Frankenstein*], Mary Shelley linked the creature directly to the unknowable elements of the universe: “Invention, it must be humbly admitted, does not consist in creating out of void, but out of chaos; the materials must, in the first place, be afforded: it can give form to dark, shapeless substances, but cannot bring into being the substance itself” (F 183 1, Introduction 54). (22)

Mellor proceeds to comment on Shelley’s quote, “What we call knowledge, truth, or culture are only a collection of ‘discourses,’ linguistic readings of what is essentially a ‘chaos’” (22). Mellor argues that knowledge is formed from a set of discourses. It could be said that the dynamic between the discourses has a chaotic duality, as Mellor acknowledges based on Shelley’s introduction to *Frankenstein*, stating that the manifestation of knowledge “can give form to dark, shapeless substances, but cannot bring into being the substance itself” (22). This paradoxical idea that something developmental must start out of something chaotic is ignored and suppressed by Victor Frankenstein, who believes in the power of destiny to

control the formation of his work. Victor ignores the extensive nature of his obsession with knowledge as well as the true chaotic nature of knowledge, and focuses his energy on how his destiny has ruined his life. Victor is unsuccessful because he associates knowledge with truth, but in reality both have a chaotic duality. The moment when he does not embrace the fact that brilliance stems from chaos and must always continue to court chaos is the moment he succumbs to his feelings of failure.

As Mellor shows, knowledge in Shelley's novel can be understood in the Foucauldian sense in its relationship to power. In Michel Foucault's "The Subject and Power," he describes the "interplay" of power and its relationship to the concept of freedom through knowledge. Foucault attempts to convey the ambivalent relationship that one has with power in a multitude of contexts such as political power, violence, economic power, and the power of resistance. Power, for Foucault, is not in the sole possession of a single entity or entities, but is fundamentally diffused and dispersed. Victor Frankenstein's relationship with knowledge parallels Foucault's exploration of power, and specifically, the freedom that power simultaneously constrains and enables. Knowledge is ultimately Victor's freedom as well as his shackles. Victor thinks that knowledge will free him, but lacks the understanding of how knowledge can also be binding or constraining. Foucault explains, "In this game freedom may well appear as the condition for the exercise of power (at the same time its precondition, since freedom must exist for power to be exerted, and also its permanent support, since without the possibility of recalcitrance, power would be equivalent to a physical determination)" (790). The liminal space that freedom in power occupies is in a constant dialectical relationship with itself. Freedom is required to exercise power, however, freedom is given up in order to occupy power. In "Dialectic of Fear," Marxist critic Franco Moretti explains:

Between Frankenstein and the monster there is an ambivalent, dialectical relationship... On the one hand, the scientist cannot but create the monster: 'often did my human nature turn with loathing from my occupation, whilst, still urged on by an eagerness which perpetually increased, I brought my work near a conclusion.' On the other hand, he is immediately afraid of it and wants to kill it, because he realizes he has given life to a creature stronger than himself and of which he cannot be free. (85)

Victor imprisons himself with the manifestation of his knowledge into the creature because he expects his work to have a linear trajectory that includes a “conclusion.” Victor experiences both “loathing” and “eagerness” toward knowledge, which are the roots of his ambivalent feelings. This double-sidedness of ambivalence is mirrored in the inherent chaotic duality of knowledge. However, his ambivalent relationship with knowledge is different from his ability to fully accept the chaotic duality of knowledge. Victor ultimately gives up the power he could maintain in his academic endeavors the moment he does not embrace the chaotic duality of knowledge.

At one moment, when the creature himself is in the process of acquiring language and knowledge, he describes, “Of what strange nature is knowledge! It clings to the mind, when it has once seized on it, like a lichen on a rock” (Shelley 116). Even the creature reflects Victor’s desires and reaction to knowledge through this romantic imagery of a lichen growing on a rock, for he is the manifestation of it in a physical form. This addictive component of acquiring knowledge was ultimately passed from father to son. Shelley uses the word “seized” to describe the way knowledge takes over a person, comparing this seizing to way lichen grows on a rock. Lichen is a type of moss that can only grow in the presence of pure oxygen. Perhaps lichen is compared to knowledge in the sense that knowledge can only flourish in the presence of a great watering desire for it. Knowledge is typically described as something that blossoms, but in Victor’s case, it is something that manifests and covers all parts of his life. This knowledge, at its core, highlights a chaotic duality for Victor.

In “The Monstrous Body of Knowledge in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*,” Alan Rauch describes the analogous relationship that Victor has with knowledge and his creature and how his creature is ultimately an embodiment of that knowledge. Rauchs piece is centered around “Frankenstein’s seemingly willful misunderstanding of the value of the knowledge he gains in the context of reproduction [or the creature]” (229). Victor Frankenstein’s relationship with knowledge is the same as his relationship with the creature, therefore, when I use the word knowledge it can be interchanged with the creature, reading the creature as a figure of knowledge. Victor is chained down by the way he personally perceives knowledge, but if he acknowledges the ambivalence of knowledge, he could potentially be a free man. Rauch explains:

Frankenstein ignores the “slow, uncertain, and irregular” pattern, to use Herschel’s language, by which science has traditionally con-

tributed to knowledge... The effective communication of knowledge, however, is predicated on a scientist's affinity for the knowledge that he or she has introduced. Frankenstein's failure as a scientist is due in great part, then, to his inability to recognize and perhaps even understand what the monster represents. (236–237)

Victor has the “inability” to understand his creation and the foundation he has created it upon. Knowledge is something that does not have an end point or a fixed course, and that is where Victor finds his fault. He “ignores the irregular pattern” that is the key to understanding his creature and his academic endeavors. The monster represents his knowledge and because he cannot “recognize” that, he is lead into his demise.

The title of Shelley's book *Frankenstein or, The Modern Prometheus* plays a key role in the understanding Victor's self-imprisonment throughout the novel. The reader is presented with the allusion to the Greek deity Prometheus who brings mankind light and life, but is ultimately punished for his violation of a sacred taboo: enlightenment. The relationship between Victor and his pursuits of supernatural knowledge are similar to Prometheus, considering he sparks life within the creature and toys with the idea of physical and metaphorical enlightenment. In the original myth, Prometheus is imprisoned by an eagle who eats away at his liver. This can be related to the idea of guilt that eats away at one's sides for pursuing something without a full understanding of what one is doing, and therefore Victor takes on his consequence of shackling himself to his idea of demise. During Victor Frankenstein's initial pursuit of scientific knowledge, he explains that “My enthusiasm was checked by my anxiety... Every night I was oppressed by a slow fever, and I became nervous to a most painful degree” (Shelley 51). Without an understanding of why, Victor undertakes physical pain due to his anxieties toward his pursuit of animating the creature. His guilt is the consequence that passion reaps. Furthermore, this physical pain he experiences is subject to his addiction to knowledge and the way he flirts with chaos in a way that he does not understand.

In Theodore Ziolkowski's *The Sin of Knowledge*, he addresses the multiple interpretations that scholars have exercised in light of the nature of Prometheus and his meddling with the taboo of knowledge. In *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus*, Victor Frankenstein is often associated with Prometheus in the sense that they both meddle with divine knowledge and the exploitation of it. Ziolkowski summarizes an interpretation from Volker Braun of the Prometheus-Frankenstein



link, in which the reader is presented with a similar chaotic duality that Victor Frankenstein feels toward his exploitation of knowledge:

Though at night he felt the palpitations of the heart, every morning he hurried into the laboratories of Beyer-Leverkusen for the great experiments. Ashamed of his secret lust for knowledge, he persevered... he was no longer able to fend off the vulture of his own agony. So he stands before the tribunal of history: "It was I! It is I! I am death, which plunders all, I am darkness." Without awaiting the verdict, he goes back through the recoiling crowd to his prison cell, which has assumed the size of the world that he can destroy. (146)

The self-imprisonment that Prometheus undertakes in Braun's piece is metaphorically drawn out in Shelley's *Frankenstein or, The Modern Prometheus*. The similar kind of obsession with knowledge leads to the mental shackles that the lack of understanding of the dual nature of knowledge provides.

Victor is ultimately free; however, he self-imprisons within a certain line of duty that he must fulfill. He is not able to escape from his self-made prison because he does not realize that fulfillment only comes when you embrace the chaotic nature of the pursuit of knowledge. He tells the sailors on the ship he is aboard, "Oh! Be men, or more than men. Be steady to your purposes, and firm as a rock" (Shelley 212). Victor begins by encouraging the sailors to commit to their purposes. He wants them to be "men" but Victor himself fled from being a man when he neglected his creature and the nature of knowledgeable pursuits. He ends up changing his opinion soon after with his final living words: "Seek happiness in tranquility, and avoid ambition, even if it be only the apparently innocent one of distinguishing yourself in science and discoveries. Yet why do I say this? I have myself been blasted in these hopes, yet another may succeed" (215). He proceeds to warn the men of the chaos that can develop due to "ambition." Victor believes that there is no innocence in the nature of pursuing knowledge, when innocence is not even a question concerning his "science and discoveries." He blatantly violates a societal and divine taboo of stealing a body from the ground and giving death life. Victor is only "blasted in these hopes" if he remains neglecting of the true nature of knowledge and trapping himself in his own ignorance and guilt.

Victor strays from his self-imprisonment in his ambivalence toward knowledge at times. His internal dialogue becomes that of societal duty versus scien-

tific pursuit. However, Victor only breaks from his shackles in self dialogue, not through actions. He reflects early in his pursuits:

A human being in perfection ought always to preserve a calm and peaceful mind, and never to allow passion or transitory desire to disturb his tranquility. I do not think that the pursuit of knowledge is an exception to this rule. If the study to which you apply yourself has a tendency to weaken your affections, and to destroy your taste for those simple pleasures in which no alloy can possibly mix, then that study is certainly unlawful, that is to say, not benefitting the human mind. (51)

This brief moment of clarity is completely contradicted by Victor's true nature. This comment also demonstrates his misunderstanding of the nature of knowledge. There is never tranquility, but rather always a conflict between stronger and weaker affections; that is, simple pleasures versus the darker and richer depths of knowledge in chaos. He disregards this fleeting moment of intellectual coherence and proceeds to neglect all worldly expansion when he mentions that "If this rule were always observed; if no man allowed any pursuit whatsoever to interfere with the tranquility of his domestic affections, Greece had not been enslaved; Caesar would have spared his country; America would have been discovered more gradually; and the empires of Mexico and Peru had not been destroyed" (51). He fails to acknowledge the ways in which these massive events were not the end of history. Without chaos, time would not propel forward because there would be no endeavors to do so. He begins his scientific endeavors with what seems to be an understanding of the dangers found within arduous desire, but proceeds to violate his very own opinion because he is blind to the true, chaotic nature of knowledge, and this is why it destroys him.

Knowledge that was once seen as controllable and started out as a childlike curiosity is now literally endowed with a life of its own. Had Victor Frankenstein come to understand knowledge as an inherently chaotic process, he may have formed a relationship with his creature and been released from the shackles that he created for himself. He lives with a torrential ambivalence of obsession and disgust toward knowledge and lacks the wisdom to know that his knowledge is analogous to his creature. While these two are one and the same, Victor fights a never-ending battle with himself about the duty he owes to knowledge. As I conclude my paper, I am aware that this will not be the conclusion of my academic pursuits. This

has been a long and gruesome process, but I plan to continue my own pursuit of knowledge beyond this paper. I am able to recognize the ongoing and chaotic entity that knowledge necessitates and, unlike Victor, I am willing to embrace it.

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# SAM BEEKER

Sam Beeker studies English and comparative literature. His academic interests include post-structuralist philosophy and 20th century literature. Sam is most drawn to the periods between major literary movements.

Mentor: **Nadège LeJeune**

## SYLVIA PLATH'S LINGUISTIC "MAGIC MIRROR": THE CHAOS OF TEXTUAL SUBJECT FORMATION

I am, I am, I am.

—Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*

WHAT DOES THE "I" MEAN IN FICTION from a first person narratological perspective? This assertion of the self, as it is expressed both in narrative and in the world it seeks to define and capture, is a jubilant, liberating, and horrifying signification of subjectivity with which the content of this paper is concerned. The mimetic qualities of fiction preserve its ability to represent the lives of those who continue to engage with it; however, fiction is more than just this. As *fiction*, a body of text does not attempt to present reality objectively or in its totality, but rather in a manner that allows readers to attain profound insights into the human experience through their projection into a world that is not their own. It is simultaneously a linguistic and cultural space of solitary psychic projection and experimentation that allows both reader and writer to conceptualize, or rather, reconceptualize, their metaphysical realities internally within a space of private, secure contemplation. It is precisely the interpellative and hegemonic qualities of the "I" as a linguistic form, and the texts that seek to represent it, which constitutes

its utterance<sup>1</sup> as a unifying form of chaotic intersubjective relationalities. Within a world fraught with chaos that we cannot surmount or escape, it is the role of fiction, as it were, to save us from ourselves, from our own subjective conceptions of reality, and from the irreconcilable unknown that our own isolated consciousness keeps us within. It may be said that some authors write for this purpose and that we as readers engage with texts for the same reason.

The literary genre of the *Bildungsroman* concerns itself precisely with these queries. As defined by M.H. Abrams in the 7th edition of *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, “The subject of these novels is the development of the protagonist’s mind and character, in the passage from childhood through varied experiences—and often through a spiritual crisis—into maturity, which usually involves recognition of one’s identity and role in the world” (193). Through fictitious accounts of individual chaos, and the growth that results from it, readers are offered the rhetorical space to confront their own transitional—and by greater definition, chaotic—experiences similarly to the protagonist of a *Bildungsroman*. However, what then may be implied about a supposed *incomplete* transition from, or reconciliation with, what Lacan calls *Innenwelt* to *Umwelt*, a distinction that essentially dichotomizes the “interior” and “exterior” worlds of a given subject? If we examine when theories such as Jacques Lacan’s succeed and fail, perhaps then we may find a juncture between theory and praxis that remains valuable in an exploration of the self and its textual formations. Though theorizations and formations of the self that remain independent from binary oppositions are difficult spaces to navigate due to the primacy those structures have within literary discourse, an experimentation with those alternative modes may grant us insight into how the self is described as the following analysis ensues.

By examining Sylvia Plath’s *The Bell Jar* as an *interpretation* of the canonical genre of the *Bildungsroman*, we may observe a triangulated relationship between author, text, and reader that signifies a reflective, dependent relationship among these metaphysical entities to each other, as well as their own modes of chaos. Whether that chaos is linguistic, physical, psychological, textual, or symbolic, this triangulated relationship is what is represented in the narrative of *The Bell Jar*, as a fiction, in its ability to allow for the acceptance of ambiguities, pluralistic subjec-

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<sup>1</sup> “Utterance”, as written here and throughout this essay, is meant to describe both spoken and internalized iterations of language as they may be expressed in the reading of a text. When considering the ways one reads, it is important to recognize that the formation of both kinds of utterances can be as one and, at the same time, as separate discrete instances, depending on one’s ability and relationship to a text as it is constituted in and by intersectional modalities.

tivities, and non-explicit reinforcements of a dynamic, reclaimed identity. Indeed, *The Bell Jar* straddles the Modernist conceptions of objective truth and unified subjectivity, as well as postmodern conceptions of autonomy within infinitely layered and fragmented "selves" which exist within irreconcilable ambiguities. It is by and from these difficult conditions that Sylvia Plath elicits from her readers their own psychic projections into her fiction to establish what I will call a consciousness in chaos.

To begin in the world of the text, Sylvia Plath uses the semiautobiographical qualities of her narrative to explore and reconceptualize a story that is close to her own. *The Bell Jar* chronicles the story of Esther Greenwood, as she reflects upon her early college years during an internship in New York City with *Ladies Day* magazine. Now a mother and wife, this retrospective narration of Esther's serves as a one-sided frame narrative that grants the reader access to the first person perspective used to describe her gradual depersonalization and isolation from herself and society. After returning home from hectic life in the city, Esther begins to spiral downward into a deep depression and attempts to take her life in a multitude of ways until she ingests a handful of sleeping pills in the basement of her mother's home. She is then discovered in the basement after an indeterminate amount of time and relocated to psychiatric institutions that revive her and attempt to put her on a path to wellness by means of insulin injection, talk therapy, and shock treatment. These institutions become sites of fear and paranoia for Esther and, after a few dramatic episodes with other patients and people in her life, Esther is left awaiting the approval of various doctors to determine if she is well enough to return to society, and thus, the real world, leaving her fate open-ended and ambiguous.

Throughout the narrative, interactions with characters like Doreen, another woman interning at *Ladies Day*, leave Esther feeling "like a hole in the ground," or like she is "shrinking into a small black dot..." (Plath 16). This speaks for a defensive cynicism that Esther adopts with society in order to preserve her already vulnerable interiority, a strategy that, ironically enough, results in a wounding of the self by means of isolation that, in turn, further perpetuates anxiety. In addition to the adversity Esther faces in her engagements with life in the city, she is also plagued by the conflicts of her past which represent themselves in the character of Buddy Willard. As the primary source of Esther's sexual and romantic frustration who moves in and out of her story, Buddy acts as another character who perpetuates Esther's conflict with the identity she wishes to create for herself, because in-

deed, Esther's primary conflict may be defined as her wish to adopt a pluralistic identity in a society that values monologic subjectivities.

The psychiatric institutions become a backdrop for the different conflicts Esther faces with herself and society. Characters such as Joan Gilling, a fellow patient, which scholar Tim Kendal describes as "the sacrificial double whose death allows Esther to recover identity and progress towards health," also act as catalysts for Esther's anxiety and paranoia in relation to identity and subjectivity (14). Freudian psychic doubles take precedence in Plath's narrative as a literary device used to destabilize a sense of individuality, complicating the ways Esther constructs a self-definition. As scholar Lindsey Tucker explains:

In Esther's imaginary world, a world increasingly suffused with *imagos*, Joan Gilling would appear to be another of Esther's doubles, albeit a more prominent and problematic one. We may recall that Freud describes the double as originally an insurance against the destruction of the ego, a primitive infantile creation that has been repressed, but that can manifest itself in a later stage of experience. (25)

Within psychoanalytic works like those of Jacques Lacan's, *imago* refers to the unconscious and hyper-idealized version of someone that becomes embedded in the psyche as a force that dictates and influences an individual's behavior. The "problematic" qualities of Joan as a kind of *imago* within Esther's psyche are most explicit in chapter 14 of the novel, as Esther continues shock treatment in the hospital: "I gathered all my news of Joan into a little bitter heap, though I received it with surface gladness. Joan was the beaming double of my old best self, specially designed to follow and *torment* me" (Plath 205; my emphasis). This troubling relationship is further explored in the narrative until Joan commits suicide near the end of the novel. However, the "doubles" within Plath's narrative remain important sites of ego disintegration in Lacanian terms, and we shall return to this point later.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the entire novel is that Esther's development and journey to "wellness," as it were, is stunted and incomplete. Rather than returning from the hospital triumphantly as a changed person, the novel ends with Esther walking into a room of doctors awaiting their judgement as to whether she is recovered enough to leave. As stated by Esther in this moment, "I had hoped, at my departure, I would feel sure and knowledgeable about everything that lay ahead—after all, I had been 'analyzed.' Instead, all I could see

were question marks" (243). Though, at this point in the novel, the metaphoric "bell jar" of Esther's psychic entrapment is considered to be above her, this state of being is a very uncertain one as Esther explains "I wasn't sure at all. How did I know that someday—at college, in Europe, somewhere, anywhere—the bell jar, with its stifling distortions, wouldn't descend again?" (241). These questions, the uncertainty of Esther's transition, and the ambiguities presented to us at the novel's end seemingly place Esther where she started, as a character that appears to want everything and simultaneously does not know what she wants. This ambivalence is what defines the personal chaos of Esther throughout the novel, and perhaps echoes modernist anxieties towards the kind of subjectivity Esther wishes to attain. However, in these moments chaos has become something greater for the novel's author and readers.

Plath scholarship throughout the 70's and 80's asserted a problematic link between Esther and her author that essentially equated the two as individuals who were victim of their own interiorities, an idea that finds itself most prominently in the works of Freud on female "neuroses" which condemn woman as always-already victim to psychic vulnerability due to highly permeable ego boundaries. These conceptions and interpretations of the text must be received with the utmost skepticism in order to understand the importance of the reader within the reflective, triangulated relationship among author, text, and reader to establish a consciousness within chaos. However, this is not an easy task, as can be observed by Henry Schvey's quotation of Plath as he writes, "Sylvia Plath wrote *The Bell Jar*, she said, as 'an autobiographical apprentice work which I had to write on order to free myself from the past'"—thus, making this universal concern explicit within the life of the author (21). As author, Sylvia Plath indeed weaves elements of her own life into Esther and the narrative she exists within. However, it is the vulnerability that both author *and* reader have to project themselves into fiction, as text is an interpellative apparatus on account of the ways a reader interacts with language. This is why fiction has the ability to allow the individual to decontextualize notions that chaos is something that they are forever victim to. There are various moments throughout the text when Plath makes her life available to the reader and at the same time presents the lives of her readers to them through their very act of reading and their identification with the experiences of her characters. As a first person narrative, the reader and author are forced to read the internal monologue of Esther's as if it were their own on account of the interpellative and hegemonic qualities of the "I" as a site of identification.



This phenomenon is presented internally in the very utterance of a first person “I” as the text undoes itself within the metafictional qualities of Plath’s text, as it presents stories that are embedded within one another. After Esther returns home, she is confronted with the news that she did not get accepted to a writing course at Harvard and decides to write a novel of her own due to her own sense of existential inadequacy. She writes “My heroine would be myself, only in disguise. She would be called Elaine. Elaine, I counted the letters on my fingers. There were six letters in Esther, too. It seemed a lucky thing” (Plath 120). Now, if one is reading the text autobiographically, it will take no effort to identify that there are six letters in “Sylvia” as well, and that if one is to compare this scene with Plath’s own life, it may be discovered that Plath was also rejected for a writing course at Harvard the summer she completed an internship with *Seventeen*. However, rather than using this link to validate the sexism ingrained within psychoanalytic readings, if one were to contemplate this self-reflexive moment as a commentary on the value of female authorship of fiction, profound insights may be discovered as to how Plath implants these very strategies to adopt a consciousness in chaos in the minds of her readers. Whether one reads *The Bell Jar* critically or for sheer enjoyment, the literary act of reading first person narratives forces the reader to iterate the thoughts and words of the author as their own, binding the two together as individuals who are simultaneously in and out of control over the textual space they inhabit. This liminal space of power over the self through language is what Esther attempts to navigate by writing herself in fiction because, in semiautobiographical fiction, the projected subject may embody a paradox free from the repressions of their society: the assumed “objectivity” of autobiography as a text that means to candidly present the thoughts of its author and the subjectivity and “falseness” of narration within first person fiction that is ultimately constructed by the author.

Ambiguous and pluralistic modes of subject formation present concepts and ways of thinking that are difficult to sustain. However, the containment of the subjectivity/objectivity dualism in the novel is symbolized within Esther as a character who exclaims, “Neurotic, ha!... If neurotic is wanting two mutually exclusive things at one and the same time, then I’m neurotic as hell. I’ll be flying back and forth between one mutually exclusive thing and another for the rest of my days” (94). This very utterance of Esther subverts Modernist notions of singular, objective subjectivity. By “wanting two mutually exclusive things *at one and the same time*,” (my emphasis) Esther undoes the Modernist singularity of mutual exclusivity to reveal that she harbors a mutually constative subjectivity littered with contra-

dictions, paradoxes, and tensions with itself. However, this is a radically liberating condition rather than a repressive one, and remains necessary for adopting a consciousness within chaos as linguistic bodies that remain both inside and outside the world of text that fiction remains a part of. As *The Bell Jar* exemplifies, identity cannot be signified monologically, for the act of doing so would be an incomplete exploration of consciousness as it is concerned with first person narration. This speaks towards Lois Tyson's thought that "the structuring mechanisms of the human mind are the means by which we make sense out of chaos, and literature is a fundamental means by which human beings explain the world to themselves, that is make sense out of chaos" (208). By using fiction as a linguistic space of inherent chaos through its contradictions, Plath is able to reconcile with universal chaos in the domain of the writer. However, by constructing her narrative with the first person "I," the reader is also forced to adopt the linguistic chaos of Plath and her characters on a metatextual level that unifies the unique chaotic experiences of fiction and reality as they are unified by a reader's ability to identify with a text. The varying layers of textual meaning for reader, writer, and the characters with whom they engage are derived from the chaos they reflect and project in one another.

Despite the fact that the individuated "subject" is a highly Western concept, it must be stressed that there remains a *discrete* collective within the "I" of Plath's writing that remains iterable and in constant movement by the ways we extract meaning from the self and its linguistic variations. This will remain important, as the text itself grapples with many expressions of the self as seen through structuralist and poststructuralist methodologies. The linguistic and textual form of the "I" as it is uttered in text that constitutes it as a site of interpellative identification in democratic terms. For if the "I" is observed as an interpellative structure, it becomes available to all who use it to advance subjective modes of self-expression and definition within discourse.

The implications of the reflective triangulated relationship among the three metaphysical entities of fiction can be unpacked further if we examine them through the works of Jacques Lacan. In Jacques Lacan's "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," he expands upon the foundational concepts of what he describes as the "mirror stage" within an individual's psychological development. As stated, this transitory period of maturation is formulated around the infant's construction of their identity, or *ego*, as it becomes individuated from the collective mass of human, sensory, and physical experiences it internalized prior. This stage is crucial in the development

of the ego and the individual's psyche because, as Lacan states, it is in the child's symbolic identification with their reflection in the mirror that they are able to constitute a more complete identity and existence. Lacan uses the terms *imago* and Ideal-I to define the mirror reflection of identification because the child experiences its reflection as far more complete and perfect than it experiences its own body; it is, essentially, an ideal representation the child can project itself into. Lacan uses the word *gestalt* to evoke this joyous unity experienced by the individual in this moment of identification. However, despite the joyous experience of individuation Lacan describes this identification to be, it is also one of extreme isolation and alienation because it forever strips the child of its collective identification with its mother and the rest of society. This isolation is construed by Lacan as a necessary stage of maturation that connects the subject to its reality. "Its" is key because it implies a subjectivity that is precariously dangled between a destabilizing, isolating lack of identity, and an autonomous sense of self. Laura Mulvey, in her essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," provides a succinct explanation:

The mirror phase occurs at a time when the child's physical ambitions outstrip his motor capacity, with the result that his recognition of himself is joyous in that he imagines his mirror image to be more complete, more perfect than he experiences his own body. Recognition is thus overlaid with mis-recognition: the image recognized is conceived as the reflected body of the self, but its misrecognition as superior projects this body outside itself as an ideal ego, the alienated subject, which, re-introjected as an ego ideal, gives rise to the future generation of identification with others. (61)

The "joyousness" of this experience is key and curious when one considers that this moment also signifies the perpetual isolation of the subject. However, this is paradoxically so, given Mulvey's explanation, the mirror stage unifies unity and disunity of the self with others as mutually constative modes of being. Thus, the condition of being both an ego and an "I" is signified by the chaotic movement of the psychic dialectic of the self, one that we cannot surmount or establish a totalizing fixity upon within something believed to be as concrete as text due to the absence of a kind of synthesis which is most commonly expected within narrative.

Within *The Bell Jar*, Plath employs multiple mirrors and reflections to signify Esther's depersonalization as well as the chaos that arises from the discrepancies

between her inner and outer identities. The concern with identity within Plath's narrative is elaborated upon by Tim Kendall's quotation of Ted Hughes as he writes, "The main movement of the action is the shift of the heroine, the 'I', from artificial ego to authentic self—through a painful death [...] The authentic self emerges into fierce rebellion against everything associated with the old ego" (57). Albeit, Hughes' dichotomization of Esther's subjectivity in terms of authenticity and inauthenticity presents its own problematic and oppressive binary, this attention to the "authentic" ego may serve us in our reading of *The Bell Jar* in Lacanian terms by its failures and successes. Esther also seems to concern herself with the anxiety of authenticity with her loathing of the cinema, similar to characters like Holden Caulfield in J.D. Salinger's *Bildungsroman*, *The Catcher in the Rye*. As she and the other young women interning at *Ladies Day* are watching a Technicolor film, Esther states "I hate Technicolor. Everybody in a Technicolor movie seems to feel obliged to wear a lurid costume in each new scene and to stand around like a clotheshorse with a lot of very green trees or very yellow wheat or very blue ocean rolling away for miles and miles in every direction" (Plath 42). As Tim Kendall identifies, "Esther discovers that the spotless hygiene of 1950s technicolor America is a façade which may conceal an unhealthy reality" (53). However, moments like this that bring debates over authenticity and inauthenticity into question also remain highly important to the identity and subject, signifying qualities of the mirror, because, after all, both the mirror and the screen are axes of projective fixation. Once one gives the fiction that is their reflection in the mirror an autonomous consciousness with language (i.e. the instance of saying "That is me!" upon identifying oneself in a mirror) just as both writers and readers do in their engagement with fiction, the relationship one has with their reflection becomes a convergence of consciousness among writer, reader, and character which are unified through the first person "I". This entanglement of the three entities' linguistic consciousness is precisely what defines the chaos of textual subject formation, making Esther's exultation, Plath's writing, and our reading of "I am, I am, I am" far more impactful to Lacanian notions of the construction of individual subjectivity (243). In this moment, Esther, Plath, and the reader simultaneously claim their subjectivities within the textual space of fiction through the medium of the first person "I" and its consequent utterance. In other words, text becomes the Lacanian mirror of signification.

Moreover, if we examine the literal moments when mirrors unveil themselves within *The Bell Jar*, greater claims about chaotic depersonalization and dis-

identity may be made. After Esther is admitted to the psychiatric institution for her failed suicide attempt she states, “I want to see a mirror,” only to later observe this:

At first I didn't see what the trouble was. It wasn't a mirror at all, but a picture. You couldn't tell whether the person in the picture was a man or a woman, because their hair was shaved off and sprouted in bristly chicken-feather tufts all over their head. One side of the person's face was purple and bulged out in a shapeless way... the most startling thing about the face was its supernatural conglomeration of bright colors. I smiled. The mouth in the mirror cracked into a grin. (174–175).

The sights of recognition and depersonalization with the self as a subject are expressed as places where we “see” ourselves. Whether they be photos, mirrors, literature, or film, these visually symbolic textual entities, and their ability to convey meaning, force Esther to relive, in a sense, the Lacanian mirror moment. This simultaneous recognition and depersonalization feeds into the chiasmic nexus of chaos in terms of Esther's subjecthood that destabilizes the reader's conception of the self and how it is defined and mediated through text.

If notions of the self become disrupted by our very reading of the “I,” perhaps the postmodern condition that departs from Modernist attempts and anxieties to mediate and totalize the reading, writing, and utterance of the “I” as a linguistic form becomes a viable truth that Plath puts forth in *The Bell Jar*. After all, as a linguistic subject, Esther's claims to selfhood are what constitutes an omnipresent vulnerability to the linguistic entanglement that arises in our deployment of the “I” as an anchor of subjectivity. Moreover, in the words of Judith Butler in her essay “On Linguistic Vulnerability,” “agency begins where sovereignty wanes” (16). In the linguistic situation that is presented when one attempts to totalize subjectivity, it is simply the assertion of being that is to be in question by Esther's condition as an oppressed Other. To consider the historical moment of this text is to acknowledge the sexism that marked women as Other, as well as a fixed form to establish the mobility of male subjectivity. This is one manifestation of the identity problematics that are internalized by Esther as one that must work with what Butler calls “enabling constraints” (16). These constraints on individual mobility as an oppressed other are what embody the chaos of identity politics for Esther as a woman wishing to claim an identity that operates both outside of and within culturally informed expressions of womanhood.

The othering of the individual, as they are marked by sexist pretenses and Lacanian lack, presupposes that subjectivity must be signified monologically, and therefore dichotomizes the self and that which lies outside of the self. However, if we reconsider the triangulated relationship among author, reader, and text, the "I" becomes insurgent against monologic signification in its capacity to internalize paradoxes of the human condition, paradoxes that may feel chaotic as they are confined to the dialectic by arbitrary cultural norms. It is precisely this quality of textual subject formation that demands a consciousness within chaos, a strategy that unveils itself in the ambiguities of *The Bell Jar*. What may be inferred when the signification of the identity of the subject is lost in ambiguity? Whether the self is distorted and diluted by its own mirrors and bell jars of sorts, a consciousness within chaos demands a tolerance for ambiguity in order for the subject to recontextualize the initial feelings of pain and dread that occur when one finds themselves spinning in the void and shrinking into their own black dot that may be forever lost in the recesses of the human psyche. This ambiguity is felt as a chaotic force until this newfound consciousness allows the subject to dance in the void, as the shifting pulls of the dialectic of subjectivity become a natural rhythm to stage the assertion of the self as an incomplete form and as one who is complete within their incompleteness. It must be understood that there is a dependency expressed here upon others for self-definition and coherency.

*The Bell Jar* is a text that contains the chaos of liminal space as its supposed tension with both modern and postmodern conceptions of truth and subjectivity become disrupted. The dialectic of the "I" that unifies author, text, and reader becomes unveiled in the "magic mirror" of text as a form of Lacanian signification. As the title of Sylvia Plath's honors thesis at Smith College entitled fully as *The Magic Mirror: A Study of the Double in Two of Dostoyevsky's Novels*, the double as a concept can be seen as something of interest to Plath in the writing of her one and only novel as it acts as the magic mirror of Plath's own creation. The symbol of the double as it signifies greater claims to subjectivity as it is constructed by the mirror of text represents two polar sides of the self. The Lacanian mirror moment exhibits that text may in fact act as its own mirror of textual and physical signification as the "I" is predicated upon which we see ourselves in textual forms. It is precisely one's interpellation as a subject by and through text that demands a greater relationship between the subject and literature. As Plath exhibits in her novel, textual subject formation, as it is concerned with the establishment of Esther's identity, cannot be signified or totalized monologically as culture wishes it to be, because

that restrictive mode of existence perpetuates an unhealthy relationship between oneself and their reality, one that is experienced chaotically. By reading a text that is written in this way, we are left to consider the condition and implications of this chaotic “I” on our own terms as individuals who are interpellated into reality by our relationship with text in reading. This reading, writing, and speaking of the “I” is what unifies reader, writer, and text by its very utterance and evocation. However, in the advent of the “I,” just as *imago* within the mirror, the text forces us to relive the Lacanian moment of signification to varying degrees, which demands a new understanding and consciousness of what textual subject formation means in our greater understanding of the ways we interact with the world. The self is brought into question by a reading of *The Bell Jar* as a text that asserts that the “I” has everything to do with chaos and how we as people are responsible for adopting a consciousness within it as it is found in both the worlds of fiction and reality.

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# STEVE CHADWICK

Steve Chadwick majors in physics and mathematics. He also enjoys writing and glass blowing. Steve is specifically interested in how art and science interact in literature. After reading Zamyatin's *We*, Steve found the novel to provide the perfect platform for an analysis of art, science, and glass.

Mentor: **Dr. Anna Kovalchuk**

## CLEARLY CHAOS: PERSPECTIVES DISTORTED BY GLASS IN ZAMYATIN'S *WE* AND FRANCIS' "PART FOR THE WHOLE"

YEVGENY ZAMYATIN'S *WE* WAS WRITTEN IN 1920 AND 1921, just after the Russian Revolution but before solidification of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1922. The tumultuous political and social climate of post-revolutionary Russia heavily influences the plot and themes of Zamyatin's novel, which criticizes a powerful totalitarian government and a social structure that aims to crush individuality. Zamyatin's critical stance on Russian politics resulted in his imprisonment, and the Russian government censored *We* almost immediately after it was written, although the manuscript was smuggled out of Russia and printed in English in 1924. Government censorship prohibited the publication of *We* in Russia for 66 years until it was finally published in 1988. The ideas about society and humanity explored in Zamyatin's *We*, which the Russian government found too radical to publish, illuminate how altering perspective, specifically with the use of glass, leads to individualism and freedom in an oppressive government. Zamyatin's novel uses glass as an extended metaphor to initially represent transparency, order, and simplicity. As *We* progresses, the tone shifts to acknowledge the medium's distortive and chaotic properties. The novel ultimately advocates for a more beautiful world, not of simplicity and order, but of chaos and passion, qualities which glass as a medium can represent as an art form.



*We* takes place in the 26th century in a society dictated wholly by the One State. Every member of the society, distinguished only by his or her individual state-appointed alphanumeric title (for example, the protagonist is named D-503), functions as an equal fraction of a single unified form: “At the exact same hour, we uni-millionly start work and uni-millionly stop work. And, merged into a single, million-handed body, at the exact same Table-appointed second, we bring spoons to our lips, we go out for our walk and go to the auditorium” (Zamyatin 13). This mechanically precise action sterilizes any sense of individuality in an effort to create a completely equal, completely unified society, in which “I” does not exist, only “we”. In order to maintain the unified precision of movement, each member of the One State is closely monitored by both Guardians, government agents who function as state police, and every other member of society, who are each encouraged by law to report any rebellious or anti-state behavior. The monitoring of behavior is made infinitely easier by the fact that the city’s infrastructure is made entirely of glass, save one opaque building called the “Ancient House,” a preserved structure from the past existing solely as a museum demonstrating life before the One State.

At the beginning of the novel, *We* develops glass’ role in the novel as a representation of clarity and simplicity by using the glass city as a physical manifestation of the society’s structure and transparency. D-503, representing the society as a whole, finds solace in the perfection of his glass world but his tone feels forced and overly praising, foreshadowing the eventual shift in the metaphor’s meaning. In his journal D-503 writes, “A solemn, bright day. On days like these you forget about all your weaknesses, imperfections, sicknesses, and everything is crystal-fixed and eternal—like our new glass” (41). The “crystal-fixed” structure and “eternal” transparency of glass simplifies D-503’s understanding of the world and helps comfort him from “irrational” ideas about passion and love, which manifest themselves in his mind as the irrational number  $\sqrt{-1}$  and an unsolved variable  $X$ . D-503 finds the unsolvable variable  $X$  and irrational numbers so discomfoting because the One State theoretically exemplifies all the characteristics of rationality and has irradiated unsolvable questions, which contradicts D-503’s subconscious feelings. The transparent and utilitarian glass civilization in *We* provides D-503 with some degree of reassurance about the simplicity of the One State, but as I-330, a female rebel who lures D-503 into a complicated world of love, freedom, and law breaking, emerges on the scene, D-503 must confront the meaning of  $\sqrt{-1}$ ,  $X$ , and transitively, the unknown. As D-503 confronts the unknown, the simplicity of the One

State deteriorates and the metaphor of the glass city's transparency transitions into a representation of distortion and uncertainty.

In "The X-Factor in Zamyatin's *We*," Andrew Barratt discusses how Zamyatin uses the motif of the unsolved variable X to explore D-503's relationship to the unknown. Barratt writes, "The primary function of the X-image in *My* is to make manifest the distance between D-503's declared quest for truth and his undeclared desire to suppress it" (661).<sup>1</sup> Barratt's argument illuminates how D-503 begins to struggle with the unknown as new information begins to contradict his understanding of the One State. Given his career as an engineer, D-503 is an inherent problem solver and naturally inclined to solve for the variable X and thus explore the unknown. But his love interest, and the mounting pressure from the One State to deny feelings associated with passion towards individuals or thoughts that fail to agree with the One State's prescribed way of life, pull D-503 in two different directions. As D-503 finds himself unable to put I-330 out of his head, D-503 begins to embrace the unknown and disregard the consequences. Accordingly, D-503's initial appreciation for the simplistic structure offered by the glass civilization of the One State no longer satisfies D-503 and his developing desire for I-330 and the chaos she represents, diminishing the utilitarian power of glass in favor of glass' distortive and artistic qualities.

Zamyatin's *We* ultimately links artistry with chaos and distortion by integrating poetry, music, and visual art into the novel as the antithesis of the well-ordered One State. *We* introduces poetry via D-503's old friend R-13, a state-appointed poet whose job largely involves praising the One State poetically, but whose actions and words demonstrate a thirst for knowledge contradictory to the supposedly satisfactory explanations provided by the state. Though the One State acknowledges the existence of art before the 26th Century, the government discredits the value of that art, because it created based on emotion or whim, qualities which the One State links to inefficiencies and irrationality. D-503 reflects on art before the One State and discusses how poetry changed over time, writing:

The tremendous, splendid force of the artistic word was wasted absolutely in vain. It's pure comedy: anyone wrote about whatever he took it in his had to write... Now poetry is no longer a brazen nightingale call. Poetry is a state service; poetry is purpose.  
(60)

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the text's Russian origins, some English translations of *We* refer to the text as *My*, the Russian word for we.

D-503 reflects the beliefs of the One State by criticizing the freedom of poets who wrote before its creation, arguing their work served no purpose and therefore wasted the power of language. However, during a conversation between D-503 and R-13, R-13 subtly acknowledges value in old art. D-503, reflecting the One State's values, expresses his happiness with the end of the era of Shakespeare and Dostoevsky, to which R-13 sarcastically replies, "Yes, dear mathematician, happily, happily, happily! *We* are the happiest, arithmetical mean ... what is it you people say: integrate from zero to infinity, from cretin to Shakespeare ... that's it" (40). R-13's sarcasm, which theoretically should not exist within the One State, seemingly goes over D-503's head, but the statement as a whole reveals an important quality in the state-appointed poet: an appreciation for Shakespeare. In an attempt to convey an aspect of art to D-503 in mathematical terms, R-13 relates integration (a mathematical process used in calculus) to the value of poets and assigns a numerical value of zero to the work produced by a cretin and infinity to the work produced by Shakespeare. The effect of R-13's comment defines Shakespeare's value as infinite, despite the One State's assertion that the work of Shakespeare and a cretin both contain zero value. R-13's extremely high degree of appreciation for Shakespeare, which contradicts the One State's stance, ultimately signifies an act of rebellion, to which D-503 fails to immediately respond. Instead of vehemently disagreeing, D-503 silently begins to think of the irrational number  $\sqrt{-1}$  again. D-503's inaction and mental contemplation of the unknown signifies a changing attitude towards rebellion and an interest in ideas contradicting the One State's beliefs. As D-503's mentality changes, glass' metaphorical representation of art and distortion overtakes its initial role as a representation of simplicity and utility in *We*.

R. Mark Preslar in "Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We*: Forbidden Knowledge and Coercion in Utopia" analyses how R-13 and I-330 affect D-503 and his perception of the One State. Preslar argues that the forbidden knowledge related to art and law-breaking I-330 and R-13 offer D-503 entices him to abandon his staunch support of the One State and rebel. Preslar writes, "Both artists and rebels, I[-330] and R[-13] are pointing to what lies beyond. D[-503]'s early ardent repudiation of I[-330] and her X graduates toward passion" (40). Preslar's analysis of D-503's growing interest in the unknown through I-330 and R-13 helps illustrate how "artists and rebels," R-13 and I-330, offer D-503 a more chaotic life via passion and rebellion. Accordingly, the chaos of D-503's new life shifts his understanding of humanity and the integration of the unknown begins to fog the transparency of the One State. The ability for art and rebellion to distort perspectives mirrors the distortive

qualities of glass, and in situating R-13, the poet, and I-330, the rebel, as the root of D-503's new outlook, Preslar argues that *We* ultimately links chaos and distortion to art and passion through poetry and rebellion against the One State.

As *We* progresses, the metaphor of glass develops beyond just a utilitarian manifestation of simplicity and transparency and into a more complex artistic representation of perspective into the unknown and humanness. Despite D-503's trepidation towards I-330, D-503 finds himself unable to resist her. Their sexual encounter causes D-503 to struggle with his passionate feelings towards I-330. To understand himself and his relationship to I-330 he uses glass as a vehicle to help explain. He writes:

We, on the Earth, are constantly walking over a bubbling, crimson sea of fire, hidden there, in the belly of the Earth. But we never think about it. But what if suddenly the fine crust of earth under our feet became glass and suddenly we could see ... I became glass. I saw into myself, inside. (Zamyatin 50)

In this tone shift, D-503 relates his inner passion to the core of the earth, which has now been uncovered by his transformation into glass. Though glass still maintains its transparent qualities in D-503's metaphor, the metaphorical glass no longer maintains the same degree of simplicity and structure; glass becomes a way to peer into the unknown and see passion denoted by fire. As D-503 and I-330 become more involved and D-503 begins to reject the simplicity of the One State, fire becomes a more prevalent symbol and signifies the alteration of D-503's once-simplistic understanding of his world. Because D-503's world is cast in glass, these changes in world view reveal changes in his perception of glass, which now exists not only as a utilitarian structure but as a lens for D-503's shifting mindset.

Marking a transition from a simplistic understanding of the One State, D-503 and I-330 engage in a fiery argument about the inevitability of rebellion in the One State. This argument concludes when I-330 hugs D-503 and D-503 "disappears" in her embrace and, seemingly flustered by her spontaneous display of affection, he agrees to aid I-330's rebellion (154). The next day, D-503, still basking in the afterglow of his embrace with I-330, describes the once comforting and simplistic cityscape in the sunlight:

Against the setting sun, everything was made of crimson, crystallized fire: the orbs of the cupolas, the enormous, blazing cube-buildings, and the spire of the Accumulator Tower, frozen lightning

in the sky. And to all this—all this impeccable, geometrical beauty—I myself, with my own hands, am supposed to... Isn't there a way out or another way. (155)

D-503 reveals the change in his perception of One State in his language and tone. D-503 uses striking phrases like “frozen lightning” and “blazing cube-buildings,” which convey a new artistic view of the familiar glass city. D-503 also describes the city as a “crimson, crystalized fire,” which brings color and movement into the description. D-503's new description of the city contrasts with the aforementioned description of the city in sunlight: “A solemn, bright day. On days like these you forget about all your weaknesses, imperfections, sicknesses, and everything is crystal-fixed and eternal—like our new glass” (41). Thus, the glass city helps convey the transition from D-503's utilitarian mindset to D-503's passionate and artistic revelation; the once clear and cold glass city reflecting D-503's mental state begins to warp in the presence of heat and passion. As the glass city becomes a lens for D-503's mind, the initial connection between glass and utility deteriorates, while the connection between glass and artistry intensifies.

The Russian literary critic Viktor Shklovsky wrote “Art as Technique” in 1916, just five years prior to Zamyatin's *We*. Discussing the purpose of and definition of art, Shklovsky's thoughts about perception provide the theoretical basis of support for understanding how D-503's perception of glass changes from a utility to an art when applied to Zamyatin's *We*. Shklovsky's essay explores how repetition and “habitualization” renders life experiences nonexistent, but how art “defamiliarizes” one with their known surroundings, thus making them beautiful again:

Habitualization devours work, clothes, furniture, one's wife, and the fear of war. “If the whole complex lives of many people go on unconsciously, then such lives are as if they had never been.” And art exists that one may recover the sensation of life; it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone stony. The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. (9)

Shklovsky's analysis of how art reinvigorates the experience of life, which may evaporate under mundane and repetitive conditions, speaks to D-503's perception of glass within the context of Zamyatin's novel. As the One State values repetition and structure beyond all else, art, as defined by Shklovsky, cannot exist within the One State. Yet D-503's defamiliarization with the One State's glass city demonstrates the psychological change in D-503. D-503 initially perceives glass as a

medium that reflects the cold, transparent, structured society of the One State, but as passion and rebellion enters D-503's life, glass begins to represent the art and chaos that D-503 embraces.

D-503's change in attitude is noticed by the One State and he is sent to a doctor. The change in D-503 is diagnosed as the development of a soul. The doctor explains the source of D-503's condition:

Well, take for instance, a plane like this mirror here... Now imagine some heat source causes this impenetrable surface to suddenly grow soft, and nothing slides across it anymore but everything penetrates inside it, into that mirror world... The plane has now become a volume... So you see: a cold mirror reflects and rejects but this absorbs every footprint, forever. (80)

We again uses glass and heat as extended metaphors for the changes in D-503, explaining how the development of a soul, which the One State sees as an illness, forces an individual to change from a reflective two dimensional plane into a three dimensional permeable space. The transformation creates an individual who takes in their experiences in an irreversible way, rather than reflecting all the individual encounters. D-503's permeability connects his feelings of love and passion to heat and glass; the fire created by passion melts D-503's planar glass surface, resulting in his soul. The consequence of D-503's newly realized condition results in D-503's ability to break the "habitualization" of the One State and reenter an unfamiliar, and therefore artistic, glass city representing both structure and chaos. Understanding D-503's condition in the context of Shklovsky's definition of art reflects how and why glass' distortive and defamiliarizing properties force glass to progress from a utilitarian means of structure into a physical representation of rebellion and art.

Robert Francis' "Part for the Whole" helps illuminate how glass changes an individual's perception of familiar experiences thus creating beauty, a beauty which falls under Shklovsky's definition of art. Francis' poem, "Part for the Whole," examines how the ordinary can become beautiful when distorted or obscured, and argues glass possesses ideal properties to create such beauty. The poem begins with a man who chooses to stay inside during a sunset in order to mentally reconstruct the image outside by using the fragments of light reflecting inside the building, "as if to say, I see more seeing less" (Francis 1). Francis' poem then describes how the combination of light and glass create a unique and artistic image, impossible to find in nature: "A patch of light that picture-glass happens / To catch from window-glass, fragment of fragment, / Flawed, distorted, dulled, nevertheless/ Gives

something unglazed nature cannot give: / The old obliquity of art, and proves / Part may be more than whole, least may be best” (1). Francis’s poem argues that the fragments of something beautiful, distorted and reflected by glass, become something artistic in their indirectness. The lack of familiarity found in reflected light affords the viewer an opportunity to recreate an image using disjointed pieces, a process that provides a more valuable experience for the observer than viewing an image whole. Here, the transformational medium of glass both reveals the versatility of glass and serves to defamiliarize, in Shklovsky’s sense, the familiar beauty of a daily phenomenon.

Howard Nelson’s essay “Moving Unnoticed: Notes on Robert Francis’s Poetry” explores how Francis’s poetry interacts with readers and how his poetry demonstrates strength and relevance, despite Francis’s lack of public recognition. Nelson introduces Francis’s work by describing Francis’s Thoreau-like lifestyle in rural Massachusetts, which Nelson argues galvanizes Francis’s simplistic style. Nelson then argues that Francis manages to live paradoxically amid the polarizing poetry climate, which either champions language to be used as the main proponent of poetry or avoiding ornamental language to avoid detraction from the poem. Nelson continues by discussing Francis’s prevailing theme, which aims to provide new perspective for the reader and implore the reader to find meaning in everyday life:

[Francis illuminates] The engagement of the imagination and the actual, poetry’s effort to focus the material world in a new light and make us more awake to it... He uses the things of the world for symbolic and moral purposes, but this is simply part of the interplay of mind and subject, of the homage to awareness and the world. (1)

Nelson argues that Francis’s poetry enlightens the readers’ perception by offering a perspective that appreciates the material world in a unique and positive way; thus, Francis’s use of symbolism in everyday objects creates new connections between the reader and their surroundings. Francis’s poem exemplifies the themes described by Nelson in “Part for the Whole” by asking the reader to manipulate their distorted perspective through imagination and recognize the beauty of their own creation. Nelson’s analysis once again points us to the power of the artistic medium, especially glass, to reorient a viewer to a more fulfilling and enlightened position, enabling the viewer to see more than without the artistic medium.

“Part for the Whole” and Shklovsky’s theory focus our attention on the artistic medium of glass, and this focus is expanded upon in Julia Vaingurt’s “Human

Machines and the Pains of Penmanship in Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We*," which helps to explain how glass as an art develops into something more than just an object of beauty in the text. Vaingurt's article explores how the humanity in art and the idiosyncrasies of humanness clash with the precision of technology represented by the One State, thus revealing how art functions as a way to rebel against oppression. Vaingurt writes, "*We* articulates Zamyatin's view that artistic imagination will prevent the otherwise inevitable conscription of technology into the arsenal of political hegemony" (1). Vaingurt argues that Zamyatin's novel demonstrates a perspective in favor of seeing human imagination as a tool to disrupt political order through the creation of beauty and art. When implemented artistically, imagination possesses the power to break the role of a technology in society by introducing a human's defamiliarized perspective, the antithesis of the repetition and unimaginativeness of technology. In the context of "Part for the Whole," Francis encourages humanity to allow glass to disrupt their surroundings and use imagination to reconstruct their surroundings. In both cases these authors implore the use of imagination to interrupt habitualized perception, and in both cases glass as an artistic medium represents and functions as the interrupter of predetermined ideas. In Vaingurt's example the transparency of the glass city used to oppressively monitor its occupants can also be used as a lens to distort perspectives artistically, encouraging a rebellion of humanness against the mechanical doctrine of the One State.

*We*'s criticism of overly systematized societies redefines humanness and the role art and beauty play in the human experience by celebrating chaos and distortion. Symbolized by glass, these qualities challenge both the reader and D-503 to alter their perspectives. By designing a state obsessed with order, the dystopian future depicted in *We* brings to light the liberties of modern life frequently taken for granted and, like light through glass, disrupts the readers' perception of their own world. When understanding the versatility of glass as more than a utility in everyday life, one can implement the arguments of Francis' "Part for the Whole" and Shklovsky's "Art as Technique" and enjoy a more meaningful experience by defamiliarizing the repetition of an "unglassed" life. One's ability to see glass as an art, and thus allow glass to distort life, will, as argued by Vaingurt, allow one to recognize the dangers of an automatized society and challenge political hegemony with artistic imagination.



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# PATRICK DUNHAM

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## CHAOTIC REALMS OF BAUDRILLARDIAN IDENTITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

UTTERLY DISMANTLING JEAN-LUC GODARD'S CLAIM that "Photography is truth. The cinema is truth twenty-four times a second," Leos Carax's film *Holy Motors* (2012) has a paradoxically complex yet simple theme: protagonist Monsieur Oscar goes on a series of limousine-chauffeured appointments throughout Paris over the course of one day. In each of these appointments he takes on a new identity, each with no correlation to the last, and each with no reasoning or explanation. Oscar is an enigma: one second he's simulating combat in a motion capture suit, the next he's stumbling through the streets of Paris as a stooped beggar, the next desecrating a cemetery; the list goes on. All of his characters, as wildly disparate as they may be, shift back into the same individual at the end of their respective phases for a precious few minutes as he prepares for the next appointment. In examining this logically-vexing film through a Baudrillardian lens, we can analyze the narrative as a critique of the modern digitization of identity in all of its diffused, pixelated madness. Just as Oscar is convoluted among many different roles which all stem from his base identity of Oscar, so too are we dispersed across our many different social media profiles, cyber roles, and absorption in the digital world. A major part of this critique of the digital age emerges through Carax's tribute to the comprehensive history of cinema, most notably the proto-cinematic experiments of Étienne-Jules Marey, the comprehensive French cinematic canon, and even reflexive references to Carax's own filmography.

In his film, Carax illuminates the depthless bounds of the digital age and how technology has seeped its way into this most personal domain of our existence: our sense of identity. *Holy Motors* illustrates that reality, defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as “the world or the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to an idealistic or notional idea of them” is no longer a possibility in contemporary culture in industrialized societies (OED). Rather, the layers of simulacra—models that have the form but not substance of whatever they are representing—on which we have built our disparate and vast modes of identity through technological saturation cause us to exist in a constant state of simulation where we have lost the tangible grounding previously provided by our base identity. Since we are always creating and updating virtual personae of ourselves (e.g. various curated social roles operating as simulacra) through social media and online presence, we live in the realm of the hyperreal, adhering to Jean Baudrillard’s claim that “[s]imulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal” (*Simulacra and Simulation* 1). Such as the historical sense of a stable, “real” identity been scattered throughout the digital nebula of simulacra, resulting in a constant simulation wherein the signs of the signified replace the signifiers. First impressions now exist through social media profiles, constructing our dominant sense of identity through digital presence of curated hyperreality which is wholly irrelevant to “analog” or “real” identity. It is in trying to simultaneously follow Monsieur Oscar’s defiance of “reality” through his many exposed fragmentary identities—all digitized to obscurity—that we experience his state of simulation akin to how we experience our own. Our experience of the hyperreal differs in that instead of the evolution of cinematic technology operating as the simulacra which hazes identity, social media stands in for this digitization of identity.

In considering the perplexing narrative of *Holy Motors*, its position as an art film is a crucial first step in deciphering its context. David Bordwell argues in his essay “Art Cinema as a Mode of Film Practice”:

Especially apt for the broken teleology of the art film is the biography of the individual, in which events become pared down toward a picaresque successivity...Thus the art film’s thematic of la condition humaine, its attempt to pronounce judgments on ‘modern life’ as a whole, proceeds from its formal needs: had the characters a goal, life would no longer seem so meaningless. (153)

With Bordwell's correlating the art film's "attempt to pronounce judgments on 'modern life'" as emerging from its "formal needs," *Holy Motors'* confusing narrative is made a sliver more manageable. At every appointment Oscar's character performs some sort of action or rendezvous and the viewer is given just enough context to rationalize possible motivations or backstory for the immediate situation. Contrasting this is the greater framework of Oscar's occupation: we never discover his motivation behind carrying on with all these performances until he is directly asked by an enigmatic figure who seems to be his boss. Oscar replies, "What made me start, the beauty of the act," establishing beauty as paramount and the only reason behind continuing his art. If we think of the diegetic world as Oscar's environment and his performances as art, a functional relationship could be created between these terms to contextualize his justification. In consideration with Immanuel Kant's claim that "Nature is beautiful because it looks like Art; and Art can only be called beautiful if we are conscious of it as Art while yet it looks like Nature," Oscar's stance on "the beauty of the act" becomes more transparent (149).

If we were to update Kant's claim by changing the two terms to reflect not only the dichotomy between Oscar's world and his performances but also the meta-cinematic nature of *Holy Motors*, one modification could be "Film is beautiful because it looks like Life; and Life can only be called beautiful if we are conscious of it as Life while yet it looks like Film." In this way, Oscar's justification for the continued need to create art in an era of originality's rising obsolescence doubles as the response of a filmmaker who is asked why they continue to create in face of plummeting theater attendance and the general malaise of creating film for art's sake rather than commercial motivations. This interpretation coalesces in considering the film's surrealist opening scene in which we see a man, played by Leos Carax himself, wake up, unlock a door, and wander out onto the balcony of a full theatre. All patrons inside have their eyes closed and are motionless in front of the silver screen, possibly asleep but just as likely dead: both conditions could apply with Carax's critique. Evoking Roland Barthes' "Death of the Author," Carax sets up the film as a critique of the state of the medium, in which the audience is paradoxically saturated with massive amounts of content yet not stimulated in the least.

We, the non-diegetic viewers, could be perceived as the asleep/dead audience whose minds are about to be provoked due to expecting a framework of narrative based in logic and coherence rather than the aggressively nonsensical narrative of *Holy Motors*. This expectation emerges from cinema's historical adherence to these elements, and it is of no matter that this film belongs to the realm

of art cinema as opposed to mass-market cinema: the effect of disorientation due to thwarted expectations is the same. Luis Buñuel and David Lynch are known for crafting narratives rooted in dream-logic within the canon of art cinema, yet they do not breach or hoodwink this framework as Carax so vehemently does with not only dream-logic but even the film's subversive rejection of internal logic, most conspicuously in considering how many other forms of himself Oscar kills throughout the narrative. In considering how divergently the film strays from all other audience-focused cinematic modes in terms of logic and coherence, it is important to realize how steeped it is in its position to other films. As Ginette Vincendeau maintains in her review of *Holy Motors*, "Citations range from canonical art cinema...to Hollywood blockbusters...to his [Carax's] own films" (*British Film Institute*). Carax also includes "Étienne-Jules Marey's pre-cinematic experiments" integrated into the narrative, acknowledging and consciously evolving cinema's past, present, and, as I will assert, future (*BFI*).

*Holy Motors'* treatment of film as a medium requires analysis before we discuss the narrative, as the film's convoluted representations of identity stem from the medium's digital manipulation of the character of Oscar. In *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, Jean Baudrillard expands on Marshall McLuhan's concept of signification's domination by a given medium, pushing the media theorist's famous phrase "the medium is the message" to its utmost. Baudrillard spoke to a world of dislocated signification, with all its selective decoding and "short circuit[ing] [of] every dialectic of the signifier and the signified," over 40 years before Carax put the hyperreal on screen (*Symbolic Exchange and Death* 64). In thinking about the human being as an obsolete signifier insofar as our digital simulacra now precede our analog identity, we can understand *Holy Motors'* disruptive handling of Oscar's identity by representing his "original" body—that of Oscar and Oscar alone—as an artifact, the master file from which several duplications have been created. These duplications result in Oscar living in the hyperreal: a mode of being that paradoxically integrates all these disparate identities *while not adhering to reality as we understand it*. Baudrillard draws from Michel Tort's *Le quotient intellectuel* which also speaks to this matter of the hyperreal: "it [the artifact] is a savage intervention in reality, at the end of which it is impossible to distinguish what in this reality arises out of objective knowledge and what results from the technical intervention (the medium)" (64). *Holy Motors'* serpentine treatment of Oscar renders the film's "[i]rreality [as] no longer belong[ing] to the dream or the phantasm, to a beyond or hidden interiority, but to the *hallucinatory* resemblance of the real to

itself” (72, emphasis added). All scenes in which Oscar encounters another form of himself result in his assassination of this duplication, or rather fragmentation, of his “base” identity, all except for a scene in which he is rendered as computer-generated imagery. The exceptionality of this scene—which I will discuss in detail later—bears importance in Carax’s depiction of Oscar’s rendering as unkillable and his supreme, “purest” form.

Taking a step back from the seemingly boundless extent of machine intelligence, we must consider the medium of *Holy Motors* as the structure containing and affecting the signification of computer-generated-imagery (CGI). In *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, originally published in 1976 and translated into English in 1993, Baudrillard articulates how film constructs signification in this era of the hyperreal by explaining that “both object and information already result from a selection, an edited sequence of camera angles, they have already tested ‘reality’ and have only asked those questions to which it has responded” (63). As such, *Holy Motors*’ mode of signification is compounded a layer further in calling to mind that creating CGI is a dynamic technological process which modifies the pixels on the screen, already substituted for Oscar’s in-the-flesh representation, which in turn have already been altered from the “original” image: our eyes’ transformation of ultraviolet radiation into cognitive data for our optic nerves. Does the CGI form reflect Oscar as the least “himself” due to deviating so vastly from the source content? Or rather, is this the purest form of his “base” artifact identity in being a supremely precise, two-fold digital representation; a contemporary digital metamorphosis? It is important to clarify that this CGI rendering is a simulation and not a simulacrum in that it threatens the distinction between the “real” flesh of Oscar and artifice; it threatens what is real and imaginary rather than a simulacrum which has its subject’s form but not substance. To Baudrillard, this transmutation of form into substance results:

The real becomes volatile, it becomes the allegory of death, but it also draws strength from its own destruction, becoming the real for its own sake, a fetishism of the lost object which is no longer the object of representation, but the ecstasy of denegation and its own ritual extermination: the hyperreal. (*Symbolic Exchange and Death* 71–72)

Focusing on Oscar as “no longer [being] the object of representation,” how else can we view this radicalization of form? How can it be possible that Oscar’s symbolic

death under compounded swarms of pixels is a rebirth and not an “extermination”? Carax’s treatment of the human form—which is the analog “base”—exemplifies the endless possibilities that cinema has offered from its very beginnings for the death of this corporeal form *as a sacrifice for a rebirth of cinematic capability itself*. In this way we can literally think of the CGI scene as Baudrillard’s exemplification that “one must think instead of the media as if they were, in outer orbit, a kind of genetic code that directs the mutation of the real into the hyperreal...” (*Simulacra and Simulation* 30). Thus, is the message of our digital saturation and fragmentation of identity functioning to alter our “genetic code” in that we no longer think of identity without digital means? In this way *Holy Motors* ceases to just be another film—alongside *Crash* (1996), *The Matrix* (1999), and *eXistenZ* (1999)—channeling Baudrillard’s poststructuralist, postmodern lens; as will be expanded upon in the conclusion, the film provokes thoughts about the future of cognitive software fusing with our hyperrealities in a mode that adheres more to Alan Kirby’s concept of digimodernism than to poststructuralism or postmodernism. This classification is grounded in understanding digimodernism as “the impact on cultural forms of computerization...a set of aesthetic characteristics consequent on that process and gaining a unique cast from their new context,” especially because *Holy Motors* proves through its technology that it is principally “a new form of textuality” (Kirby 50). Now that there is sufficient framework for understanding the medium as impacting the message beyond all other factors, we can dissect the core of the film as it handles this fragmentation of identity as well as social and industrial critique.

In unpacking the chaotic threads of narrative that compose *Holy Motors*, it would be fruitless to approach as a depiction of any semblance of reality; rather, if we step back and consider it as a hyperreality, irreality, or simulation, grappling with the narrative’s tangled and intricate essence becomes much more feasible. Accordingly, Baudrillard’s discussion of simulacra and simulation is productive for grasping the layered complexity and social critique of *Holy Motors*. One of the definitions the Oxford English Dictionary gives for simulation is “the technique of imitating the behavior of some situation or process...by means of a suitably analogous situation or apparatus.” In comparison, simulacrum is defined as “a material image, made as a representation of some deity, person, or thing,” as “something having merely the form or appearance of a certain thing, without possessing its substance or proper qualities,” and as “a mere image, a specious imitation or likeness, of something” (OED). Just as with the simulation, the simulacrum bears a resemblance to that which it imitates only on the surface level, but opposed to the

simulation's mimicry of a process or situation, the simulacrum is defined as a static entity: a "mere image" rather than something that "imitat[es] the behavior" of the real thing on which it is based (OED). *Holy Motors* ruptures any sense of coherence that the audience could have by dismantling the framework of logic and coherence through muddling simulacra with simulation, Oscar's identity with his roles, and even his superseding the laws of physics as they relate to mortality.

Baudrillard expands on the hyperreal in his 1981 book *Simulacra and Simulation*, translated into English in 1994, in arguing that a simulated bank robbery is more disruptive than its inverse (non-simulated) because the latter "does nothing but disturb the order of things, the right to property, whereas the former attacks the reality principle itself" (*Simulacra and Simulation* 20). This paradigm can be applied to *Holy Motors*' style of narrative: Carax disrupts the "rules" of everyday life, such as our inescapable mortalities, rendering Oscar in a godlike state of immortality. Despite he and his various personae experiencing fatal injuries at multiple points in the narrative, he/they never die. This logic becomes further distorted after, in a performance as Alex, he stabs a man named Théo and changes his physical body and appearance to entirely resemble his own character. Although these two characters are two separate beings on screen, they are played by the same actor, Denis Lavant. Théo, lying motionless on the ground, turns out not to be dead quite yet, however, and stabs Alex in the same spot as he himself was stabbed. After they are both bleeding out on the ground, dressed identically and writhing from identical gashes, there is a quick cut to (presumably) Alex stumbling out of the parking garage and heading back to the limousine. Since there is no way to tell if the man we see on screen is Alex or Théo, the world of simulation within Oscar's roles is further compounded. Théo, becoming a replication of Alex, is a simulacrum in "having merely the form or appearance of a certain thing, without possessing its substance or proper qualities," yet this is all within the simulation of Oscar carrying out his appointment as Alex (OED). In showing the doubles in symmetrical composition, identical in every visible way, the shot aligns with Baudrillard's argument:

This way the stake will always have been the murderous power of images, murderers of the real, murderers of their own model, as the Byzantine icons could be those of divine identity. To this murderous power is opposed that of representations as a dialectical power, the visible and intelligible mediation of the Real. (*Simulacra and Simulation* 5)



Carax uses the image of the two simultaneously bleeding out on the floor to shatter this dialectical capacity of representations as “the visible and intelligible mediation of the real.” Furthermore, it is difficult to ignore the congruity between Théo’s name—Greek for “god”—and Baudrillard’s challenge that “[d]oes it [the divinity as revealed through icons] remain the supreme power that is simply incarnated in images as a visible *theology*? Or does it volatilize itself in the simulacra...for the pure and intelligible Idea of God” (4, emphasis added). Therefore, the disorienting power held within this image results from the medium’s capacity for divergence from real-world physics as well as a puzzling network of signification which creates certain theological and dialectic complications. When considering the ambiguity of the scene’s following cut to either Alex or Théo’s stumbling out of the warehouse, Carax adds another layer of obfuscation to the viewer’s understanding of Oscar’s identity. It is also important to mention that the name of Leos Carax contains two precise anagrams: Oscar and Alex. In considering the director’s tongue-in-cheek manner, it is impossible to consider this as anything other than intentional. Moving from this trickery onto the double trickery of the scene, the scene not only deviates from real-world physics in terms of Alex’s (or Théo’s) immortality, but also breaks with earlier rules of cinema regarding continuity and the occupation of space. It is only through cinematic technology that Alex and Théo, undeniably played by the same actor, can be in two places at once. Therefore, the cinematic world Carax creates in this sequence is a simulation born out of a new technological world: specifically, the post-production enabled by digital “movie-magic.” Indeed, this technology is an established element of film in the 21st century, but the deliberately addled way it is used brings more to its source content than *Holy Motors*’ cinematic cousins; enough to warrant such explorations of Baudrillard’s cultural theories in this new mode of hyperreal, digimodernist cinema.

This scene’s layered complexity is intended to illustrate that, just as we viewers become lost in our attempts to separate Oscar out from his many identities, we as individuals become lost in managing our own multi-tiered identities which blend, tangle, and contradict one another to the point where the analog “base” of the individual is lost within the decentralized haze of simulation. Following in this spirit, the next scene features Oscar *en route* to his next appointment. Spotting something troubling across the street, he immediately orders the limo to halt, dashing across the street to assassinate a banker dining with two associates.

Interestingly, this banker is the first role we saw Oscar performing when we first meet him leaving a house in the beginning of the film, saying goodbye to

whom appear to be his children, and entering for the first time into his chauffeured limo. In his second appearance in the film, the banker is still played by Lavant, but the film offers no explanation of this diegetic doubling and cameo. Instead, the banker is the second consecutive manifestation of one of Oscar's personae threatening Oscar to the point that one murders the other. After the assassination, the banker having been inexplicably manifested despite Oscar not performing his role, Oscar is gunned down then helped up moments after by his chauffeur Céline who addresses him by name and beseeches to the gathered crowd to "[f]orgive him, there's been a mix-up" (*Holy Motors*). Part of why this is so disorienting is because we meet this role of "Le Banquier" before we know that it is a role of Oscar's. In killing an earlier role of himself, he is given an empyreal reign over his reality, recalling Baudrillard's argument that "formerly, the king (also the god) had to die, therein lay his power. Today, he is miserably forced to feign death, in order to preserve the *blessing* of power" (19). Thus, Oscar definitively preserves his position as his own god, the only possibility in this era of technologically fragmented realms of identity, in killing a role of himself. Carax indicates through Oscar that we metaphorically kill or render inaccessible the imperfect or defective divisions of our cumulative identity via selective representation in various domains of social media. As Théo's cause of death was having wronged Alex, yet the banker's cause of death is inexplicable, this further obscures the protagonist's mosaic of identity as well as the now exponentially difficult logic of the narrative. In going back to Kirby with contextualizing this and its preceding scene, we see that "[in] its pure form, the digimodernist text relies on its technological status: it's the textuality that derives from digitality," further establishing *Holy Motors* under this distinction (51).

Baudrillard's repeated use of the word "hallucinatory" evokes Trevor Paglen's essay "Invisible Images (Your Pictures Are Looking at You)" in which he discusses machine vision, or, more specifically, the implications resulting from the algorithmic abstractions in facial recognition software such as Facebook's DeepMask and Google's TensorFlow. He brings to mind that we can think of "these synthetic activations and other 'hallucinated' structures inside convolutional neural networks as being analogous to the archetypes of some sort of Jungian collective unconscious of artificial intelligence...." Clearly for Paglen, machine vision via facial recognition could spread a sort of machine awareness that eclipses the threshold we are comfortable with or even aware of. In recalling McLuhan's mantra, the medium of CGI is unlikely to have such a dystopian undertone as it is a simulation with no higher objective such as machine intelligence. In the film industry and the private sector,

would it be possible for software such as DeepMask or TensorFlow to be integrated into modes of virtual reality? If so, in what ways would this further enmesh our sense of hyperreality in the digital sphere? *Holy Motors* forces us to consider whether, by extension through advances in technology, it would be possible to effectively fuse our simulacra of social media personae along with the virtual reality or the simulation of CGI. This could manifest through cognitive software which somehow takes our digital identities and renders them—using neural networks of relevant datasets for predictive generation—into an interactive world where we experience our digital cloud of ‘holograms’ in flesh and bone.

It is transparent the numerous ways in which Carax convolutes Oscar’s (and by extension, the viewer’s) sense of identity, yet it remains nebulous as to how this film uses its social critique to set a model for the future of cinema. In Ang Lee’s *Billy Lynn’s Long Halftime Walk* (2016), shattering the limits of cinematic frame rate—having been “shot in 120 frames-per-second 3D, with 4K clarity”—the future of cinema looks to reach an extreme, never before imagined realm of verisimilitude (Fleming). Fleming argues that this “Whole-Shebang [Lee’s term for this hyperreal cinematic innovation] technology removes that barrier that always existed between the audience and the images on a movie screen,” a domain in which Carax is very interested (Fleming). While he might not find as much interest in removing the barrier as in exploring how it could be manipulated and subjugated, one of the many scenes in *Holy Motors* that employs new cinematic technology while making homage to the medium’s roots is of particular interest: the aforementioned CGI scene. Furthermore, Carax’s decision to include Marey’s cinematic experiments in movement throughout the film fosters additional significance with this scene precisely because it involves motion capture technology and computer-generated imagery.

Oscar, his whole body garnished with motion sensors, explodes in acrobatics that call to mind martial arts: performing backflips, fight maneuvers, simulated parries, and highly dynamic actions. The scene celebrates the human body over its technological rendition: Carax chooses to leave the camera fixed on Oscar performing the movements rather than showcasing the translated motion into CGI. His explorations of movement and physical form are a continuation of Marey’s early experiments, effectively bookending cinematic history. It is clear from the motion-capture activity that follows (which involves a sensual, beastly interaction with a woman) that Carax’s interest is not in the CGI product, as interesting as it may be; rather, it is in the continuing of this historic cinematic experiment with

physical form to a new level of cinematic ability, an echelon that Marey had no conceivable means of imagining. Rather than a postmodernist or poststructuralist reading of the text, I assert that *Holy Motors* is bound by two constraints that Kirby gives for postmodernism: “the effects of cultural forms of digitization” and “the cultural-dominant succeeding postmodernism prompted by new technologies” (51). Thus, Carax asserts that building upon while simultaneously deconstructing what has been established in and throughout cinematic history, especially as it challenges the representation of the human form, is a critical responsibility of contemporary and future filmmakers. Rather than the CGI forms masking the human form, Carax portrays them as redefining the “genetic code” of the human form, leaving us to wonder as to its future interactions with cognitive software like recurrent neural networks. Of Baudrillard’s three orders of simulacra, the third, the present age, is what I have been discussing, yet *Holy Motors* makes the case for a fourth, wherein our digital simulacra are able to be simulated through modes of simulation such as CGI or virtual reality software proper. The latter has gained recent accessibility to the general public through apparatuses such as the Oculus Rift and Samsung Gear, so it could just be just a matter of time before such unimaginable extensions of the hyperreal exist. Seeing as our social media identities already precede our “analog” identities while also serving as the “visible theology” of others, does this digital transformation, far superseding Freud’s Uncanny valley, finally signify that “the visible machinery of icons [has been] substituted for the pure and intelligible Idea of God” (*Simulacra and Simulation* 4).

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# NICOLE HALL

Nicole Hall, originally from Portland, studies psychology and business with a concentration in marketing. Nicole is passionate about psychology, and in particular enjoys investigating what makes people make the decisions they do. She hopes to apply her findings to her future career in marketing.

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## STRUCTURES OF CONTROL: THE STIGMATIZATION OF MENTAL ILLNESS AS REPRESENTED IN *ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST* AND THEORIZED IN *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*

**STRUCTURES OF CONTROL EXIST IN EVERY REALM** in order to control chaos. They exist to create order in which the mass majority can live in harmony. However, this can be detrimental to several parts of the population, particularly those with mental disorders. While some of disorders may create chaos, it is the mental health care system in the United States that is chaotic. The lack of funding and support from the government costs millions of dollars that could be saved. There are many components to explain the lack of mental health care, one of which includes the stigmatization surrounding it. Stigmatization in itself is a structure of control to oppress those with mental disorders. In *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Ken Kesey comments on the treatment of mental illnesses in society, comparing it to the oppressive Nurse Ratched and themes of machinery. Kesey also shows the struggle of fighting against such stigmatization through the character McMurphy and his use of laughter as an avenue to combat the effects of stigmatization. The structure of control outlined in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* is explained in Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* through Foucault's Panopticon. In Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Nurse Ratched is a symbol for the cata-

strophic effects of the stigmatization of mental illness, and the text illustrates the negative effects of this mindset on our mental health care systems in the U.S.

In *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Nurse Ratched is the controller of the mental health institution ward where she is stationed and she exercises this control through fear. While one may think that the doctor would be control, it is actually a nurse that is in control. Over time, she has created her ideal team of people that will do anything she wants: as the narrator observes, "Year by year she accumulates her ideal staff: doctors, all ages and types, come and rise up in front of her with ideas of their own about the way a ward should be run [...] she fixes these doctors with dry-ice eyes day in, day out, until they retreat with unnatural chills" (Kesey 26). She does not overtly do anything to these doctors but uses body language, "her dry-ice eyes," that send those she controls "unnatural chills" so as a way to communicate her power.

After she has gotten the staff that will agree with anything she says and do whatever she pleases, she utilizes the fear in her patients to control and oppress them. Early in the novel, the Chief describes how "The Big Nurse recognizes this fear and knows how to put it to use; she'll point out to an Acute, whenever he goes into a sulk, that you boys be good boys and cooperate with the staff policy which is engineered for your cure, or you'll end up over on [the Chronic's] side" (17). According to the novel, a chronic patient is one with a permanently debilitating disorder while an Acute patient is one that has potential to heal and go back into the real world. This is one tactic the Nurse uses to gain the patient's obedience. A key part of this is that some of the Chronic patients became Chronic patients by the Nurse sending them to get a lobotomy or too many electroshock treatments. A lobotomy is the procedure of cutting parts of the brain, particularly the frontal cortex, to correct disordered behavior (Zangwill). This practice harmful in that the patients with this surgery often lose their personality and become aggressive. They can even enter in coma-like state, so it is no longer used today. An electroshock treatment (ECT) is the administration of shocks to the brain (Schindler). This practice continues to be used today, but only in severe cases of depression where there has been no improvement with other treatments. The Nurse uses ECT on all her patients that misbehave as a punishment, rather than an actual treatment. This can be incredibly damaging.

The Big Nurse claims that the reason why certain systems are in place is that they have supposed therapeutic value, making the patients and the staff believe that the system is functioning well. Examples of these supposed therapeutic

techniques include the lobotomy and shock treatments. Other examples include “requiring” patients to write down things they hear when she is not around in a book and holding group meetings everyday when they grill a particular person about why they have the problems that they do. However, she cannot actually do anything to the patients if they keep themselves under control. As the Chief says, “if you’re tough enough to keep her from getting to you she can’t do a thing” (65). This means as long as they do not let her aggravate them enough to the point of an outburst of some sort, the Nurse does not actually have the power to punish them. She would not have enough basis to order an electroshock session or order for them to be sent up to the Disturbed Ward, for example.

The Nurse creates her own version of the Panopticon in the ward as described in Michel Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Over the years that the Nurse has been at the top of the authority, she has molded the system that she oversees exactly the way she wants it to be. The Nurse has the utmost control of all aspects: all staff, including the doctor and the way they go about their duties, and the patients. A main method she uses is explored in depth in *Discipline and Punish*. Foucault describes a structure called the Panopticon and its major effect, which is “to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (201). In *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, this happens in several ways. All of the Nurse’s staff are extensions of her eyes and ears so they become part of the system of power. Not only that, but they do everything exactly how she wants it to be done. Moreover, the patients themselves act as her eyes and ears. If any of the patients overhear something important from a fellow patient, there is a book that they write it in and all of them are eager to do it. This follows Foucault’s ultimate “principle that power should be visible and not verifiable” (201). At any one moment, someone could be listening and be able to use whatever their fellow patient does or says against them. All of the patients also know that she is almost always watching from her counter in the day use area. It could be compared to the “central tower” in the Panopticon, where it is in a focal point in the day use area with large windows and easy access to views of the whole room (200). Nurse Ratched has created the perfect Panopticon.

Nurse Ratched reflects the concept of stigmatization of mental health because stigmatization happens through fear. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, stigma is “a mark of disgrace or infamy; a sign of severe censure or condemnation, regarded as impressed on a person or thing; a ‘brand.’” It is to regard something with a strong disapproval so in respect to mental illness, people often



regard mental illness as very negative and therefore those people with mental illness as parasites of society. Just like the ways that the Nurse does not outwardly do anything to change people's behavior, stigma mirrors that, in that it does not manifest in policies or laws but rather mentalities and lack of education. With no experience with mental illness, it can seem made up or exaggerated or even frightening. Many people only know about mental illnesses what they have seen or heard from the education system and media. Just like how the Nurse uses the worst case scenario of becoming a Chronic to oppress the Acute patients, inaccurate depictions of mental illnesses oppress those with mental illnesses. Additionally, just as how she uses the fear of the patients to control them and maintain power, stigmatization uses the fear that people have to maintain influence. Moreover, the narrator, Chief, has been "on the ward the longest" but "the Big Nurse has been longer" than he has (Kesey 17). In other words, she has always been part of the system, just as stigmatization of unknown and unfamiliar concepts has always existed.

In order to put Nurse Ratched in a position of such powerful control and in order to view her as a symbol of stigmatization, she is dehumanized by being described in doll-like terms. One of the first descriptions of her is that "her face [was] smooth, calculated, and precision-made, like an expensive baby doll, skin like flesh-colored enamel, blend of white and cream and baby-blue eyes, small nose, pink little nostrils" (6). This imagery of her as an "expensive baby-doll" creates a vision of a manufactured object that does not necessarily have feelings or human like attributes. The Chief goes on to describe how she "walks around with that same doll smile crimped between her chin and her nose and that same calm whirl coming from her eyes, but down inside of her she's tense as steel" (25). The Nurse maintains an unchanged expression of happiness on her face like a doll that puts an uneasy, unnatural front up that while attempting to present friendliness. She treats her patients in such a cruel way that one of the ways that she can do this is that she is like a doll. She is an allegorical representation of stigmatization and its evils so it therefore seems appropriate that she would be compared to an inanimate object.

A mechanical theme persists throughout the novel as the narrator provides many vivid illustrations of machinery that are put in place by the Nurse. The Chief describes that "the Big Nurse tends to get real put out if something keeps her outfit from running like a smooth, accurate, precision-made machine" (25). She expects that a strict routine with no questions asked should occur at all times of

her “precision-made machine.” This is a method she uses to control all the possible disorder that could come about and question her authority. Her grid of power is compared to a “web of wires”:

Practice has steadied and strengthened her until now she wields a sure power that extends in all directions on hair-like wires too small for anybody’s eye but mine; I see her sit in the center of this web of wires like a watchful robot, tend her network with mechanical insect skill, know every second which wire runs where and just want current to send up to get the results she wants. (26)

The Chief describes the intensity of the authority, how she is so powerful that she has a network of a “web of wires” that extends significantly and through the ward she has complete control of it as a “watchful robot.” This metaphor also aligns with the idea that the Nurse is a symbol of stigmatization of mental illness because her influence is so powerful and widespread. The ward is a machine she controls: “she pushes a button for things to start. I hear the wharrup of a big sheet of tin being shook someplace. Everybody come to order” (29). Her goal is to bring order to these people with mental illnesses and she does it through machine precision. The Chief explains how the ward is like a factory:

...it’s for fixing up mistakes made in the neighborhoods and in the schools and in the churches, the hospital is. When a completed product goes back out into society, all fixed up and good as new, better than new sometimes, it brings joy to the Big Nurse’s heart; something that came in all twisted different is now a functioning, adjusted component. (36)

It is as though the patients with mental illnesses are damaged products that need “fixing up” and must go through some process in a factory to be put out into society. Just like the Nurse is happy when a patient is “fixed up and good as new”, so is the cycle of stigmatization of mental illness. When someone comes out of a mental health care institution that is “cured,” the stigma on that person is lessened. While this is how mental illnesses are viewed, it is not aligned with reality at all.

Part of the reason why mental health is so stigmatized is because people do not view mental illnesses like physical illnesses, both in the fact that they exist and how they are treated. The mentality is that if you cannot see it, it is not truly there. Often, those with depression do not cry, look sad or sleep a lot in public but rather

try to get through the day or possibly are absent from it all. Yet, people want something to demarcate mental illness on the body. On the other hand, a broken arm is visually seen through the break of a particular bone or a cast. Both types of illnesses cannot be treated the same way either. This mirrors the mechanical themes in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. The Nurse is happy once her patients are “fixed up and good as new.” However, in order to heal depression, it is a long and complicated process because it differs with every person. It can go away but it can also be part of a person’s entire life. The process of healing depression is not just corrected through medication, but also through a lot of talking in therapy. A broken bone can be fixed with some x-rays, a cast and pain medication. The way that the Chief describes the patients of the ward in terms of the Nurse’s goals of turning something that was “all twisted different is now a functioning, adjusted component,” sounds exactly like the way you would amend many physical illnesses—like correcting a broken arm with a cast. A lot of people do not understand how many people really have mental illnesses nor do they understand the difficulties of going through one.

While stigmatization is an oppressive, prominent system in place, people can challenge it. The character McMurphy is a catalyst in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* to disrupt the system Nurse Ratched has built. Nurse Ratched has such oppressive control over the patients that they do not laugh even though they socialize for hours on a daily basis. Once McMurphy arrives, he gets the patients laughing slowly but surely with all the jokes he makes. He creates room for the carnivalesque, which generates the chaos Nurse Ratched fears. Eventually, he is able to get many of the other patients laughing, even at Nurse Ratched. This concept is important according to Mikhail Bakhtin in *Rabelais and His World*:

Laughter has a deep philosophical meaning, it is one of the essential forms of truth concerning the world as a whole, concerning history and man; it is a peculiar point of view relative to the world; the world is seen anew, no less (and perhaps more) profoundly than when seen from the serious standpoint. Therefore, laughter is just as admissible in great literature, posing universal problems, as seriousness. Certain essential aspects of the world are accessible only to laughter. (66)

Laughter is a raw and truthful way to look at experiences. As Bakhtin points out, it changes the perspective of how to interpret events, which can be more rewarding than understanding them in a serious manor. McMurphy does that in the mental

health ward. He pokes fun at himself and others. This in turn lets them learn about themselves in a completely new way. For so long, the stigmatization they endured, as represented by the Nurse, dehumanized them. When people laugh, it is when something happens or is said that does not align with a norm that is expected. For the patients, it was a turning point. When McMurphy makes fun of the Nurse, it breaks down her power by taking apart the machine she has built, ultimately creating chaos. By the end of the novel, they disobey rules, talk back to Nurse Ratched, and finally, check out of the hospital. The “world” of the ward is truly “seen anew” as McMurphy brings laughter. The stigmatization around mental illness is serious and oppressing like the Nurse, which makes mental illnesses seem frightening. As McMurphy dismantles the system, his laughter that he brings is needed to bring a new perspective and shut down stigmatization.

Stigmatization is an incredibly harmful part of human life as revealed by Kesey in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. It is part of our existence as social beings; however, we can actively change it. There has been stigmatization around many unfamiliar and controversial concepts but it has improved over the years. This is the case with mental health. While there has been improvement, there is much more progress to be made. In fact, mental illness is much more important than a lot of people know or think. It is so prominent that “[a]lmost half (46%) of the U.S. adult population will have a major mental illness during their lifetime” (Price et. al. 617). That means that almost one out of every two people a person meets are likely to have a major mental illness at some point in their life. Examples of major mental illnesses are Major Depressive Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and more. Price et. al. suggests that people with a major mental illness are at a serious risk in premature death and quality of life. The risk factors that contribute to this are manageable and should be addressed. One manageable factor is the stigmatization of mental illnesses. Price et. al. insists “[p]ublic health professionals should aggressively target the stigma surrounding those who have SMIs or those who live or are recovering from mental illnesses” (621). Kesey critiques the U.S. mental health system, revealing an important component, stigmatization, through Nurse Ratched. Lessening stigmatization will not only positively affect people with mental disorders, but also every person in the U.S that pays taxes.

The United States could save billions if it invested in the mental health care system. One of the reasons that mental disorders are so stigmatized is that the government does not adequately support the population with mental health dis-

orders. The documentary “Institutionalized: Mental Health Behind Bars” by Vice News explores the Cook County Jail in Chicago, Illinois and their situation with mental health care. It is estimated that 30% of the inmates there have a mental illness, which makes them the largest mental health care provider in America right now. Illinois made a 32% cut in health care spending to help fiscally but it ended up making them spend more money than they saved. The costs of increased hospitalizations and institutionalizations caused an increase in spending of 131 million dollars. The budget cut led to 6 out of 12 mental health facilities in Chicago to close. At the Cook County Jail, and jails everywhere, most of the inmates with mental disorders get put back on the streets and then they get arrested once more, which becomes an awful never-ending cycle for many. This process is extraordinarily expensive. It costs about \$150 a day to keep someone imprisoned. However, for a person with severe mental illness, it could cost up to \$450 a day. To treat the same person outside of the facility would cost only \$27 per day. When mental health issues are still not socially accepted and stigmatized, it makes it much more unlikely that many will get the care that they need.

In *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Ken Kesey uses the tyrannical Nurse Ratched to represent stigmatization to reveal the catastrophic effects stigmatization has on those with mental illnesses. She attempts to govern the patients in a mechanical and oppressive way to control the chaos that mental illness could create. The Nurse's methods resemble Foucault's Panopticon so that she has complete and unyielding authority. However, the character McMurphy brings laughter to the ward, humanizing the patients and taking apart the machinery of stigmatization. He breaks the control of the Nurse, creating chaos. He literally punches through the window of the Nurse's physical Panopticon, symbolically dismantling the system of oppression. After this happens, the patients are able to express themselves as well as escape from the Nurse's wrath. Kesey brings this system to light to expose the detrimental complexities of the U.S. mental health care system. Mental health issues are a prominent issue and reducing stigmatization of mental illness would help those suffering heal as well as save the entire country billions of dollars.

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# ALICE HARDING

Alice Harding is history major. She focuses on the ancient Near East, which explains her love of mythology and language. Alice is interested in the ways in which we can learn about history through art and literature.

Mentor: **Professor Kenneth Calhoon**

## THE NECESSITY OF CHAOS IN THE DESCENT OF INANNA

**THE ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIAN MYTH OF THE GODDESS INANNA'S** descent into the underworld was written on clay tablets around 4000 years ago. It tells the story of Inanna, an early version of Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess of love and war, who travels to the underworld, dies, and is resurrected. However, returning from the dead is not allowed, and her husband must initially take the place she left. Eventually, the rules are amended, and her husband and sister-in-law each spend a certain amount of time in the land of the dead. The result of their shared responsibility is the change in the seasons, to which these intervals in the afterlife correspond. Through its depiction of ritual as well as of the physical descent of Inanna, the myth conveys the idea that order and chaos are necessary for life in equal parts, and that everyone, divine and mortal alike, must help to preserve the balance. By extension, some amount of chaos is necessary for order to be created. This is a duality that exists within us, and is therefore also notable in depictions of deities, as well as the world-at-large.

The importance of everyone, even mortals, in preserving order is not unique to this particular myth; a Mesopotamian story detailing the creation of the world and its organization through the decrees of Enki, the god of wisdom, shows that mortals were intended to play an active role in upholding the world order as well. The decrees of Enki were intended to make Sumer prosperous, and the fact that they evidently did, at least in these mythical early days, shows the importance of order. Excess chaos is almost always presented negatively: it is associated with foreign places outside of Sumer, and sometimes with the underworld itself, an idea found in the story of Inanna's descent, as she witnesses—and is condemned

by—the unusual rituals of that realm (Averbeck 758). This idea is presented by Hans Peter Duerr in a discussion of many aspects of culture, not only myth, but it is important nonetheless. These places outside Mesopotamia were the wilderness, which people attempted to categorize in terms of their own experience as they made increasing contact with it (Duerr 125). This is particularly noticeable in regard to the underworld, as every person would eventually be under its control, although it was considered foreign (or wild) just as cultures outside of Mesopotamia were—and, like those cultures, being outside of the control of Mesopotamian leaders, the underworld was outside the control of the other gods. However, as Inanna's experience with the rules of the underworld shows, this wilderness cannot be entirely categorized, or entirely understood as the rules of ordinary Mesopotamian life could be. The rules and rituals of both places, even the apparently chaotic and wild underworld, served to organize life. They also introduced an ideal to be followed if individuals feared they had ventured too far from the original ideas of the gods. In later days, perhaps during the collapse of empires or conflict between city-states, when people feared that chaos was far too abundant, the rituals described in creation myths could (theoretically) help to return Mesopotamia to the order of earlier times (Averbeck 763, 770).

Chaos could also have more positive associations. Inanna herself could foster chaos in ordinary circumstances within her capacity as goddess of war, and therefore these chaotic aspects are welcomed in temple hymns related to battle: "I am the heart of the battle, the arm of the warriors" (Jacobsen 137). These temple hymns illustrate the importance of Inanna's controlled chaos in battle, a domain where such chaos is necessary. Therefore, those praying to her before a battle or reciting hymns of this nature invoked this aspect in the hope of ensuring success. This, along with her early actions in the story of her descent, may appear to suggest that she is an entirely chaotic figure, only appearing in situations dealing with impulsive decisions and their consequences; for example, the chaos in battle is mainly associated with widespread destruction and death, even when the outcome is successful for one particular group. However, Inanna does not always exhibit these behaviors, and in fact is tasked with presiding over a highly important aspect of divine order: judging the deeds of humanity, the "cases of just and unjust" as goddess of the morning and evening star (138). The complexity within her illustrates the importance of the two seemingly contradictory aspects, indicating that although the Sumerian people may have considered chaos as something to be avoided, it was not entirely strange or foreign. It could even create new forms of



order, as the conclusion of the myth shows—an idea that can imply the necessity of chaos to create new order such as this.

In the beginning of Inanna's descent, she is said to have "abandoned" the earth, which gives her departure a negative connotation. Inanna breaks the rules created at the beginning of time by leaving her earthly temples, and this fact is exaggerated by the repetition of this statement for each temple: "In Uruk she abandoned her temple to descend to the underworld/In Badtibira she abandoned her temple/In Zabalam..." (Wolkstein and Kramer 52). However, though this appears to be an entirely chaos-inducing action, she is evidently aware that order, which ritual would restore, is necessary to repair the damage. Before descending into the underworld, she gives instructions to her servant Ninshubur detailing the actions the latter must take if Inanna does not return. These actions appear to be exaggerated gestures of mourning, or specific mourning rituals: "Set up a lament for me by the ruins/Beat the drum for me in the assembly places" (Wolkstein and Kramer 53). Both of these actions are designed to include others, indicating that the power to create order does not belong to the divine alone. After all, Inanna herself does not have the ability to entirely control the chaos she creates.

While it is evident that these rituals alone cannot repair the order of things, their importance is illustrated in a later scene in which Inanna's sons and Ninshubur obey her order to "Dress yourself in a single garment like a beggar"—in fact, Ninshubur has performed every ritual, including public grieving and speaking to the other gods to negotiate Inanna's return—while Inanna's husband Dumuzi persists in wearing his royal robes and does not lament, refusing to observe the mourning ritual (53–54). Just as Inanna violated the accepted order by leaving the earthly realm, her husband evidently offends it by failing to observe rituals meant to reestablish order in the face of excessive chaos. It is notable that although Inanna initially created this chaos by entering a realm that was not intended for her, Dumuzi is also punished.

Although the earth is the realm of the living, mourning rituals are mentioned in the context of the underworld as well. Divine servants (*kurgarra* and *galatur*) are instructed to imitate the actions of Ereshkigal, the Queen of the Underworld ("When she cries 'Oh! Oh! My inside!'/Cry also 'Oh! Oh! Your inside!' [...] The queen will be pleased"), actions that seem reminiscent of the earlier instructions to Ninshubur (64). It is evident in both instances that it is only through ritual that certain actions can occur: Inanna seems aware of this even as she disobeys the proper order of things, and Enki, who creates the *kurgarra* and *galatur*, is aware

that it is only through the rituals of the underworld that Inanna can be brought back to life. Ritual ensures that the divine order is not entirely broken. It is therefore indicated that this dichotomy of order and chaos is found in the underworld as well. Their rules may seem foreign, and perhaps chaotic, but they are rules nonetheless:

Inanna asked:

“What is this?”

She was told:

“Quiet, Inanna, the ways of the underworld are perfect.  
They may not be questioned.”

(57–58)

These lines repeat as Inanna enters each gate of the underworld and her clothing and jewels are removed—perhaps these earthly things serve no purpose in the realm of the dead. As these “ways of the underworld” are never explained, it is possible they are merely made up by Ereshkigal as a way to torment her sister. However, it is not only the queen who has power in the realm: the Annuna, “judges of the underworld,” enforce these rules as well. It is they who first declare that Inanna must die (“The Annuna [...] surrounded her. They passed judgment against her” [60]), and explain what must occur once she is brought back to life: “No one ascends from the underworld unmarked. If Inanna wishes to return from the underworld, she must provide someone in her place” (68). This person is evidently meant to be close to Inanna, as she is brought to the cities of those who are most important to her.

The foreign appearance and unusual customs of the underworld are likely entirely intentional: as the underworld was described in the same fashion as locations on the borders of Mesopotamia and beyond (specifically, the word used to mean “underworld” is used in other circumstances to mean “mountain” or “enemy territory,” both of which relate strongly to foreign places [157]), it makes sense that it, too, would be associated with uncontrolled chaos, a common negative trait applied by the Sumerians to places of that nature. In contrast to the living world and the realm of the gods, the rituals of the underworld are not commonly known and, as indicated by the repetition of the statement “The ways of the underworld are perfect. They may not be questioned,” these rituals are unlikely to change (58–59). They cannot be understood as the rituals of the ordinary world can, and therefore, although it may seem as though there are ways around certain aspects, such as the

necessity of remaining in the underworld once one has entered, these things cannot be avoided, which leads to the search for someone to take Inanna's place. Since everyone ends up in the underworld—the foreign territory, the wilderness—these attempts at understanding according to the more familiar ideas of the living world, and even the celestial realm, make sense even if they ultimately prove unsuccessful. After all, both the worlds of the living and that of the other deities have their own rules that may not be questioned, just as those of the underworld cannot. Perhaps even its chaos appears uniquely foreign, in contrast to the expected chaos of Inanna—the type shown in battle, for example. Unlike the two other realms, the underworld was evidently not organized by Enki's decrees after its creation, and it is therefore completely under the control of Ereshkigal and the judges: just as in a foreign territory, although Inanna is powerful everywhere else she goes, this is a place where she has no power at all.

The actions of Ereshkigal are notable because, although she is the queen of a place that is completely foreign, she mimics Inanna's behavior. This does not necessarily mean that she is intended to be another version of Inanna, as Diane Wolkstein argues in her commentary, with Ereshkigal as the “other, neglected side of Inanna” (158). Rather, their actions are similar in the ways that actions of siblings tend to be, even though one of them lives in a foreign land and the other lives in a place with which the people of Mesopotamia were far more familiar. Ereshkigal's condemnation of her sister is reminiscent of Inanna's later condemnation of Dumuzi, and each of the sisters has the same response after seemingly realizing the implications of what they have done: Ereshkigal moans “with the cries of a woman about to give birth” and Inanna raises a lament for Dumuzi (64, 85). Ereshkigal's control of the underworld through seemingly strange and mysterious rituals indicates that she too has both chaotic and more orderly aspects: in other words, her realm itself is seen as chaotic by the people of Sumer, but it is controlled by decrees perhaps not unlike those of Enki, and of Inanna at the conclusion of the story (Averbeck 758). The order of the Underworld may be unusual, but there is an order nonetheless, and Ereshkigal is expected to pass judgment on those in that realm just as Inanna judges those in the mortal one.

Order such as this is enforced by creatures called *galla*, who seemingly exist to serve this purpose, as they do not have any interest in earthly pleasures: they “know no food, know no drink [...] accept no gifts [...] They have no sweet children to kiss” (Wolkstein and Kramer 68). This makes them relentless when looking for someone to replace Inanna, particularly when Dumuzi escapes from them

the first time. Their anger only increases as they continue to look for him, culminating in the destruction of his sister's sheepfold where he is hiding: in the end, it is "given to the winds," as the animals are seized and tools destroyed (83–84). In carrying out the orders of the underworld, the *galla* behave in ways that mortals and most other gods would consider chaotic, and rather unkind. However, this too is likely intentional, as the underworld itself operates in unusual, foreign ways. The behavior of the *galla* is likely a representation of this: since the orders they carry out appear strange to those outside of the underworld, it makes sense that they would enforce those orders in equally strange ways. Like the customs Inanna sees in the underworld, they may not be questioned, and create an order of their own, however unusual this order is compared to that of the other gods. It is therefore evident that order can be created through chaos, as the *galla* do when they destroy the sheepfold to make Dumuzi fulfill his obligation.

The *galla* therefore illustrate an important aspect of this endless cycle of order and chaos: everyone seems to be aware of the consequences of disobeying the divine order although these consequences are never explicitly discussed. Geshtinanna, the sister of Dumuzi, is aware of what a visit from these servants of the underworld means: "The terror of tall trees which rises about you is the *galla*; they will descend on you in the sheepfold" (76). Since this is the consequence of Dumuzi's apparent refusal to mourn for Inanna—his kingly clothes and calm demeanor are in direct contrast to the sackcloth of the mourning ritual and the excited greetings Inanna receives from others upon her return—it is the only example we encounter of one who deliberately disobeys the divine will. His continued attempts to avoid his fate ultimately result in greater chaos than Inanna caused by entering the underworld.

This is not to say that the only outcome of both of their actions is a complete break in the divine order. At the story's conclusion, a new order is created: "Inanna took Dumuzi by the hand and said: 'You will go to the underworld half the year. Your sister, since she has asked, will go the other half'" (89). In this case, chaos influenced the world of both the mortal and the divine to such a degree that the divine order was permanently changed. This action offers an example of the calmer, more ordered Inanna: although her early instructions to Ninshubur show an awareness of order as well, her final decree shows a glimpse of that aspect which acts as a divine judge. Unlike her instructions for the mourning ritual, this is not given out of a desire to save herself. Instead, it is intended to help Dumuzi, and therefore solve the problem caused by her ascent. In her judgment, she shows that

the divine rules do not have to be obeyed so aggressively, as the *galla* are required to do, but can instead be modified to benefit others or, at the very least, cause less harm. Stories of descent are common in mythology, and those who return “carry within them the knowledge of rebirth and often return bringing to their cultures a new world view” (156). This is precisely what Inanna does: the agreement she creates between Dumuzi and Geshtinanna to take her place in the underworld creates the seasons, an aspect of divine order that did not exist even in Enki’s initial decrees.

The fact that this story ultimately explains the seasons raises a question about the nature of myth: it is most often considered to be exclusively an allegory for natural occurrences, but there is frequent disagreement about which aspects of any given story can be read as allegories of that kind. In a discussion of the functions of myth, G.S. Kirk criticizes those more simplistic interpretations that “the early inter-relations of Anu, Enlil and Enki can be translated directly into physical language” and that “by representing the forces of nature as anthropomorphic gods, and telling stories about their mutual relations in terms of human psychology, the Sumerians were able to understand and accept the workings of the natural world” (88-89). Instead, he offers the idea that they could primarily be narratives that may convey certain ideas about the world (such as the creation of the seasons), but are not solely related to those specific occurrences (118).

Similarly, Walter Burkert discusses myth as being not only allegories and not only sacred tales but having “partial reference to something of collective importance” (23). Although Burkert frames this in a study of Greek myth, the same idea can apply to other cultures. The story of Inanna’s descent and its aftermath may not entirely be explicitly related to the creation of the seasons, but this is certainly an event having great importance for those who would have heard the story. Perhaps more noticeably, in terms of collective importance, the idea of order being created in the days of legend is very similar to the myth of Enki and the world order. Although the contrast between order and chaos is less apparent in the myth of Enki, and therefore the idea of order being created from chaos is not as important, both stories illustrate the origins of society, and the world, as the Mesopotamians knew it. The rules of society, then, were created by the gods just as natural occurrences like the seasons were, meaning they were natural and had to be followed. This idea may more closely follow the more simplistic idea of myth, that it is an allegory for existing rules or natural occurrences, but that particular origin story (or the idea of

order presented within it) was treated as an example of the desired order, and the will of the gods, in later periods (Averbeck 763).

The story of Inanna's descent is not merely an explanation for the seasons, or even why it is necessary for mortals to perform certain rituals, although both of these things are important. Rather than simply offering an explanation for the importance of ritual, and therefore implying that chaos must be avoided at all costs (as the earlier myth concerning Enki's organization of the world implies, if its later importance to the Sumerian people is any indication), it shows that order and chaos are not necessarily opposites: an abundance of chaos, such as the type Inanna creates in her descent and ascent from the underworld, does not automatically mean the order of the world, both those created by mortals and by gods, is irreparably broken or broken at all. The divine order is constantly changing based on the actions of those living in accordance with it.

It is evident, then, that both order and chaos can be created by everyone, both divine and mortal. Each can act as a balance to the other: Inanna invokes this when she instructs Ninshubur to mourn for her, using ritual to balance the chaos of leaving her assigned role, just as the *galla* create chaos in the form of destruction in an effort to enforce the divine will. This balance is even found within Inanna herself, in her warlike aspect governing battle, and her calmer aspect, acting as a divine judge, both aspects that are found within the story of her descent and its aftermath: she changes from acting in almost purely chaotic ways—despite her recognition of the importance of mourning ritual—to obeying the rituals herself and making a decree that results in a new type of order, similar to her capacity as the morning and evening star. It can even be seen that some amount of chaos is necessary to create order: if the origin of something as natural as the seasons, as depicted here, cannot be created when order and chaos are in perfect balance, or when chaos itself is lacking, this indicates that order must come from somewhere.

The underworld, too, shows this duality by being considered inherently chaotic by the Mesopotamians, like the foreign places surrounding it, despite having its own rituals and way of creating order. It is the “wilderness” beyond the bounds of the ordinary Mesopotamian world, and therefore it cannot be understood as the mortal realm or even the celestial realm of the other deities can, although this does not mean it is inherently “uncivilized.” Even Ereshkigal, though her behavior appears highly unusual, acts in ways that mimic Inanna. Chaos may have been considered something to be avoided, particularly when there seemed to be an excess of it, and avoiding chaos may have been seen as a way to return Sumer to its

earlier, more prosperous state, but this does not mean that chaos should not exist, or should not be encouraged. After all, if deities can play important roles related to both order and chaos, it is evident that neither concept is inherently negative. Therefore, both are necessary in creating aspects of the world and preserving them.

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# ROSS LENCH

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## COMEDY, CHAOS, AND THE NEW “NORM” IN A POST-NETWORK ERA: THE TALE OF *NORM* *MACDONALD LIVE*

“The comedian’s disease is when they become philosophers.”

GILBERT GOTTFRIED, EPISODE 11

“Who invented it anyway, a desk and some chairs it’s like an interview. Whose idea was that?”

NORM MACDONALD, EPISODE 12

“This is as important as drama or anything else, so you need to have as much respect for your comedy as major drama.”

DAVID KEOCHNER, EPISODE 19

**WHERE DOES THE INDIVIDUAL STAND IN RELATION** to the swirling turbines of social media, entertainment and news? The answer is in the hands of both consumers and producers of spreadable online content. In the past, people throughout the world received highly regulated, formulaic, and structured forms of media, but now the Internet is finding massive viewership. Some scholars are



calling this new trend the “On-Demand Culture,” others the “post-network era” (Tyronne). Artists are allowed new creative freedoms and audiences feel they have relationships with the producers of their favorite content like never before. The video-podcast *Norm Macdonald Live* exemplifies the current state of media and the implications of its future by using the oldest tropes of comedy and the newest trends in media to create something new: a hybrid of reality and the highly theatrical within the chaotic landscape of the post-network era. *Norm Macdonald Live* is not the only online content experimenting with great success, but it best captures the shift between the two eras through its dualistic style.

As this new post-network era begins, there are seemingly endless possibilities for how media is produced, distributed, and consumed. Some believe that this shift and deregulation of mass media allows for propaganda and outrageous ideas to take seed, but, as in all things, there is a flip side. In this modern age of media—the post-network era—filled with surprises, comedy is flourishing by pushing satire, irony, vulgarity, and absurdity, and emphasizing the relationships between the performers and their audiences in ways which were never possible before, highlighting the chaos of this uncharted reality and creating a space where the audience is forced to question sentiment, asking what is truth, and what is just inherent chaos?

Chaos; our universe is chaos. The human mind takes it in and tries to make sense of it as a way of better recognizing, coping, and feeling secure in an otherwise scary and unstable environment. Scientists make observations, hypotheses, and laws; psychologists theorize and diagnose. The lowly comedian relies on jokes. Jokes are no more than the perceiving of patterns in the universe and acting upon those patterns to alleviate their burden on society. In Dmitri Nikulin’s book *Comedy, Seriously A Philosophical Study*, he opens by explaining that “Comedy is in fact the very dramatization of philosophical reasoning, and, as such, it deserves a central place as a subject of philosophical inquiry” (vii). Yet, for some reason, comedians and their craft are not held in the same regard as other professions. There is no Nobel Prize for telling knee-slappers. Stand-up is not taught in the literature classes of traditional schools. In general, the entire art form is sanctioned on stages in dirty nightclubs, on higher-numbered cable channels, and, more recently, in the heinous den of perversion known as the Internet.

Jokes and comedy do have advantages over the other filters through which one can interpret the patterns of the universe. Comedy seems to meet the chaos with chaos. Comedy can take the ordinary and expose all of the absurdities which

are present within it. Comedy sees questions in life and questions those questions. Is there a god? Who cares? And so on until all aspects of the original question are pondered and the listener realizes even unwittingly that answers are for the unsure, and asking seriously only leads one to cling to a temporary self-gratifying truth. Nikulin describes this pattern as part of comedy's search for what he calls a “good ending,” amidst its own chaos by explaining that “it is never guaranteed. Unlike the tragic ending of destined death, the comic ending, as life, needs to be renewed, reproduced and achieved again and again.” (xi). This property of comedy is not done as a nihilist debunking of logic and life, but as a natural progression which questions logic in a world where all one has is personal perception and temporary truths. Nikulin even suggests that “comedy speaks more acutely than tragedy to human existential, moral, political and erotic needs” (xi). This highlights the cultural necessity of comedy's ideals while also explaining the often controversial reception of humor, especially in times when public thought is trying to be controlled.

The year is 2013. Media, entertainment and information exchange is changing. Netflix has been producing its own content for two years and is starting to see returns. *The Young Turks* channel had approximately 1.3 million subscribers and 1.2 billion channel views. This out-performed all U.S. mainstream news channels, indicating that more people are getting their news and entertainment online than through traditional network era channels. The trend of “nonexclusive licensing and the nature of social networking is encouraging sharing of content” (Ellingsen 109). This allows for these small-budget programs to reach huge audiences without needing advertising and marketing teams. Nontraditional niche programs and audiences are starting to connect and experimental content is produced because of the low risk-to-reward opportunities. Viewership online across the board is skyrocketing, causing President Barack Obama to make history by sitting in a musty garage in suburban New York with a washed up comedian named Marc Maron, forever changing and legitimizing the emerging form of the Podcast.

In 2013, television networks were dealing with change as well. Jay Leno on NBC negotiated a new, soon to be infamous, contract, while on CBS. *The Late Show's* host David Letterman's retirement plans looked like they could leave an enormous void, and raised the question of what and who would fill it. Thirty-one years earlier, writers David Letterman, Jim Downey, and Adam McKay shook up the television world by positioning their program *The Late Show* alongside the legendary Johnny Carson and his *Tonight Show*, both at the 11:30 slots. *The Late Show*

against all odds blossomed into a new era of comedy when the status quo of the format itself was being actively parodied. Between then and 2013, cable became prominent and countless programs came and went. Johnny Carson died and it felt like the genre with which he was synonymous was not far behind, but Jim Downey was at work trying to revitalize it, again, this time on the Internet.

The template for a successful talk show has several consistent factors. First comes a familiar face, someone the audience will recognize, or a licensed product christened by television stardom, but typically one who has fallen from its graces, because “Comedy implied the universality of human equality, as it depicted the contingency of social and class distinctions.” (Nikulin 121). The second thing that is needed is a direct connection to the audience. Technologies like Twitter, Skype, and even things as basic as comment sections are huge avenues of communication available to content producers, which were not available during the network era. The ability to let audiences participate by commenting and influencing their favorite programs is a huge factor of online content. It is a way in which the line between entertainment and reality is diminished, helping the audience relate to the characters and the goals of the program. The third and final aspect which comes up constantly in the discussion of web content is its willingness to push the boundaries of the format and of the social space which surrounds it. Online content producers have fewer obligations to society, and their sponsors know the risk of investing in the fickle market, but “it is important that these experiments are not regarded as purely isolated events, but rather as parts of a greater movement towards developing new and viable business models” and the staple of Internet media is its suspect credentials and often outlandish commentaries on contemporary culture (Tyron 140). Many podcasts are niche and even treat their audiences like a group of insiders. These three factors come together to create an intentionally chaotic atmosphere which viewers eat up and celebrate for its bravery and can mock for its hodgepodge and accessible nature.

Enter Norm Macdonald, journeyman comedian, former cast member of *Saturday Night Live*, host of the 1997 White House Correspondents Dinner, the final stand-up comedian to perform on *The Late Show* with David Letterman, and the impetus of this article. Macdonald has gone from being a teenager performing in tiny clubs in his homeland of Canada to astonishing heights of stardom. He was on NBC broadcasting live every week into millions of homes from a famed studio in Rockefeller Plaza, until he had a falling-out with then network owner, Don Ohlmeyer. The situation is generally speculated to be due to Ohlmeyer’s close

friendship with O.J. Simpson. Macdonald did not invent the *Weekend Update* segment of SNL, but he did revolutionize it by crassly mocking not only the stories he covered, but the ways in which major news outlets present sterilized coverage and the extremes they use to make a story. Macdonald even claims that he invented the term “fake news” as his pet name for the *Weekend Update* segment. *Weekend Update* was dubbed “punk comedy” by critics because of its relentless pointing-out of hypocrisy and its above-it-all attitude towards authority, an attitude Macdonald still harbors today.

After separating from NBC, Macdonald flickered as a star on network television with two short-lived stints as a titular sitcom character, and hosted a cable show which was styled as a comedy equivalent to SportsCenter. However, none of these stuck and Macdonald faded from the public eye, ironically moving instead into the spotlight through his self-proclaimed true craft: stand-up comedy. It is impossible to quantify Macdonald’s influence as a figure in television, and stand-up comedy, up to this point. But in 2011, out of seemingly nowhere, Norm Macdonald swung back into the public eye with his first-ever recorded stand-up comedy special, *Me Doing Stand-Up*, to great critical success, and positioned himself as a relevant comedic mind once again. With Letterman retiring, the idea of Macdonald replacing him as the host of *The Late Show* began to circulate. However, Macdonald was falling into obscurity as a television face, and was still associated with his famous firing from NBC. With the help of Jim Downey and Adam McKay, Norm Macdonald came up with an idea: he would film a video-podcast akin to *The Late Show*, and Macdonald would host and get his feet wet, showing that he had what it takes to run such a personality-driven program. Macdonald would bring in his celebrity friends from his past in stand-up and television for him to practice interviewing.

*Norm Macdonald Live* exemplifies the current state of media and the implications of its future. The program uses both the oldest tropes of comedy and the newest trends in media to create a hybrid of reality and the theatrical. To do this, the video-podcast draws on history by formatting itself as an hour-long late night show with only a single guest, a hybrid of the styles of Letterman and Charlie Rose. The program counter-balances its use of history with the contemporary by using the Internet’s ability to communicate with show fans, creating a rapport with fans and making the audience feel like a privileged and necessary participant in an experiment in the history of comedy. This balance of the tried and true with the new and experimental is upset by the most contemporary aspect of the program, the

chaos of it all, and the attempt to use comedy to push social bounds. In America, the engine which for decades has pumped comedy into the public consciousness has been late night television. *Norm MacDonald Live*, because of its production team and its reverent penitence to the church of comedy, is the natural progression of the late night format. This idea floated around the program. It was cemented when comedy legend Carl Reiner, as a guest of the show, explained that he was wearing a tie which belonged to Johnny Carson as a form of homage to both Macdonald and the program. Late night format varies, but for all intents and purposes it boils down to a host (Macdonald), who performs a monologue or a cold-open (a pre-recorded skit). Then, the host from behind a desk invites a different guest up for an interview, which is meant to be conversational, informative, and ultimately light-hearted and entertaining.

The adoption of this format, which started in the golden age of television, does several things. First, it gives the viewer a loose map to follow through the strange and often confusing hour long episodes which, unlike traditional television, may have come to them with very little context. The late night format brings its own context. It is one of importance, celebrity, and even nostalgia for simpler times when the line between celebrity and civilian was more clearly defined. Alongside Macdonald is Adam Eget, an unknown who plays the role of a lovable foil. One trope of comedy especially present in the late night format is the duo: the sidekick Ed McMahon to Johnny Carson, Andy Richter to Conan O'Brien, Brack to Space Ghost, and Abbot to Costello. Comedian and guest Kevin Nealon compares Macdonald and Adam to Walter White and Jessie from the show *Breaking Bad*, and the shoe fits. Another classic trope of comedy is the foil, the butt of every joke, and the person who the audience loves to hate. In the case of *Norm Macdonald Live*, the two standbys are reimagined by combining the two in Adam Eget. Eget is a relative unknown and a chaotic choice in himself, but the non-comedian and non-actor is very familiar with the world of entertainment as the manager of the world famous Comedy Store in Los Angeles. The show demonstrates credentials through ties to the real world of comedy, decades of experience, and genuinely amazing knowledge about both comedy and show biz.

Carl Reiner's presence on the show at the age of 93 or Jack Carter's are perfect examples of interviews that elevate the program. Beyond that, the show hosts hour-long interviews, all unrehearsed, unlike many of the canned small talk on television late night shows. While this can be a pitfall for podcasts who cannot book quality talent, *Norm MacDonald Live* flourishes as a result of its unorthodox

booking of guests. Carl Reiner, creator of *The Dick Van Dyke Show* and multi-Emmy winner, is just one highlight. Figures of American pop culture who have been guests on the show include Bob Saget, Ray Romano, Larry King, Andy Dick, David Spade, Gilbert Gottfried, Adam Sandler, Fred Willard, Martin Mull, and Rosanne Barr. Oscar-winning actor and director Billy Bob Thornton talks about pooping himself on a bus. Comedians Russel Brand, Marc Maron, Tom Green, Todd Glass and others repartee with Macdonald on a plethora of topics along with some hard-to-categorize faces of show business like Stephen Merchant, co-creator of the original British television program *The Office*; Bill Hader, best known for *Saturday Night Live*; and David Koechner. Guests include many of Norm MacDonald's personal friends accumulated throughout his show biz career spanning from writing on *Rosanne* to performing on *Saturday Night Live*.

All of these guests seem to have one thing in common. They all come from adversity, whether obvious like Russel Brand's addictions, Billy Bob Thornton's off-and-on relationship with the media, or the literal coma which Rosanne Barr describes being in for weeks after being hit by a car as a teenager. All of the guests somehow have achieved great success in the world despite the adversity and chaos which could have impeded them. All of these guests and their personal redemption stories play into the larger tale of Macdonald's own redemption. Each of them, while interesting as individuals, have a larger role in Macdonald's life and career, either as key players in its progression or strictly as stylistic influences. The culminated experience of all of these eclectic guests creates a larger narrative of Macdonald's life, which may be reality but often hints to a larger-than-life fiction. It is hard to know what is real and what is for humor's sake, much like the style of Andy Kauffman. And in the same way that Kauffman's antics brought him success and celebrity, Macdonald's enigmatic persona creates an air of mystery, which audiences marvel at and speculate about.

By studying the show, one notices a pattern in Macdonald's pursuit of the comedic "good ending," and he uses the same jokes in multiple episodes. This is not simply because he finds a joke funny but more for the sake of evoking a reaction from his guest. One example of this is that Macdonald often suggests to the guest that his co-host Adam Eget is a Holocaust denier. A large number of Macdonald's guests are Jewish, as is Eget himself, but to Macdonald suggesting this possibility live on camera creates emotion, panic, and chaos. Typically, Eget explains his position by saying "I know the Holocaust happened," to which Macdonald often says something like "That's not what you told me earlier." Then Macdonald will look to

the guest as if to say, *Do you believe this guy?* To put it mildly, the joke (if you can even call it that) is crass and provocative, but no two guests react the same way to this unexpected shot of serious topic.

Examining at the Carl Reiner episode, Macdonald asks out of seemingly nowhere, “What is the worst thing you ever saw in the war?” Reiner, a veteran of the Second World War, shifts the focus on to his brother, who also served in the military and had experienced the chaos of war more directly than Reiner himself. Reiner relates several of his brother’s stories from the war, including one about how he was present for the liberation of Dachau. Macdonald and Eget listen reverently to this powerful true story about mass cremations and the fact that their guest’s brother had to deal with this emotionally for the rest of his life. Reiner’s story ends with him saying “Jeez. Is this a comedy show? The funny thing about it is that there is nothing funny about it, that’s funny!” and that sentiment hangs in the air for a few silent seconds until Macdonald says, “Oh no, this is important things.” Then the silence sits for a moment longer and, in this moment of impromptu tribute, Macdonald rotates his chair to face Eget and says, “Now does that change your mind at all about any of your opinions?” The tactless comment elicits nervous laughter from the studio crew, which becomes even louder when Eget defends his position by stating that he had a Bar Mitzvah.

There are two things about this part of the interview to which I want to call attention. First, Carl Reiner’s story is told for about six minutes, without a joke. This is only possible because of less rigorous time restraints of the Internet. Second, Macdonald looks for humor in every story. Macdonald implies that his co-host is a Holocaust denier as an attempt to find humor in the most uncomfortable and relatable aspect of human nature: uncertainty. Macdonald takes a heightened moment and raises its stakes even more when emotions are at their most volatile. This forces a fight-or-flight response out of Eget, who tries to protect his reputation with the audience, who is forced to interpret. The audience is given an enormous amount of perspective on the program and the entertainer. Directly after hearing a story of atrocity, the audience is ripped back to the present and forced to realize both just how close the horrors are to our own lives and how far away those kinds of tragedies are to our daily life.

What *Norm Macdonald Live* presents is the amalgamation of a nearly endless number of circumstances. The variety of guests, the varying range of tones, and energies which come up over the course of their interviews and the topics which are discussed are a culmination of preparation and circumstance. Norm Macdon-

ald is the unlikely host with Adam Eget the even more improbable sidekick, and they appear to have a true sense of heart and good will, which can stand beside the entire malcontent of the Internet and the complex culture which thrives there. The positives emerge from a program which does not steer away from the uncomfortable truths that lurk in the shadows and under the surface of our highly communicative world. Through humor, the program safely encounters different aspects of the socially taboo and investigates their merits and the logic behind the prejudices towards them, whether sound or incomprehensible. The show is an artifact to be interpreted as one will. It does not serve a larger commercial or social agenda beyond that of experimentation and Macdonald's own personal desires to meet some of his comedic icons. But, the passion projected unwittingly (or wittingly) exposes the tropes which are still being formed and plays off them in ways that are both truly comedic and stylistically important to the new medium of online spreadable content.

In a time when one can easily feel lost amongst a sea of new experimental forms of spreadable entertainment content, *Norm Macdonald Live* sets an example of how artists can make socially relevant programming. The show expertly ties itself to its predecessors by utilizing recognizable faces, formats, and content producers from the network era. The show also uses its format to produce specific content, which could not have been possible before, such as interacting directly with fans and conducting hour long interviews that simply would not have occurred with the old network mindset. Finally, *Norm Macdonald Live* produces content that it feels is socially necessary to the social sphere, even if that means that it crosses the line of social acceptability. With no risk comes no reward. Programs like *Norm Macdonald Live* are taking big risks in this Wild West of content production and distribution. In all likelihood, most of them will fail, but a few will innovate and set the standards for what quality content can be online. As of now, the world of media seems to be on board, but in that chaos there are gems of independent thought and important human experiences which, before the post-network era, could never have been shared with the wider world.



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ALI LILLEY

Ali Lilley is from Astoria, Oregon and studies English. Enticed by the craft of storytelling, she is attracted to stories with sharp contrasts, particularly darkly enchanting stories like Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*. Through the Nomad program she has learned to refine and strengthen her own distinctive writing style.

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## HUMANITY AT THE HANDS OF HUBERT HUBERT: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHAOTIC PERCEPTION OF BEAUTY

CONTRASTING TWO EXTREMES REVEALS THE INHERENT nature of both extremes. The dissection of two abstracts on seemingly inverse ends of a spectrum unearths the true defining nature of each abstract. The chaotic nature of opposite extremes exists in diverse aspects of life: light cannot exist without darkness, love without the existence of hate, peace without chaos, freedom without oppression, beauty without ugliness—two extremes on opposing sides reveal the absolute nature of the inverse. Describing the stark difference between the beautiful and the ugly is analogous to light and darkness, life and death; the true definition is tethered to the reality of the other. Conversely, the two abstracts are always fundamentally grounded in the same roots. The inherent juxtaposition constructs an absolute necessity for the equal and opposite, and a revelation of the nature of the inverse. Beauty is a construct of what ugly is not, and conversely, they are counterparts, as if two oppositely wrangled branches of the same tree.

Throughout the wrangled thorns of Vladimir Nabokov's 1955 novel *Lolita*, the author showcases the unconventional beauty that arises from ugliness, and the true nature of beauty through abjection, erotic motifs, and captivating prose. Nabokov's juxtaposition of Humbert's obsession, capriciousness, and consumption in contrast to the precocious *Lolita* cultivates an uncomfortable realization that our ideals and values are constructed from the same ideas as the ones we reject. Throughout the entirety of the novel, Nabokov masterfully toys with two

extremes. At times readers are persuaded to love *Lolita's* little details and Humbert's love for her in passages such as "without the least warning, a blue sea-wave swelled under my heart and, from a mat in a pool of sun, half-naked, kneeling, turning about on her knees, there was my Riviera love peering at me over dark glasses", and conversely are appalled by Humbert's road trip fantasy turns into a pedophilic reality, which results in twelve-year-old Lolita withering in the ashes of her robbed innocence (Nabokov 39).

The nymphet, a term concocted by Humbert, exists as a creature unlike a normal girl; her innocence has crumbled but her sexuality has blossomed before puberty. In describing a nymphet, Humbert explains as an academic, employing scientific vocabulary as if to present his perverse understanding of young girls as unquestionable fact:

Beyond its many associations with myth, particularly the wood or water sprites of Greek mythology and religion, a nymph designates, in entomological terms, "an immature stage of hemi metabolic insect," which unlike a butterfly, does not undergo complete metamorphosis. (36).

Lolita exists within the poetic liminal space of art. Humbert elevates her presence beyond the bounds of flesh into a fantasy realm of his perfect world. Nabokov's purposeful motif allows the physical manifestation of a nymphet's childhood to appear akin to a rosebud woven tightly, cut abruptly before the full bloom of adulthood. Transcending the presence of Lolita into a mythological wonder, a fairy-like specter, rather than the human girl allows Humbert to redefine his interactions with her. The unorthodox and immoral nature of a young precocious girl-child idiosyncratically creates the opposing dynamic: beautifully on the verge of blossoming, yet prematurely and horrifyingly aware of the sexual nature of the adult world. As a nymphet, Lolita becomes the perfect prey for Humbert. Nabokov's reworked tale of predator and prey, enhanced by Humbert's unreliability, Lolita's precocious sexual history and interest, and Lolita's mother's death, and paired with Nabokov's prose creates a concoction of perfectly timed illusion, allure, seduction, and bleak desperation. The world of *Lolita* enchants the reader into a sunless dreamy haze as Humbert and Lolita come to life, dancing darkly into every crevice of the reader's mind, quietly questioning and enticing the reader into modest madness as the beautiful wording settles around the preconceived morality of the reader. Humbert's puzzles, inaccuracies, and discrepancies confound, perplex, and seduce the reader: much like the labyrinth of Crete remade into the mind of Humbert

Humbert, filled with nymphets and madness, obsession and tragedy. Their world solely revolves around each other. Humbert's love for Lolita is seemingly the only true warmth to the story—an impossibly grotesque love, but a love nonetheless. Though there are endless connotations, justifications, and interpretations of that love, it transcends time and the traditional bounds of virtue, despite the grisly contents of the novel.

Humbert encounters his first nymphet during his own childhood, a period where his attraction to young girls is natural, reasonable, and encouraged. Young Annabel, in a princedom by the sea, enchants young Humbert during a beautiful and unforgettable summer. She is his first perceived nymphet, the tragic love that stunts Humbert's ability to love with her untimely death. Humbert's young love is a prototype for Lolita and acts as a sympathy mechanism. In describing the premature love—"all at once we were madly, clumsily, shamelessly, and agonizingly in love with each other"—Nabokov's inclusion of Annabel works to create another level of sympathy for Humbert (12). Humbert's childhood trauma of Annabel Leigh serves as a grounding reason for Humbert's pedophilia, and obsession with nymphets, an unforgettable and painfully early love cut short before it blossomed fully. He describes Annabel's immature body and aura in every meticulous dreamy detail, in language so mesmerizing the reader can imagine Annabel as art—as a muse transcending the borders of normalcy in the same manner in which he addresses Lolita. Humbert's tender reminiscence of Annabel exalts her otherworldly presence into a place beyond simplistic comprehension and rigidity of innocence and corruption, moral and immoral, and beauty and monstrosity.

Annabel is an allusion to Edgar Allen Poe's last completed poem, "Annabel Lee," whose protagonist mirrors Humbert's doomed young love of the same name: "I was a child and She was a child,/In this kingdom by the sea,/But we loved with a love that was more than love—/ I and my Annabel Lee— /With a love that the wing'd seraphs of Heaven/ Coveted her and me." The narration of a shared love between the author and the voiceless girl is described in Poe's poem as so beautiful that even angels covet the two, and the narrator believes that their two souls are intertwined, dreaming of Annabel Lee every night. The inclusion of Annabel and this allusion to "Annabel Lee" provokes sympathy and foreshadows the future ambiguity surrounding Humbert's twisted actions: is he a madman or a passionate lover suffering from childhood trauma? As a child, Humbert's love for another child allows the reader to perceive and imagine them both as children with a premature inkling of love, at a time when this love is requited, beautiful, and

encouraged. In essence, the alliteration to Poe's Annabel Lee suggests Humbert's soul is that of a child, and because he is childish his love for Lolita is admissible. The moral rigidity of age restrictions, ill intentions, and undisputable pedophilia begins to unwind, as the heart overtakes rationale through the asylum of art. The reader to feel compassion for poor Humbert. The use of alliterations and makeshift masks—for example, his mask of childishness—to conceal the reality of his true intentions “constantly acts in a way to simultaneously disguise and satisfy his criminal desires, creating as it were a kind of semiotic polysemy that allows him to be one thing while appearing another, as when he speculates on the physical possibilities that would attend his marriage to Lolita's mother” (“The Use and Abuse of Reading in *Lolita*”).

The reader can now see the masterpiece of Nabokov's work: perhaps Lolita is simply a vessel for Annabel, for hers and Humbert's souls to intertwine yet again. For the love between the two—“I was a child and she was a child”—is innocent and beautiful. As a vessel, however, Lolita is simply a shell onto which Humbert can project his fantasies as an adult male, not a child, which furthers Humbert's masterful masking of his true intentions.

Lolita's attractiveness to Humbert and prematurely developed sexual appetite sanctions Humbert's rationale; he justifies his actions as acts of love. She is all at once his muse and his reason for living, and his preceding madness is enhanced from the ferociousness of their love. Humbert opens the story with a sonnet dedicated to his passion and lust for Lolita:

Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin, my soul. Lo-lee-ta:  
the tip of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the plate  
to tap, at three, on the teeth. Lo. Lee. Ta. She was Lo, plain Lo,  
in the morning, standing four feet ten in one sock. She was Lola  
in slacks. She was Dolly at school. She was Dolores on the dotted  
line. But in my arms, she was always Lolita. (Nabokov 1)

Humbert sings her name, and he entrances the reader into dark reality as Lolita takes center stage. A line as beautiful as “light of my life” is instantly followed and quite starkly contrasted by “fire of my loins”; the opening chant sets the stage for the events that follow: chaos and love, shocking revelations of love and obsession—the unimaginable and the unthinkable. Dolores, Spanish for sorrow. Lo the adorable girl child. Dolly the living doll, a child, a toy. Lola the sophisticated, mature young woman. Lolita, a beautifully enticing tap of the tongue—the blend of these images into one perfectly grown yet tragically destined girl-child.

Humbert's displacement and riddling of her name and identity allows him to deconstruct her humanity and to create her presence into a dream, a muse, an exalted art form, transcending her beyond the bounds of human likeness, stripping her of the moral shelter regularly allowed to children, in favor of becoming an otherworldly presence. Dolores Haze as an art form allows the reader to believe Humbert's love for her, a twelve-year-old child. Although Humbert blatantly accepts the reality and culpability at times, he also masterfully curates the story to favor his actions. The progression of Humbert's physical actions with Lolita is perfectly coupled with an event outside of Humbert's control, granting a rationalization and a semblance of a happenstance to the severity events that follow. As scholar James Phelan discusses, it is imperative that Lolita provokes the first sexual encounter to further muddle to culpability:

Besides contributing to our awareness of Humbert's impending doom, these interjections in which Humbert's directly or indirectly condemns himself help us to remain partially sympathetic to him even while they emphasize the seriousness of his crimes. We never approve of these crimes—indeed we abhor them more than if Humbert remained silent—but his interjections do affect the quality of our response to him. We know much pleasure it will give him to sleep with Lolita; consequently, when we see him now regretting that he ever experienced that pleasure, we regard him not as a monster but as a potentially sensitive human being. (163)

Humbert's symphony of words caresses the reader into glazing over the harrowing and factual details; Humbert moves to a town to realize his molestation fantasies, and marries a woman to seal his position of power over her daughter. He salivates over Lolita, desperately fantasizing about her child body, propelling his predatory desires. After Lolita's mother discovers Humbert's fantasies through his journal, he considers murdering her mother when she decides to ship Lolita far away and permanently out of reach from Humbert's voracious grasp. In a bizarre yet perfectly convenient twist of fate, Lolita's mother, Charlotte, dies in an accident, and Humbert reacts with pure ecstasy in the realization that there were no longer any obstacles in kidnapping, molesting and raping a twelve-year-old girl.

Subsequently, after retrieving young Lolita from summer camp under the false pretense that her mother was being hospitalized, he planned to drug her into sexual submission, preparing to rape her unconscious body. In an auspicious stroke of luck for Humbert, Lolita's first sexual experience had occurred as a game

with a fellow camp mate, in which Lolita then plays with Humbert. He embarks on a cross country tour, maneuvering a willing or unwilling victim through purchases of extravagant gifts, depriving her of interactions with other children, and threatening her with the fear that she will become a ward of the state. Humbert bribes her for sexual favors, normalizing their interactions within their corrupted reality. Lolita vanishes from Humbert's grasp after a year of this treatment through another predator, Clarence Quilty. Humbert finally comes to the realization years later that his actions burst Lolita's life into flames and weeps into the ashes of Lolita's childhood and innocence. Toward the end of his life, he reckons with the consequences of his actions and crafts together the manuscript of *Lolita* in the confinement of his psychological treatment as an eternal ode to his love for Lolita. In his vivid anticipation and groundswell of beautifully explosive surges of intense emotion that evokes spine-tingling sensations of sentiment from the reader—from awe to terror, anger and utter disgust—Humbert retells his singular perspective, exploring his own justifications, sentiments and actions. Nabokov masterfully plays with the perceptions of sharp contrast: moral and immoral, abject and normalcy and varying connotations of what the true essence of love demands.

This dangerous and untimely awakening muddled with childish naiveté, which Humbert describes as the key quality of the nymphet, provokes an emotional concoction of horror mixed with intrigue for the reader. Akin to a Hollywood staple of the dangerous plight of the vixen underage girl, the conventional firm beliefs surrounding the sexual safety of juvenile children are dismantled if the child is a precocious, attractive and experienced young girl—allowing regularly principled adults to explore and, at times, sympathize with Humbert. As a perfect perpetrator, Humbert, who fulfills traditional heterosexual romantic ideals of a suitor—tall, handsome, refined—who professes his love for Lolita in grandeur with poems, grand gestures and hopeless desperation, enchants and captivates. A dashing foreign European suitor with sophisticated taste and privileged upbringing, Humbert easily masks his sickening appetite for young girls and conveniently blends into societal norm as a desirable, respectable, and handsome man. These details accumulate to produce a sometimes likable and attractive persona, not quite the dark image of a monster with which pedophiles are commonly associated. Nevertheless, Humbert and Lolita's tale is cultivated with enough smoke and mirrors, ranging from Humbert's traditional physical and intellectual appeal to Lolita's sexual maturing, to provide reasonable doubt in the mind of the reader, even if momentarily, to draw attraction and allure from the hideous details of the

novel and to allow a compassionate understanding of Humbert's vicious wrongdoings and sickness.

Humbert's notorious cognitive unreliability amplifies Nabokov compelling ability to lift the reader's veil between moral and immoral, while also allowing the reader to question their own beliefs within Nabokov's dreamscape. Lolita's own perspective, ideas, thoughts, and input are entirely unknown throughout the course of the novel. The silencing of Lolita's voice allows Humbert to completely dominate the story, with his attractive details, striking wit, and patchy memory overshadowing the entirety Lolita's existence as a sentient human life. Humbert's narration focuses mostly on himself, even when other characters or events are being discussed, and it revolves around Humbert's root feelings and observations. Descriptions and depictions of Lolita habitually neglect revealing details of her perspective, true actions, feelings, and actual personality. The novel presents many variations for the single biggest villain of the story: Quilty, Humbert, or Lolita? The story suggests Lolita is potentially at fault for seducing Humbert, although Humbert abused her, while Quilty took her away with malicious intent. The answer is never clear, as the knowledge provided to the reader has been combed over by Humbert in his romanticized vision of the events, centering around himself. Humbert invents "...elaborate dreams, pure classics in style" to mock the psychoanalysts and readers who attempt to interpret the events factually, disorganizing events and details to further allow compassion for Humbert within the confusion (Nabokov 36). Humbert's manuscript for *Lolita* is also laced with perfectly timed satire—utilizing humor, prose and the taboo to provoke the reader into affinity with the ugliness of Humbert's actions and weakening the severity of his crimes. Humbert's perfectly placed witty commentary of American culture also provokes admiration and a level of comfortable familiarity with Humbert that allows his humanity to, at times, outshine his pedophilia.

Lolita, in many ways, dies at the hands of Humbert: he takes her childhood, innocence, curiosity, dreams, and self-esteem, and causes her eventual death shortly before her eighteenth birthday. The novel enchants the reader under its splendid spell of beautiful prose that crawls under the skin and surges through the bloodstream of the reader into the brain where Lolita and Humbert's actions and consequences rattle the perception and ideals of the reader. As Lolita's perspective is absent, the reader is allowed sparsely placed evidence of the true effect of their love, as Humbert writes:



We had been everywhere. We had really seen nothing. And I catch myself thinking today that our long journey had only defiled with a sinuous trail of slime the lovely, trustful, dreamy, enormous country that by then, in retrospect, was no more to us than a collection of dog-eared maps, ruined tour books, old tires, and her sobs in the night—every night, every night—the moment I feigned sleep. (245)

At once, Lolita's delicate nature as a child is briefly revealed. Throughout the captivating and beautifully recorded journey, the reader is forced to reckon with the true effects on Lolita. Humbert mostly overlooks insights to another casualty, Lolita's psyche. In order to continue his fantasy and to avoid succumbing to the reality of his actions, Humbert glazes over her sobs in the night. This stretch of the human psyche reveals the nature of humanity, of how easily it may be twisted, manipulated, and crafted to suit the hands of the sculptor.

Humbert's justification is wrapped in beautiful prose: "But she had been so pretty in the weaving of those delicate spells, in the dreamy performance of her enchantments and duties!" (230). The mystical veil that cloaks the grotesque is the same veil that justifies social dictation of moral and immoral. It is arguable that Humbert viewed his intentions as moral, as reciprocated and just, through his perception. Humbert is sometimes painfully aware of his own dilapidated mental state, addressing, "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, exhibit number one is what the seraphs, the misinformed, simple, noble-winged seraphs, envied. Look at this tangle of thorns" (1). Through this passage, he speaks about the societal norm, of the morality of the reader, with his sophisticated intellect. Perhaps Humbert's mental state crumbles at the realization of how his actions—consequently affected his dear Lolita, or perhaps the mental illness was an underlining perpetrator of his actions and intent all along. Delving deeper into the psyche of Humbert is difficult, as he is notoriously unreliable as an author, a self-proclaimed madman of passion who glazes over a fact-based analysis, and Lolita is Humbert's story of love. Perhaps Lolita did not exist at all and the entire story of Dolores Haze was a conveniently perfect dream for the madman, Humbert Humbert.

A reader of *Lolita* is superficially disgusted by the theme: pedophilia and a precocious young girl. However, the reader who decides to precede into Nabokov's darkly enchanting, prose-laced world of wonder unknowingly seeks the revealing nature of the abject and the keen contrast of opposing ideals. Nabokov's abject idea masks the true intention of *Lolita*: unpacking the stark norms for love and

beauty—simply that ugliness is another expression of beauty and a reflection of the love entirely. Stripped down to the bone, *Lolita* is the tale of a pedophile who takes possession of a young girl, abuses her, murders the man who steals her from him, and succumbs to his mental illness. The bare content of the novel is a repulsive crime story of an ill man. Nevertheless, Nabokov employs the abominable story as a blank canvas to create his enchanting masterpiece with alluring prose and spellbinding metaphors to captivate the reader. However beautiful Humbert's sentiments and prose may be, the consequences of his actions accumulate in the death of everyone involved.

*Lolita* is a contemplation of beauty and love, love as untraditional as possible; obsession and ugliness, beauty and tragedy—most importantly, *Lolita* provokes the reader to question their own beliefs on love and beauty and what the dueling nature reveals about both. Nabokov's buttery prose entrances the reader, alluringly allowing beauty to arise from a grisly, ugly story. *Lolita* does not serve as an endorsement of pedophilia, murder, or obsession, but rather is an enchanting retrospection and meditation of love and hate, beauty and ugliness, lightness and darkness, chaotic peace and peace without chaos. Beauty is not an absolute, but rather a gradient of an expression of humanity. Contrasting natures reveals the inherent ability of expression. The capacity to feel, analyze, and determine meaning is a vital rich. Love and hatred exist on opposite branches of passion, of humanity. Love is all consuming, bright and beautiful, provoking the largest expressions, whereas hatred is also all consuming, yet dark and ugly, while also providing devastating consequences. These noted expressions, no matter the size or the scope, constitute the human condition.

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# DUNCAN MACEACHERN

Duncan MacEachern is an advertising major and a business and political science minor. He was intrigued by this year's theme of chaos because college is a chaotic time. Writing this essay gave him a new perspective on chaos, namely that it should not be shunned, but rather, embraced.

Mentor: **Ying Xiong**

## THE INEVITABILITY AND SECRET ORDER OF CHAOS

**CHAOS IS THE FOUNDATION OF EVERYTHING.** It is the primary necessity for life other than water. We as individuals learn to despise chaos from our own encounters with it, yet sometimes forget that chaos is beautiful and teaches us a lot about who we are and how things come to be. Chaos is the secret yet essential and inevitable ingredient to creating order. In Ernest Hemmingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, the voyage of a fisherman symbolizes the chaos that everyone eventually encounters in their lives. The book captures how chaos can encourage new beginnings and reveal certain truths that were once overlooked, revealing how it is essential to development. Santiago is an old seasoned fisherman who has a difficult time making a catch and for eighty-four days he catches nothing. One day he decides to set out further than usual into the Gulf Stream because of a drought, dropping his line 100 fathoms deep, eventually hooking a marlin. After Santiago had hooked the fish, even "four hours later the fish was still swimming steadily out to sea, towing the skiff, and the old man was still braced solidly with the line across his back," starting off the chaotic voyage he is about to endure (Hemmingway 45). This book sets up Santiago's life when he is at a low point, and normally when people's lives take unexpected downturns they look for changes to make up for what has been lost. For instance, Santiago decides to set off further than usual, and because of this decision he embarks on a journey that will test his abilities as a fisherman. *The Old Man and the Sea* reflects life's ultimate test of discovering one's true self, showing how challenging and chaotic situations help shape reality while

molding individuals and society into new entities, revealing the interplay between order and chaos.

Santiago's voyage soon turns into a chaotic battle between man and fish, yet both seem to reach a mutual understanding of each other, demonstrating how chaos can be good. Santiago needs to survive and make a living while the fish doesn't want to be caught and killed. It is through this relationship that an inevitable mutual understanding develops: both characters endure pain, fatigue, and the fight for survival, which is a shared chaotic experience. Because of this, Santiago reveals his sympathy towards the fish. Since they go through the same shared experience, or the fight for survival, he "began to pity the great fish [and thought that] he is wonderful and strange... [and maybe] he has been hooked many times before and he knows that this is how he should make his fight," demonstrating how Santiago is accepting his opponent and the challenge at hand (48). Even though the fish is giving him a hard time he accepts it because he knows the fish is having a difficult time too, creating this odd understanding of order within their relationship. Furthermore, the fish keeps swimming and shows how they are making each other stronger. Even though man and fish get weaker and more tired each day, they are fueled by the battle for survival and continue to live on. Through the chaos of wanting to survive, both parties demonstrate how chaos can shine light on some of the most basic principles of life and death. From utter chance and disorder, Santiago has managed to bring himself to the ultimate challenge of reeling in the fish, and the fish has the ultimate challenge of surviving. It is through chaos that truth is revealed.

Chaos can test an individual's character and reveals the core of someone when they must act in the moment. As Santiago fights for his livelihood, the reader witnesses what kind of person he is because of the chaos he is experiencing. In our lives, we typically think of chaos as negative and it is difficult to accept and face it. Santiago tells the fish as he still has it hooked, "I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends" (54). Even though Santiago is tired, hurt, and has cuts from the line being torn across his hands and back, he keeps a positive mindset and acknowledges the fish who is giving him this chaotic voyage. This is important to note because chaos will find its way into our lives one way or another. The best thing to do is accept it like Santiago has, but then try to tame it. Instead of complaining—even though Santiago does a little bit throughout the story—he keeps enduring the chaos that is mutually shared between himself and the fish, revealing how order becomes more prevalent over time.

Sometimes chaos comes in waves and cannot be predicted, showing how it is something inevitable. After three days of constant battle between the fish and Santiago, he finally manages to pull the fish in close enough to kill it with his harpoon, leading the reader to believe his problems are over. But, if that happened it would no longer be a good story. After Santiago has caught the fish and placed it on the side of his skiff, the blood attracted sharks and “he did not like to look at the fish anymore since he had been mutilated. When the fish had been hit it was as though he himself were hit,” indicating how his chaotic journey is not over and how the fish symbolically became a part of Santiago over time (103). Through the fight for survival, their lives have intermixed, which allows Santiago to feel the fish’s pain, and is why Santiago felt as if he had been hit by the sharks, too. This symbolizes how chaos can allow one to step in another’s shoes because chaotic experiences shared between individuals create bonds. Even though he endured the fish, there are other challenges that came his way, demonstrating how chaos will never leave no matter how far someone thinks they’ve come.

Chaos allows for new beginnings and reveals true character, acting as the ultimate test of life. Even though Santiago was not able to save the fish he had caught, his struggles were still recognized, revealing how chaos is something that should not be overlooked. The next morning after Santiago arrives back to shore “many fishermen were around the skiff looking at what was lashed beside it and one was in the water [with] his trousers rolled up, measuring the skeleton with a length of line” (122). This shows how the chaos Santiago endured is recognized by his peers, demonstrating to them what a chaotic voyage he had been on and how determined he was and reveals his true character. There is nothing but bones of the fish left, yet the bones tell a story of their own. Santiago’s journey of what seemed to be endless chaos soon rewarded him with a silent gift of admiration from his peers, only bringing out his true character showing what he is capable of. If he had brought the fish back whole, it would have been a bonus. Santiago brought home something much more valuable than a fish while going through something many people struggle with: a battle with themselves.

Chaos is inevitable no matter where we go; it is how we learn and grow from it that truly matters. Santiago was not aware of what he would catch when he set out that day, nor did he know the fish would be eaten by sharks after he struggled to catch it for three days. Chaos allows us to grow because it is inevitable. Not knowing when it’s going to come is the true beauty of life and what separates the strong from the weak. In the end, people are fishing for their true selves, and

sometimes we need chaotic experiences in our lives to stir the pot and truly test ourselves allowing us to learn and grow, inevitably creating order in the process.

Moving from *The Old Man and the Sea* to the text “Chaos Imagined: Literature, Art, and Science” by Martin Meisel, Meisel dissects chaos into a more understandable form to help aid our understanding of the relationship between Santiago and the fish. Chaos has an uncertainty factor associated with it, allowing for the complex order of things to take place without the ability to predict them. Like mentioned earlier, this is what separates the strong from the weak, and the strong are able to accommodate unpredicted events. In “Chaos Imagined,” Meisel writes that “[nonlinear complexity] does what science has always done: it brings regions heretofore dismissed as noise and confusion and abandoned to the cloud of unknowing out of chaos and into cosmos” (22), nonlinear complexity being “small variations in initial conditions [having] exponential effects on outcomes” (21). For instance, if Santiago were to catch fish where he usually fished, he may have never set out on his journey and would have never caught the fish that leads to this life-changing event that tested his survival abilities. In other words, these smaller order of events take place in our lives which eventually conspire to create something huge. Whatever that is, it is a test of character to see how we will respond. Sometimes the only way for noise or confusion to surface and make sense is through this portal of chaos and into the cloud of unknowing.

Like in Santiago’s life, chaos is inevitable no matter what the situation is. The universe is something that is everlasting, or as Meisel puts it when he quotes Alan Guth, a professor of physics at MIT, “the universe as a whole will regenerate eternally... while life in our pocket universe will presumably die out” (30). Santiago’s life is a mere reflection of how the universe operates, and the relationship he builds with the fish throughout the story is a symbol of how chaos originates, revealing its inevitable properties. Santiago would have remained an average fisherman if he did not go further out into sea seeking a bigger catch, and, in Santiago’s case, the inevitability of chaos reveals his true character of how determined he was, which otherwise would not have shown through unless he endured his original 84-day dry spout. The fish being slayed by Santiago symbolizes how life eventually dies out, and in Santiago’s case he was regenerated in the sense that his true character surfaced and he could see what he was capable of. Hemmingway’s novel does not touch on Santiago’s self-reflection, but it builds this understanding of Santiago finding his inner self through the fish, which is a form of regeneration. That chaotic journey was waiting to be sparked in Santiago’s life to reveal his true self, and the

fish was a mere symbol of Santiago's own self through their chaotic yet necessary relationship over the fight for survival. Where there seems to be disorder, like Santiago's struggle to successfully fish, there is a secret hidden order waiting to be discovered.

Chaos' inevitability and unpredictability creates room for the most order possible. In the "Chaos and Order," by Katherine Hayles, she explains how "at the center of chaos theory is the discovery that hidden within the unpredictability of chaotic systems are deep structures of order," touching on the fact that order, or the regeneration of things and new beginnings stem from chaos (1). Santiago's 84-day dry spout was chaotic on its own. He is a fisherman and catching fish is his livelihood; from the chaos of stressing about making a living, that led him to go out further eventually brining him to his life-changing experience. This relates to what Hayles writes, because Santiago's journey throughout *The Old Man and the Sea* stems from unpredictability, which ultimately leads to some sort of order in the end when the townspeople saw Santiago's dismantled catch. Furthermore, Hayles goes on to explain how "in chaos theory chaos may either lead to order, as it does with self-organizing systems, or in yin/yang fashion it may have deep structures of order encoded within it," further touching on how chaos can lead to complete order, either as a significant event in time which usually happens in a quick fashion, or longer periods of time that have a more complex system engraved deeply into the order and sequence of events (3). For Santiago, the chaos he endured was deeply intermixed rather than one big chaotic event because over time he experienced multiple forms of chaos which made him come to a self-realization through the fish, and he learns sympathy for something else going through the same shared chaotic experience as he was. Santiago didn't just decide to go out farther for any reason; he had to make up for lost time, which reflects the deep structures of order encoded within the chaos.

Moving forward, there are other examples of how chaos can create order within our own society. Just like how Santiago's journey was waiting to happen in some form, there have been instances throughout history that demonstrate how chaos can create order. A prime example of chaos in society is the punk revolution throughout the 1970's and 90's, which went against the capitalistic hunger and greed in America. In her book *Punks: A Guide to an American Subculture*, Sharon M. Hannon touches on how the punk revolution opened the flood gates, allowing many different viewpoints to surface in American media that weren't otherwise heard. She writes, "the media's limited interest in punk has generally focused on

the subculture's unconventional fashions or the violence and drug use that has plagued the scene at times,," explaining how the punk scene was mainly observed as violent, drug oriented, and chaotic (71). Hannon even mentions that "when the Sex Pistols muttered obscenities during a British television interview in December 1976, it caused a massive outcry... Great Britain's *Daily Mirror's* headline screamed, 'The Filth and the Fury!'" giving an example of how a different culture operated or expressed themselves, inevitability bringing chaos into the mix of British culture and media (72). Hannon also explains how some punks would wear Nazi Swastikas and German World War II medals and uniforms, therefore "[receiving] far more attention than the more common hand-lettered T-shirts and spray painted jackets..." (72). What mainstream media did not understand was that most of the individuals who indulged in the punk scene and culture were not truly advocating for what they wore, but they wore it because they received a mass amount of attention. This chaos within British and American media, stemming from punk culture, allowed for punks to "talk about music and cultural and social issues," because their music and message spoke differently in comparison to what they chose to wear (71). The clothes were a spark to create chaos, leading to a cultural revolution that went against the monstrosities committed by government, bringing a sense of awareness and order. Even though at the time "order" didn't seem prevalent, it was present in the sense that it created a universal awareness that these beliefs and expressions existed and should be recognized, regardless of how they choose to express themselves.

As seen from the punk revolution, chaos is inevitable and will always occur, challenging everyone and everything to reach its greatest potential. Chaos is the bones of civilization and is essential for the existence of order; one cannot function without the other. The relationship between Santiago and the fish is a metaphor. It outlines how chaos is something that should not be overlooked because the chaotic relationship shared between them allows for a larger form of order to be created. Humans are as natural as anything else in the universe, and we carry the same properties within ourselves that connects us to the greater spectrum of things. Chaos has the ability to leak into our lives, creating beautiful results over long periods of time, eventually changing the very structures that seem common or normal. Without chaos, there is no such thing as order; without order, there is no such thing as chaos.



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# MALYSSA ROBLES

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## CONTROL IN THE FACE OF CHAOS

**EXERCISING CONTROL IS A HIGHLY COMMON BEHAVIOR** in daily life. This is something that we as humans have become accustomed to over time. Having control is seen as a natural and expected part of life. And yet this idea of control or order does not exist in nature. The realization of this fact is a part of life and a stage of maturation. An example of this maturation may be found in the novel *Smiles to Go* by Jerry Spinelli. The protagonist, high school teenager Will Tupence, struggles with his sense of control when he discovers that protons are dying. Because protons are fundamental to the construction of atoms, the revelation of their failure is indicative of the impermanence of all matter; this informs Will that nothing lasts forever and causes his perception of logic to crumble. Because we are struck with the reality that control and the organization of one's life is unnatural no matter how natural it feels to have it, we must reevaluate the way we view control and why it feels so entirely innate. Control is socially imposed as a form of natural agency. We learn from our environment and from influential role models that having control or maintaining order within life is necessary to be successful, or even to survive. But a sense of control is not an inherited attribute; one not only has to grow into it but also learn to live without it in order to face the chaos that is natural and eventually find one's way through it.

In the novel, we follow Will Tupence through his discovery of impermanence of matter and the existence of natural chaos and the effect that this realization has on his sense of self. At the same time, we experience his daily life: high school, family interactions, and the dynamics of his individual friendships. His obsession with the protons bleeds into his ability to interact with other members of society as well as fill the role expected of him. This conflict eventually overtakes

him after his younger sister is placed in the hospital due to an accident that leaves her severely injured. The combined stress and confusion leads to a psychological breakdown that ultimately gives him his needed clarity. To start, Will confronts the realization that, not only is he a small cog within a larger society, but that he has very little personal agency over the outcomes of reality. This is a realization that all teenagers must go through in order to fully grasp the purpose of society. Having always been a behavioral role model to his peers and filling the expectations of his community, Will is in unfamiliar territory when he deviates from social order. While facing chaos, there is little room for error when establishing order; it is either formed or not formed. Just as a proton has to work together with the other components of an atom, an individual must work alongside the other members of society to function properly.

Alongside the realization of proton decay, Will faces several events that challenge the stability that he understands to be reality. Will is forced to come to terms with the chaos of natural order and therefore he begins to parallel the degradation of the protons that he visualizes surrounding him. This initiates his discovery of the impermanence of self and of matter. Throughout the novel Will keeps track of every day that passes, obsessively counting them each as “PD” and then the respective number that coincides with the days since the discovery. On PD77 Will explains his concerns about the discovery out-loud for the first time: “I know I’m not going to live forever... even though I’m dead, it’s still me in there, in the coffin... but now we find out that stuff doesn’t last. Not even protons. It won’t be forever and ever after all” (Spinelli 83–84). Without being aware of it, Will admits that the one thing that truly scares him is that the childhood concept of “forever” no longer exists. For Will, this appears to be earth-shattering, his panic illustrates his strong desire to hold on to what used to be stability as opposed to finding a new sense of stability in the changed world. Will’s sense of control is quickly slipping and although talking about it makes him feel better, it also validates his own irrationality: “why should I care what happens to my protons a gazillion years from now?” (85). Will clearly understands that after death, it will likely not be bothersome whether his protons last. In the meantime, during life, he cannot help but obsess over it because, in some way, his own existence is the only thing he has control over.

Will’s overt concern about the decay of matter breaks social norms with his obsession over the true reality of nature. Whereas a mature adult might understand that the natural order of the world has chaos and therefore quickly dismiss the decay of matter as “natural,” this discovery shakes Will’s understanding of the natural

world and of reality. He must understand that order is unnatural to the reality that he lives in. It is created by the existence of society and cannot be expected to run what we refer to as nature. For his closest friends, who are both aware of the scientific development and similarly excited by it, the novelty quickly fades and they continue with hardly any change to their everyday perception of reality. This adds pressure onto Will as he witnesses his peers move on from what he simply can't. Will appears to be a very practical, ambitious, and intelligent fifteen-year-old, but his stress over this event acts as a form of deviance from the natural social order of his community. Will is aware that this particular deviance must be hidden to keep from disrupting society. Furthermore, it is the breaking of norms that makes it difficult to for Will to properly function as a member of society and he is eventually forced to change his personal understanding of control.

In an article by D. Siegel, "The Need for a Sense of Control," he mentions a study in 1954 when Julian Rotter created the concept of Locus of Control, which is a spectrum that refers to where individuals tend to credit control: on one side there is internal locus in which an individual believes that they alone control what happens to them by choices and actions, whereas an individual with external locus believes that control is in others' hands or is up to luck and fate. Will appears to have had a strong internal locus and the trauma that proton decay brings to his life causes his internal locus to unravel. This shift in his sense of control is a common process that young adults go through and eventually, through much growth, it becomes possible to find a balance in the middle of this spectrum. Will feels singled out by his reaction and begins to wonder if he is in any way normal. However, what he once understood as normal was the very unnaturalness of "order." Although it was presented to him as the first and only reality that existed for the majority of his childhood, it is, in fact, a cover for natural reality. This realization inspires his concern and forces him to go through this process of understanding the existence of chaos, why society has created order in the face of it, and where he fits in the scheme of things. This is all quite a lot to have to puzzle out at once, especially for someone so young and new to the concept of chaos. After realizing the deception that was presented to him for so long—the unnaturalness of order and the naturalness of chaos—Will must work through importance of the existence of conformity. Conforming to social order is something he has always been taught to do, to behave as the adults do, to abide by behavioral expectations. Because it is a socially constructed concept—and not natural as he once thought—understanding why conformity exists is essential to his return to normality.

The older that Will Tuppence grows, the further enlisted he becomes to expectations of the community; aging, therefore, is an inescapable pressure to conform to the expectations that surround him. Being an exemplary young adult, someone that his peers look up to and the adults in his life find responsible, he finds himself socially deviant by obsessing over the decay of protons. Out of fear of being punished by the larger society within the community, he struggles to control the urge to obsess, finding himself recurrently unsuccessful. By attempting to maintain order in his life he ignores the existence of chaos in the world and avoids learning the lesson that has presented itself to him. Because of that he struggles to conform, as one would expect him to during this process of growing up. One of the most important things that Will must accept and understand is the reason that his society chose to implement order into their lifestyle in the first place. In Lara Helena Kuhn's "Social Control and Human Nature: What Is It We Are Controlling?" the author examines different social theories that explain criminal deviance within societies. In 1671 one of the first social theorists Thomas Hobbes described social control as a necessity to maintain one's own protection from other men who each, ideally, put their own interests first and desire domination over all others, "men who live without law, without government, live in a state of nature, of which he paints a notoriously bleak picture... *why do men obey the law?* Men obey the law out of fear of punishment by their sovereign and/or fear of ending up back in the state of nature" (Kuhn 7). With this reasoning, Hobbes insists that there must be an elected authority to create the laws and further enforce them in order to maintain a stable society. If we take Hobbes' theory and apply it to Will's circumstances we can begin to piece together how his deviance inherently takes a toll on his sense of control. If we view Will's community with Hobbes' theory in mind, then we can assume that there is an elected official(s) (e.g. high status community member, parent, teacher, etc.) that has both created and enforced the behaviors that are expected from members of the community. Children learn quickly how to act when they are being observed and it is to be assumed that by adulthood, those same methods translate so far into habit that one does not need to be observed to simply obey the rules. Will has always been generally regarded as a role model for behavioral expectations, his classmates would describe him as sensible and mature; "to me common sense is just that: common. But some kids seem to think it's this rare gift. They seem to see me as a substitute adult" (Spinelli 32). Through this process of growing up, Will must find a way to reassert himself into society within this new chaotic reality of the world.

The only way that this particular social theory functions is for there to be a deeply implemented desire to conform so as to preserve the well-being of oneself. This way of thinking is again not natural and is learned over time. Conformity has to be taught to children in order to be enacted and further developed as a manifestation of self-preservation. It is easy to contrast fifteen-year-old Will Tuppence with his five-year-old sister Tabitha (Tabby) Tuppence and examine the differences that both project to the world as acting members of society. Where Will tends to prefer abiding by behavioral rules, Tabby seems not to understand what rules are meant for. This bothers Will throughout most of the novel, as he has followed social law for so long he cannot understand why Tabby refuses to. The Tuppence family becomes a prime example of the stages of social assimilation: the parents are the fully assimilated and mature members of society, Will is in the transitional stage and Tabby is at the early stages of behavior conditioning. The reader contrasts Tabby with Will: “she climbed up onto the counter, both feet, stood there daring me to do something about it... jumped from the counter onto the floor. Dishes rattled... ‘She just did nineteen things she’s not supposed to do’” (10). Within the first chapter we find that Tabby lacks the desire to conform. Whether this describes Tabby’s lack of self-preservation in the face of chaos or her inability to see the necessity of being independent remains a mystery without gathering a larger context of Tabby’s motivations.

With all children, instinct takes over when they discover that the world has rules. Some are fairly simple: avoid actions and tasks that may cause you bodily harm, be sure to eat and drink regularly, keep under shelter during times of stress, etc., while others tend to be more complex. Among these complex rules are societal rules, which tend to coincide with behavioral rules. These rules are suppressive of natural curiosity and exploration. This produces a problem. These characteristics form one’s personality and so the suppression of this area of identity for the sake of conformity is troublesome to the development of an individual. This type of suppression may be referred to as suppression of the id, one of the structural models in the famous Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theory of personality. In “Freud’s Social Theory,” Alfred Tauber examines an interpretation of Freud’s theory of self: “the Freudian ego, read in a Kantian formulation, achieves autonomy by suppressing heteronomous desire through dissociation and repression of the id. That strategy, Adorno, Marcuse and many others condemned as violent and restrictive of human potential” (52). Social rules or behavioral expectations encourage repression among many instincts and/or desires within a person; one must repress in-

clinations, lest they turn into action, and adhere to that which is demanded by a sovereign law: society. Tabby, as a child of society, has yet to have such a concept formed about the world she lives in, and so she fails to adhere to this demand. Her parents and her brother are neatly placed in her life so as to educate her as she ages. Discovering this, one might perhaps determine that Tabby lacks the ability to see the importance of sovereign law; given that she must be taught such rules, it can be concluded that this mindset is entirely socially imposed by peers and alternate forms of authority. And so, when we reevaluate Will, we can understand the pressure that has been placed to repress these instincts and conform to behavioral expectations after fifteen years of life. This would explain Will's increasing sense of desperation when his idea of reality is shattered.

Will's deviance from behavioral norms is handled with extreme secrecy, and the thought of exposing such a violation of sovereign law is overwhelmingly asphyxiating, but this consequence is, in fact, self-inflicted, as the need for control is largely ignored in society. The repression of the id is therefore deemed as "normal" behavior among the community; however this repression in no way follows the natural inclinations of human beings. Will finds himself fighting with his natural tendencies in order to conform to what has been instructed as necessary sovereign law: "If the integration of the ego and id is disrupted, the ego is weakened. Indeed, repression becomes indicative of imbalance and dysfunction. . . . Psychoanalysis then is directed at healing the splits, knitting the psyche back together, which also becomes the communal goal, the ultimate 'work of culture'" (53). Society can be viewed as responsible for creating the weakened ego and, as a result, the consequences of Will's deviance derive from the teachings that, before this point, had served him well in his life. Therefore, Will's lack of a sense of control is entirely justified despite his every effort to hide it and maintain unnatural "stability." The fight to overcome this inner turmoil tends to manifest itself as bubbling hysteria, and the longer that the two sides remain unbalanced—or rather, as long as the id cannot be suppressed—the higher this hysteria rises and the higher the risk of a psychological breakdown. Will must face that he is striving for control in the face of chaos and not control in the face of stability. If we assume that Will's community follows Hobbes' theory of social control, then we might understand that lack of id suppression blatantly disobeys sovereign law and therefore induces stress within any given person because they are putting the community at risk of reverting back into their "state of nature." Therefore, deviance turns into psychological trauma. It is out of fear that one follows the laws of society because the law is meant to protect

them from chaos, which people see as insurmountable on one's own, and so lack of suppression causes stress. The only reason that can rationalize this self-induced stress is Will's knowledge that his deviance will cause him much more trouble than his conformity, and that his very existence within the community depends on that conformity.

Because conformity grants Will the ability to protect his existence, conformity fulfills his natural tendencies: self-preservation and survival. Once Will becomes deviant, he puts his survival at risk and forces himself to compensate by experiencing absolute terror. Because this terror begins to overrun his life, his sense of self begins to wither. Instead of learning to accept a changing reality as any fully assimilated member would, he is stuck in denial and this pushes him to the edge. As much control as he has over his own existence—the single proton—he has absolutely none over what constitutes reason, “reason, in the form of free will, ironically ‘determines’ (and minimizes) choice and ‘free life’” (52). Will ultimately loses his sense of control because he cannot conform to someone else's definition of reason. This lack of control makes him question his existence, which further makes him question his purpose within society. This identity crisis unravels him entirely:

I had to get out. Move. I ran through neighborhoods, other lives, other worlds. Solipsism... It seemed so weak, so out of place, as if it stumbled into broad daylight by mistake. Unseen protons dying by the billions. My footfalls came down like periods to my mother's words: she wants to be just like you. (Spinelli 224–225)

Will believes that that he is falling victim to solipsism, or the belief that only the self exists, a sort of egotistical self-absorption that he isn't used to experiencing. Because of this, he immediately assumes that such absorption is wrong and additionally deviant which puts him at further risk of falling into chaos. In the book “Personality and Social Systems,” the authors describe what they refer to as the “public personality” as the “differences in conventional conduct and in the expectations with which people in a society regard one another” (Smelser, Smelser 110–111). Through solipsism Will is losing his public personality by being completely withdrawn and focusing on only his intrinsic personality. Losing this important layer leaves him stripped of vital protection from the outside world which is considered harsh in its demand for id repression, and so, the panic that ensues is close to the idea of torture. This result is a punishment that the community has implemented over time through social order to maintain conformity and social law. Although



it can be understood that society builds this way of being through the idea of the necessity of sovereign law, the more interesting idea to consider is whether or not this form of society is essential to the human ability to co-inhabit the same lands and territories. In other words, is having a sense of control in the face of natural chaos necessary?

Wherever we go, we chance upon civilizations that have formed themselves with some sort of order and social law, and although those laws may differ from place to place, one thing is certain: each place has them and each enforces those laws through various acts. Those acts can be considered as forming a government to both create and oversee the use of laws, developing enforcement for the written laws of the community, distributing parenting guides or expectations for technique, or creating a form of punishment for those who break the laws. There are many other forms that could be considered enforcement of social law, but in the end the objective is the same; maintaining order. This would suggest that humans have determined order to be an essential part of co-habitation, but maintaining order is much easier said than done. Though behavioral conditioning is extremely effective, it is more difficult to condition individual ways of thinking, “the tradition and institutions of every society present each of its members with peculiar emotional problems which he must resolve for himself” (112). Each individual is on their own in understanding why social law exists, and whether it is important to follow and why. This understanding comes only after years of living with social law and the struggle or questions that each individual asks will differ. How, then, can it be assumed that every member of society will eventually willingly conform to social order? Although the most obvious answer is that they are aware of the reciprocating punishment, another may be that when growing up in a constant state of order, the threat of change or lack of order sends the individual through a state of panic, similar to that of Will Tuppence. Smelser and Smelser would agree that “conditions of ambiguity, unpredictability, and individuality place a considerable demand on personal resources for maintaining standards of performance and achievement” (379).

As convincing as this might be, there may be another answer. In *Smiles to Go*, Spinelli concludes Will's journey by giving him a gift of enlightenment. Will, after suffering a psychological breakdown brought forth by his self-induced stress, discovers a new sense of agency. He realizes that when faced with chaos he is also faced with a choice: he can either relinquish his control or keep it; it is not determined by nature rather by the unnatural structure of social order. Therefore,

in the inevitability that our sense of order be threatened, individuals may search for habits or events that reestablish order and control in their lives. There is a way to manage our sense of control without having to constantly find ourselves at the reins. There is a choice then to our ability to be in control and be out of control and in that way, our sense of control is satisfied in both results. Will's new sense of agency then allows him to assimilate himself into the new reality that disrupted his previous logic. Will then stabilizes and no longer feels stress or distress in the face of what was once inconceivable.

The transition from childhood to adulthood carries with it this burden of chaos and it is impossible to live within society or even outside of society without first coming to terms with our need for a sense of control. We must first understand that "order," no matter commonplace, is unnatural to the composition of nature. Despite the way we are raised and the way we are expected to conform, the concepts of organization, order, or stability are all socially constructed and socially imposed. Second, we must understand the necessity of order to society and co-habitation. To avoid reverting to a state of nature that may bring us harm or dysfunction, we must be willing to come together and abide by behavioral rules. These rules are set to keep us safe and to promote positive conduct and successful survival. Third, we must come to terms with our place within society and our responsibilities to sustain it. The role that we uphold as acting members of society will change over time, but is important to be aware of these changes and to properly adhere to the tasks that we are expected to perform in these roles. And lastly, we must acknowledge that control is a choice and that we have agency within our sense of it. For Will Tupence, this journey was long-endured and cost him much in terms of growth. Although he suffered psychological trauma and a redefinition of his identity, he discovered that there is such a thing as control in the face of chaos and that it can be obtained.

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# STEPHANIE SEYMOUR

Stephanie Seymour is a public relations major from Menlo Park, California. She decided to take the theme of chaos at its most literal meaning, which led to comparing media accounts of Pearl Harbor and 9/11. Stephanie wants to thank her mentor, her family, and Diet Coke for getting her through this project.

Mentor: **Tera Reid-Olds**

## THE WEIGHT OF WORDS, THE SHOCK OF PHOTOS

THE EVENTS OF DECEMBER 7, 1941 AND SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 are indelibly linked in America's history. With each tragedy came chaos: chaos of relatives trying to find their loved ones, chaos in the stock markets, and chaos in the daily lives of ordinary citizens. The photos and articles on the front pages of the December 8, 1941 and September 12, 2001 *New York Times* portrayed chaos, but also helped the country come to terms with what had happened the day before. As the saying goes, "A picture is worth a thousand words." Words, while powerful, are often unable to fully encapsulate large-scale events because of the sheer magnitude of what occurred. Photographs bridge the gap between words and the public. The front pages of newspapers draw readers in, convincing them to buy a specific newspaper over another. On the other side of the spectrum, both President Roosevelt and President Bush utilize rhetoric in their appeals to the country in the aftermath of tragedy to remind the American people of their strength as a united nation. The media and the government create a narrative for the public to follow, though the two factions often have very different perspectives. Personal experiences are often lost in the greater media coverage, adding to the difficulty of creating one cohesive narrative about the event and the lasting effects on the country.

Susan Sontag, in her book, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, writes about the indelible memories that photographs evoke and sear into the collective memories of viewers. Focusing on the oftentimes gruesome spectacle that is war photography, Sontag explores why we cannot look away from that gore. She writes, "Ever since cameras were invented in 1839, photography has kept company with death"

(21). Through exploring this unique relationship between cameras and tragedies, Sontag reveals how photos are more memorable than words in people's collective memories. Words can provide the basic information, but photos create visceral reactions that often shock audiences due to their content. The Gestalt theory, created by German and Austrian psychologists, proposes that artists must be free from subjective aesthetic bias, which is the basis of photojournalism. Sontag also writes, "Poster ready photographs...are the visual equivalent of sound bites" (67). Sound bites are replayed in the media almost on a continuous loop, which embeds them into the collective memories of people. Photos can be reproduced in nearly all forms of media, ensuring that they stay in the collective memories of the public for far longer than sound bites. The advertising slogan of the magazine *Paris Match* encapsulates this idea in the phrase, "The weight of words, the shock of photos."

The *New York Times*' core purpose is "to enhance society by creating, collecting and distributing high-quality news and information." However, journalism often tells one side of the story, the dominant narrative, and leaves that which does not fit out of the news. Zygmunt Bauman, in his novel *Modernity and Ambivalence*, explains this process as the idea of "otherness." He wrote, "Abnormality is the other of the norm... 'them' the other of 'us'" (8). Journalism also revolves around the idea of "us" against the "other", which creates a false sense of unity and creates a perceived wall between the two sides that is impermeable. This idea of the "other" can take many forms, whether it is difference of religion, race, nationality, and many other identities. In these specific traumatic events, the "other" is defined as that which is perceived to attack the United States and the American culture, and so the "other" is treated as the villain in the larger narrative. In the case of Pearl Harbor, the "other" was immediately clear: Japanese forces attacked the naval base. In the case of September 11, the "other" was defined by a religion, Islam.

This phenomenon of "us" against "other" is expanded on in Social Identity Theory (SIT). SIT is a theory created by Henri Tajfel and postulates that groups that people belong to are extremely important sources of pride and self-esteem. In order to increase our own self-image, we enhance the status of the group we belong to while portraying other groups as lesser in some aspect. SIT has the ability to create chaos, and nowhere is that more starkly shown than in tragedies like Pearl Harbor and September 11. As the media scrambled to cover these events, often from thousands of miles away, the government also scrambled to reassure a nervous and uneasy country that everything was going to be all right as long as they stuck together and remembered that they were a united people against the Japanese and

Muslim extremists. This sense of unity was something that both President Bush and President Roosevelt appealed to in their addresses to the nation, furthering the sense of American patriotism that had arisen as a result of the attacks.

Though Hawaii was not yet a state of the union, but a territory, Pearl Harbor was a vital asset to the U.S. Army due to its position in the Pacific Ocean. The United States Pacific Fleet, still in operation today, was housed at Pearl Harbor and provided naval support to troops stationed in the Pacific Ocean. On December 7, 1941, Japanese forces attacked the base over a period of two hours and killed nearly 2,000 people; half of the casualties came from one ship, the USS Arizona. The *New York Times* front-page headline from December 8 reads “JAPAN WARS ON US AND BRITAIN; MAKES SUDDEN ATTACK ON HAWAII; HEAVY FIGHTING AT SEA REPORTED.” In three sentences, the reader is able to ascertain what happened and where. The whole story of what happened at Pearl Harbor is more fully explained in the accompanying front-page articles and smaller headlines both above and below the fold, showing that Pearl Harbor was not an isolated incident. These stories tell how ordinary people were able to survive one of the most chaotic events in our nation’s history, and reveal that people’s reactions to tragedies ultimately define how the tragedy will be remembered in history.

Nancy Harlocker’s memories are one of millions of recollections about Pearl Harbor and what she witnessed changed her life. Nancy Harlocker was 10 years old when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. In an article written in the *Spokesman-Review*, she shared her eyewitness account. Unlike the majority of residents on Oahu, Harlocker’s family was not connected to Pearl Harbor; her father was a civilian who had his own dental practice. On December 7, Harlocker woke up to the sounds of Japanese airplanes flying overhead and her father yelling for her and her brother to take cover. Her father was an avid hunter, and shot at the planes flying overhead with his rifle until it became too dangerous for civilians to be outside. She recounts, “Life changed. Childhood changed. We sort of flowed into a new life.” Her family took in a military family, who had no idea if the father was alive or dead, while her own father was summoned into medical service for the three days following the attack. She experienced Pearl Harbor on an extremely personal level, while the media held the tragedy at arm’s length due to the lack of personal experience. Harlocker vividly remembers the frightening weeks and months after Pearl Harbor, but she also remembers how her community came together to support the war effort.

This sense of community echoed throughout the country, and President Roosevelt spoke about the need for it in his Fireside Chats. President Roosevelt spoke to the American people on December 9, 1941, the day after he declared war on Japan, through his popular Fireside Chats. He focused on how America was deceived by the Japanese into believing that peace was still an option, while also informing the public that the war would require a lot of sacrifice but that they would get through it together. His speech appealed to the eternal optimism of the American people, saying, "I am sure that the people in every part of the nation are prepared in their individual living to win this war...they will cheerfully help to pay a large part of its [the war] financial cost...they will cheerfully give up those material things that they are asked to give up." Although the war was only a few hours old for the American population, communities rallied around this sentiment and many worked to win the war effort. Children became full players in the war arena by collecting scrap metal to melt down for bullets. According to the Department of Labor, 50% of women went to work in industrial factories while men were drafted and sent to fight against the Axis powers. Roosevelt also spoke directly to the media, proclaiming that, "To all newspapers and radio stations... you have a most grave responsibility to the nation and for the duration of the war." To Roosevelt, the media was responsible for telling the truth, but that truth was subjective to the information provided by the government, which was not always the whole truth.

The World Trade Center, located two blocks away from New York City's City Hall, represented America's wealth and economic power to the world. Bijal P. Trivedi, a writer for *National Geographic*, wrote, "The World Trade Center represented the elite and the powerful...it was the financial hub of the country, and even, some would argue, the world." For the American people, the twin towers were a symbol of American power and pride, but that sense was shattered by the events of September 11, 2001. When terrorists flew planes into the Twin Towers, comparisons were immediately made to Pearl Harbor due to the sheer scale of the attack and the intense effect it had on the American psyche. Until this attack, Pearl Harbor had been the largest attack on domestic soil by a foreign enemy with 2,000 deaths; the attack on the Twin Towers killed nearly 3,000 civilians. The *Times* wrote a two-word headline, "US ATTACKED." This simple and short headline stands in stark contrast to the headline from 1941 and relies on the nearly full-sized photograph of the Twin Towers collapsing after impact for description. The photograph, taken by Steve Ludlum, captures the precise moment the Twin Towers collapsed after being hit by airplanes.

William Wade was a businessman who was on a business trip to New York City when the Twin Towers were attacked. He wrote his experiences in a journal format that gives an eyewitness account from a tourist's perspective on the response of New Yorkers and how the tragedy unfolded. Wade learns of the tragedy after he conducts a business interview and sees the office empty except for a few people huddled around the television watching the coverage. He writes, "I look but cannot see, listen but cannot comprehend." Though the television is showing the destruction of the Twin Towers, Wade cannot understand what he is seeing due to his brain experiencing sensory overload. Sensory overload occurs when the body experiences over-stimulation as a result of something in the environment, and for Wade, his brain is unable to comprehend what is happening on the news. He decides to walk back to his hotel to clear his head, but on his way back encounters a neatly dressed man covered in fine dust. Again, Wade looks but does not see. Later that afternoon, he and a woman from Houston decide to trek to a bank to donate blood; when they arrive, the line is out the door and they are turned away. Complete strangers in the largest city in America have been compelled by their patriotism and innate sense of "I need to do something to help."

President Bush spoke to that emotion in his presidential address later that night, and his television address was broadcast on CNN. He expressed the emotions that most Americans were feeling: disbelief, sadness, and anger, but also encouraged unity and proclaimed that America is strong and the terrorists had failed in their quest to break the nation apart. Though the terrorists had caused chaos in the country by attacking prominent buildings in New York City and the Pentagon and disrupting flights across the country and the globe, President Bush assured the American people, "These acts of murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed. Our country is strong." Evoking memories of Roosevelt's radio address after the events of Pearl Harbor, Bush told about the need for unity among all Americans and extolled the idea of the American Dream as a part of his national call to action, as well as emphasized the opportunities for freedom and success, something that many countries do not have.

According to Aristotle, there are three types of appeals used to persuade: pathos, ethos, and logos. Roosevelt and Bush utilize all three rhetorical appeals in their addresses to the nation. Bush and Roosevelt use pathos to evoke emotions in their audiences during trying times. Through referring to the audience as "My fellow Americans" and "my friends," both presidents created a sense of familiarity that was immediately recognizable to all listeners, no matter where they were



in the country or in the world. Pathos uses language to emotionally connect with viewers, whether that is sharing in the emotions felt by the public, or by instilling in them a new emotion that they should be feeling. President Roosevelt takes the first route, encouraging Americans to continue being united in the face of chaos and uncertainty of joining a global war that was mainly fought thousands of miles overseas. Roosevelt said, “We are now in the midst of a war...for a world in which this nation, and all that this nation represents, will be safe for our children.” He implores Americans to be strong and that everyone, no matter who, has an important role to play in the civil defense effort against the enemy. Roosevelt reassured listeners that he would be right there with them and would always support the military. Alternatively, Bush implores Americans to turn their anger and disgust at the terrorist attacks into activism and aid for those affected. He said, “Today our nation saw evil...and we responded with the best of America.” He spoke about America’s values and how the nation had been through this attack before, further solidifying the emotional link between president and country.

The media forgoes any sort of emotional rhetoric, and appeals straight to ethos in order to persuade the audience that the source is valid and trustworthy. The *New York Times* in particular is seen as a trustworthy news source because of how long it has been in business and based on precedent of past news reporting. This credibility, or extrinsic ethos, is used to justify why one source is perceived as more credible than another, even if they have the same information. In the world of the media, the only thing a source has is their credibility and reputation; nothing else matters. Ethos appeals to the audience’s logical perception: do I trust this source, or do I not?

President Roosevelt and President Bush appeal to Americans’ logical side through logos, or the use of logical arguments to persuade an audience that the path proposed is correct. Roosevelt lays out the path for success in the war with three specific points, which the listeners are eager to follow. He also explains how the United States and Japan got to the point of war, which further validates the arguments that he makes. President Bush also outlines a plan for the American people to come together and he uses logic to make a blueprint for the future. Both presidents showed a strong command of logos at a time when the American public needed it most, at a time of great uncertainty and fear about the immediate future. When the American people were in shock and unsure of how to go about their lives, the presidents reassured them that it would be okay.

The combination of all three rhetorical devices becomes something else entirely when used by the president: presidential rhetoric. Presidential rhetoric occupies a unique place in literary theory simply because of its' relative rarity: presidents are the only people in the world who use it, and it defines as how they deliver speeches or addresses to an audience. Presidential speeches have different goals than conventional speeches; presidents are trying to convince their audience that their path of action is the correct one.

The events of Pearl Harbor and September 11 changed the country forever. Each event brought war uncomfortably close to home and left lasting damage on the country's collective psyche. *The New York Times* covered each event with photos and text explaining what had happened, but there were also personal remembrances from witnesses to the historic events. Nancy Harlocker relived her experience as a 10-year-old near Pearl Harbor, while William Wade documented his business trip to New York City in a diary and captured the feelings of American citizens around the country. President Roosevelt and President Bush both calmed the country with their words of reassurance and support, as well as rhetorical appeals to the essence of patriotism and the spirit of the American people. Media and chaos often go hand in hand, and journalism has the responsibility to cover events fairly and accurately with the information they have available. Chaos can either rip a country apart or bring it together, and in the cases of Pearl Harbor and 9/11, the country came together and worked to repair the lasting effects of the attacks.

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# LINDSAY SKINNER

Lindsay Skinner is currently studying English, comparative literature, and Spanish. She was a daydreamer as a child which helped to inspire her love for stories. Her favorite stories always included a complicated villain, and this interest led her to her Nomad project.

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## CHAOTIC DUALITY: UNCONQUERABLE NATURES IN MÉRIMÉE'S *LOKIS* AND THE *CASE OF ANNA O*

A CHAOTIC STRUGGLE BETWEEN CONCEPTS OF CIVILITY and animalistic desires stirs in the mind of Count Michael Szémióth in Prosper Mérimée's 1869 short story *Lokis*. The Count represses his more primitive nature, resulting in random and almost uncontrollable thoughts and behaviors that originate from within his unconscious. The reader experiences the Count's oddities through the narration of a philologist, Professor Wittembach, who travels east from Germany to the castle of Count Szémióth in Lithuania. The Count struggles with seemingly unconquerable urges that haunt his life, eventually tempting him to commit a brutal murder. The Count's questionable ancestry hints at the possible origin of his dual nature through the implied notion that his biological father was a vicious bear who mauled and raped his mother, the Countess. In July 1869 during Mérimée's public reading of *Lokis* at the palace of Saint-Cloud, the listeners, which included an Empress and a room full of aristocrats, failed to comprehend this outrageous storyline. Afterwards, Mérimée inquired as to whether they understood and upon receiving a no, he stated, "You didn't understand anything, that's perfect!"(434). His elation at the confusion of his listeners alludes to the Count's secrecy stitched within the short story. It insinuates the need for deciphering the hidden meanings concealed in the text. The underlying details of the text provide clues to the

Count's chaotic duality, such as the title *Lokis* that comes from the Lithuanian word for bear, *lokys*. The repression of the Count's animalistic urges leads to an internalized chaos between his dual natures, resulting in an eruption of violence. The Count's bear counterpart functions as a metaphor for the duality that lives inside everyone, challenging individual perceptions of right and wrong.

Chaos arises from the challenges of controlling one's urges through repression. In Sigmund Freud's book *Civilization and Its Discontents*, he examines the possible origin of societal discontent as a reaction to the repression of instincts in order to conform to the constructs of society; however, if those instincts become too unmanageable, they can develop into neuroses. The Count's unintended outbursts suggest that his repression has been unsuccessful and that he has transitioned further into his repressed self. Freud states, "when we consider how unsuccessful we have been in precisely this field of prevention of suffering, a suspicion dawns on us that here, too, a piece of unconquerable nature may lie behind - this time a piece of our own psychological constitution" (*Civilization* 33). Considering this quote, we might ask: does the repression of primal instincts have the opposite effect and instead threaten to expose an individual's hidden, inner chaos? In *Civilization*, Freud describes the reasons for humankind's unhappiness. He narrows down the reasons of discontent into three categories: lack of control over nature, the physical limits of a person's body, and the laws of society. In order to increase happiness, Freud recommends the mitigation of one's suffering into a productive activity: "If we cannot remove all suffering, we can remove some, and we can mitigate some" (33).

The case of Anna O., a pseudonym for Bertha Pappenheim, is an account by physician Joseph Breuer of a 21-year-old woman diagnosed with hysteria in the 1880s. Due to her irregular outbursts, she was for a time under the care of Breuer, who wrote in collaboration with Sigmund Freud in *Studies of Hysteria*. The case of Anna O. is a real-life example of an individual who struggled with conflicting dualities that Breuer recorded as her self-defined good side and bad side. Her hysteria originates from her unhappiness over the expectations forced upon women. Like Anna O., the Count in *Lokis* suffers from his constant dueling natures as he attempts to mitigate them through reading German literature and thinking about horse's blood: instead of improving his temperament it has the opposite effect and works to increase the Count's thirst.

In the article "Space, Self and The Role of the Matecznik in Mérimée's *Lokis*," Robin MacKenzie acknowledges the Count's concern over his own duality as his "preoccupation with the divided self" (196). The Count's two sides include a

civilized consciousness and primitive unconsciousness exposed by his bear-like behavior. The Count's unconsciousness seems to bleed into his conscious frame of mind, resulting in bizarre behaviors. His contrasting actions give the impression that there is a struggle for domination between his split sides and, in the process, they become intertwined. To rid himself of his peculiarities, he attempts to mitigate his questionable impulses by reading literature that he hopes will help him gain answers about his duplicity. MacKenzie describes the Count as working as a motif of the metaphysician "whose vague and troubling intimations of a profound duality in the self lead him to study works of German Idealism, in which unconscious and irrational levels of the self are acknowledged" (197). Despite his attempt to mitigate his unwanted desires, his internal chaos between his opposing sides increases and becomes more of a distraction and influences his actions.

The dual nature that dwells within the Count consists of the opposing binaries, human against animal and civilization against nature. However, his dualities do not appear as clear-cut as good versus evil; instead, the divided parts are, rather, linking components. Unknowingly, the Count displays his duality through his ungoverned curiosity. The persistence of his curiosity results in an unusual first appearance involving the Count climbing a tree during the night in order to spy on the Professor: "amid the foliage of the tree a few feet from my window, I saw a human head, clearly visible in the light cast by my lamp" (Mérimée 299). The Count demonstrates a childlike lack of control over his urges as well as a bizarre resemblance to a young cub playing in a tree. After being formally introduced to one another, the Count admits to his late night escapade: "I saw a light burning in your room and my curiosity got the better of me" (300). The Count's curiosity highlights his unrepressed desires when the Professor tells a story about a sophisticated acquaintance that enjoys an occasional cup of horse's blood. Intrigued, the Count makes a casual inquiry: "the Count interrupted me to ask how one set about bleeding a horse if one wanted to drink its blood" (317). The horse's blood could satisfy the Count's baser hungers while working as a substitute for his more quasi-cannibalistic urges. That evening, the Count and Professor share a room for the night and, while asleep, the Count's unconsciousness takes over to reveal his quasi-cannibalistic cravings. He talks in his sleep, "Nice and fresh! Nice and white! The Professor doesn't know what he's talking about! Never mind the horse... what a tasty morsel!" Then he began voraciously biting the cushion beneath his head, and at the same time he gave a sort of roar, so loud that it woke him up" (320). The Count's nocturnal activity provides an image of his animalistic self. His nightmar-

ish raving speaks of his desire to consume Julka Iwinska, a young woman whose white skin he admires, when he says “Nice and fresh! Nice and white!” The Count seems to be sexually interested in Julka, and also seems actually to want to eat her.

While unconscious, the Count exhibits a lack of control over his animalistic side, resulting in primitive outbursts. During his altered state his repressive mental boundaries collapse to expose the animalistic quality of his unconscious. The relaxing of his internalized boundaries allows his wild urges to run rampant within his mind, generating gruesome fantasies that leave him feeling confused upon waking: “He sat up, rubbed his eyes, sighed unhappily, and remained for almost an hour in the same position, apparently immersed in thought” (320). Once awake, the Count sits up in his bed and contemplates his dream and abject state that his unconscious takes when in control. His recognition of his bear-like conduct demonstrates that he has some awareness of his alter ego. The acknowledgement of his animalistic instincts creates a shift from unconscious repression to voluntary suppression. Fear compels him to suppress his dread that his animalistic urges may be exposed. His anxiety inspires him to pursue modes of sublimation with the goal of lightening the weight of his repression.

The Count decides to sublimate his violent wants through the study of German physiology, which follows the prevailing belief that Western countries such as Germany were more civilized than Lithuania. Through his examination of German literature, the Count anticipates that he may discover a cure to silence his secondary nature or, at the very least, explain it: “You’d never believe the books he reads German metaphysics, physiology, and what have you. Another great parcel of them arrived from Leipzig only yesterday” (321). The “great parcel” works as an over-compensation for the probable decline of the Count’s conscious control, leading to desperation to regain authority over his animalistic qualities. Through his frustration, the Count seeks advice from the Professor by asking the enigmatic question, “how do you account for the duality or dichotomy of our nature?” (321). The Professor answers that the constant act of suppression would be the logical route to cease vacillation between dual natures: “by constantly struggling against our passions we acquire new strength with which to diminish and dominate them” (323). This fails to comfort the Count due to his previous attempts at suppressing his animalistic wants.

The Count’s primitive urges tend to surface around Julka, and he appears to be in a “bad temper” during moments when he is near her or when he hears about her (294). The Countess’ doctor, Doctor Froeber, tells the Professor about

the Count's interest in Julka and states that the Count's love for her will make him hysterical just like his mother. The Doctor blames the Count's behavioral fluctuations on Julka: "A shameless coquette! She'll drive him mad, the same as happened with his mother" (295). The Count and Professor decide to visit Julka and, during their visit, she leaves them for a moment in order to change into a new dress. While she is changing the Professor observes that the Count acts impatiently as he waits for her to return:

I didn't notice the time it took Miss Iwinska to change into her new dress; but it seemed interminable to Count Szémioth, who kept getting up and sitting down again, looking out of the window and drumming on the window panes with his fingers like a man whose patience is wearing thin. (313)

The Count behaves almost as someone tired of waiting for dinner, irritated by hunger of both sustenance and sexual desire. The Count not only craves Julka sexually but speaks of her as though she were a piece of food he wished to consume. His dual-natured hunger is reflected in this statement when the Professor notes how the Count admires Julka: "He glowered, and I could see that smoldering gleam in his eye which was truly somehow frightening. *'Skittish as a kitten, white as cream'*" (318). This quote transforms her from a human to easy prey for a bear to capture as well as something sweet and delicious to devour. The Count's speaks of Julka's skin several times throughout the text, but here he seems singularly interested in eating her, "That laughing face of hers amused me, I enjoyed the sight of her white skin. Those are the only things she has to commend her...her skin, especially" (323). The chilling focus upon her skin inspires a fear that he may truly attempt to consume her. When the Count references Julka's skin the next thing he tends to mention is her blood as if it were simply something to drink. He goes as far as to joke about tasting her blood: "the blood that flows beneath her skin must be better than a horse's blood, eh, Professor?' And he burst out laughing. But his laugh was painful to hear" (324). After this point, the Count seems to entertain the idea of consuming Julka in order to calm his unwanted nature. His desires for Julka combine the instinctual needs to eat and mate.

The Count indulges his unconquerable nature by marrying Julka and, on the night of their wedding, he rips out her throat and drinks her blood: "The young countess was stretched out dead on her bed, her face hideously lacerated, her throat torn open, and drenched in blood" (330). Despite the Count's continuous



attempts to suppress his instinctual urges, those urges eventually emerge and conquer him as well as coerce him into committing a horrendous murder. The chaotic duel between his conscious and subconscious leads to a submerging of his desires until his suppression overwhelms him, which results in an unrestrainable eruption of violent urges. His indulgence transfigures him into an ursine monster with animal-like abilities that aid him in escaping from a window and dashing into the forest, away from civilization.

The Count's "bear heritage" functions as a metaphor for the chaotic violence that takes shape within human nature. Doctor Froeber tells the Professor about the bear attack that made the Countess insane. He describes how, a few days after her wedding, she accompanied her new husband on a hunting trip when she fell behind and into the clutches of a bear, which "was passing through a clearing, still dragging the countess with him, no doubt intending to devour her at his leisure" (296). The Doctor unsympathetically describes her as made mad by fear. After the attack, the doctors treating the Countess' madness discovered her to be pregnant. Once she bore her son, she shrieked upon seeing him "Kill him! Kill the beast!" (296). Many believe that animals can sense danger when humans cannot; for example, the Count's dog acts frightened when in his presence. Perhaps the dog senses the bear heritage of the Count or the Count's capacity for violence, as "the dog frisked and seemed full of high spirits; but when it was a few steps from the count, it put its tail between its legs, backed off, and seemed smitten with sudden terror" (306). Throughout the story, the Count's hidden thoughts seem to consume him in a way that demoralizes him and makes him into something other than human, something animalistic. The Count's mental duality takes form in the idea that he is a hybrid with a mind struggling between that of a human and that of a bear. The bear side of his mind symbolizes the innately human fear that somehow through action and choice one could become a monster. The teratology of the bear into a monster figure expresses the innate fear of losing one's identity and regressing into a more primitive, uncivilized self.

The voluntary act of suppression relies on a certain amount of consciousness that Anna O. and the Count exemplify. Some have attributed Anna O.'s psychosis to the death of her beloved father, but others see her psychosis as a response to the pressures placed upon woman by society. Not only are Anna O. and the Count both intellectually inclined and from upper class families, but the neurotic struggles with which they both suffer have several characteristics in common. Both appear almost child-like in their ability to restrain their urges: of Anna O., Breuer

explains how “Alternation between two states of consciousness persisted. She used to hallucinate in the middle of a conversation, run off, start climbing up a tree” (*Studies* 31). In *Lokis*, the Count is describe as acting in similarly odd ways such as climbing up a tree in order to spy on the Professor. Anna O. and the Count struggle with dual natures that live within them: “at moments when her mind was quite clear she would complain of the profound darkness in her head of not being able to think, of becoming blind and deaf, of having two selves, a real one and an evil one which forced her to behave badly” (24). Anna O. would become unkind and throw tantrums, and in a few incidences she tore buttons from her clothes and would throw pillows across the room. Likewise, Mérimée’s Count rips and tears at his pillow while speaking in a strange voice during his sleep. During these moments when their behaviors would switch to the unfamiliar they would have lapses in memory: “[during Anna O.’s other state of consciousness] she would complain of having ‘lost’ some time and would remark upon the gap in her train of conscious thoughts” (24). The Count appears to have more of an awareness of his other state of mind; however, to him it seems hazy like an old memory. Breuer recorded that Anna O. had admitted to a blurred awareness of her second state of consciousness, “and even when she was in a very bad condition—a clear-sighted and calm observer sat, as she put it, in a corner of her brain and looked on at all the mad business” (46).

This awareness could arise from emotions of helplessness and guilt within both situations. Guilt formed from the Count’s and Anna O.’s awareness of what they were doing and yet feeling unable to stop how they were behaving. The state they both seemed to be in has dream-like qualities: Anna O.’s second state can be “likened to a dream in view of its wealth of imaginative products and hallucinations, its large gaps of memory and the lack of inhibition and control in its associations” (45). This parallels the wild state the Count was in while having violent dreams. The Count’s repressed unconscious works like a remote, controlling his desires in a direction that makes him both uncomfortable and curious. His cohesive self splits into two dueling sets: one with the desire to follow the ideals of society and the other that wants to abandon it. Each half of their dual natures appears to function like wholly separate binaries: rational and impulsive, civilized and primitive. These halves appear like opposite sides fighting for domination over the whole. However, each half connects to the other like that of cut flesh with sinew still connecting both halves together like delicate strings. The connections between the two dueling natures create opposing frictions that make it difficult

for one side to shroud the other, making the act of absolute repression impossible.

Anna O. was not only someone who struggled with her own mentality, but she was also a complex individual and a humanitarian. Rosalea Schonbar and Helen R. Beatus' article "The Mysterious Metamorphoses of Bertha Pappenheim: Anna O. Revisited" trails Anna O.'s metamorphoses from a young woman to a patient to a feminist and an activist. The article focuses on Anna O. and investigates the open spaces left by Breuer on her life and shifting mental health. The popular understanding of her is often one-sided due to Breuer's analysis, which left out chosen aspects of Anna O.'s sexuality as well as her history and recuperation. Anna O.'s early life could be helpful for understanding the possible etiology of an individual's psychosis in addition to providing insight into the examination of the Count's psychosis. After Anna O.'s release from Breuer's care, he failed to record her relapse in *Studies of Hysteria*, as he wanted to acknowledge her as purely a success story. During Anna O.'s life, the vast majority of people saw sexuality, especially female sexuality, as extremely distasteful and inappropriate. In Breuer's care, Anna O. appeared to develop romantic feelings for him. Her relapse involved a fake pregnancy leading to a "hysterical labor with an imagined baby, and she named Breuer as the father" (63). This reveals Anna O.'s reaction to her suppressed sexuality and suppressed feelings for Breuer. Both Anna O. and the Count struggle with their sexuality: Anna O. attempts to rid herself of her sexuality and the Count merges his sexual desires for Julka with his violent hungers that urge him to consume her. Early in her life, Anna O. was a regular daydreamer: "She engaged in considerable daydreaming, making up 'fairy tales,' as she called them" (63). She mitigated her anxieties and repressed feelings into vivid daydreams that worked to help her to cope with what she found troubling in her life. Anna O. preferred her father to her mother, who had depression and who seemed emotionally unavailable to Anna. Although Anna O. adored her father, both her parents expected that she would remain obedient to her father until the day she became a wife. The stresses she felt led to the development of her daydreams into hallucinations that only increased when her father became ill, as her repression became intertwined with the fear of losing her father. Anna O.'s own internal chaos increased, or at least came to the surface, as her father became sicker. One of her hallucinations involved her right arm turning into a snake that wanted to kill her father. This later resulted in the temporary paralysis of that arm. The transformation of her arm into a snake mirrors the bear metaphor in *Lokis*. Anna's hallucination shows her awareness of her

primitive self, but her temporary paralysis shows her hesitation to fully acknowledging its existence.

Societal fears over the reverting of human civilization into that of a more primitive state is expressed within the monster that the Count eventually becomes in Mérimée's *Lokis*. The similar dualities of the Count and Anna O. show the possible severities that the act of suppression can inflict; however, it is not an excuse for murdering another individual. Reverting to a state of mind in which the scrutiny of one's behavior is less severe would explain why the Count and Anna O. have moments in which they both behave like children. The dreamlike awareness of their second states generates a feeling of responsibility that they could have done something to avoid following their urges. They both feel shaken by their urges, which go against society and make them feel like an outcast within the constructs of civilization. The Count's actions frequently hint to his anxiety as he becomes more aware and more anxious over his possible bear nature. His "bear" side works to dehumanize his character, making the monster that he represents something that is impossible to find outside of fiction. The Count's dual nature expresses his wants through his obsession for Julka's physical form. Horrified by his own desires, the Count works to suppress his lingering wants but finds the act difficult and unsatisfactory. The moment when repression turns into suppression relies on the individual's own understanding of their unconscious state. If they have awareness of that state, then they have the ability to attempt to suppress what emerges from their second self. The Count finds his only escape from the pressures of society through his indulgence of his urges, which results in his separation from civilization and into nature. The Count's unconquerable nature is a reaction to the strictness and cruelty within society's framework and that creates a battle between an individual's consciousness and unconsciousness.

Anna O. and the Count highlight that there is an animalistic quality to all of us. However, the fear of seeming different motivates some to suppress aspects of their personality. Women would often fall into hysteria after suffering years of unhappiness due to the constraints forced upon women by society. Some hysterical women happened to be those who did not follow the strict rules forced upon them by society. The purpose of calling a woman hysterical worked as a way to discredit her. Those who most benefited from the constructs of society thought of such women as monstrous and dangerous to society. The Count's experience functions as a paradox: he fears society's response to his urges so he responds by repressing

his wants, resulting in his split self. Once aware of his second nature, he reacts by suppressing it, and that results in the overflow of his desires, which eventually bubble to the surface and influence him to kill. He defines himself as a pariah to civilization by escaping into the woods in order to embrace his bear nature. The Count appears to believe that in order to survive he must choose one nature or the other, waging a war between his primitive and civilized sides.

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# CLAIRE WILLIAMS

Claire Williams is a comparative literature major and a computer and information science minor. Her primary literary interests include 19th-century French novels and perspectives on death in literature. You may have seen her previously acting on various Duck TV miniseries, including the show *Archival*.

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## ARTIFICIAL CHAOS FRUITION: THE REINVENTION OF DEATH IN *WESTWORLD*

**PERHAPS THE SINGLE MOST RELIABLE EVENT IN LIFE IS DEATH.** It does not discriminate and is the unfaltering end of every living creature, and yet despite its predictability it is surrounded by chaos. The chaos associated with death stems primarily from either those grieving and mourning the deceased or those who believe they have found a way to immortality. HBO's 2016 television series *Westworld* illustrates not only the mortal chaos surrounding death, but also reveals a reality: death itself is the epitome of chaos. The series does this by featuring two kinds of characters: humans, or "guests," who are mortal and travel to Westworld, an American old-west theme park, and robots, or "hosts," which inhabit the theme park and act as characters in the world, leading guests on quests, fulfilling the guests' fantasies, and creating an "authentic" experience. Guests are permitted to interact with hosts in any way they desire, meaning they can perform any act of violence they wish, including rape or kill the hosts. Meanwhile, hosts, though they can fight back if a guest attacks them, cannot severely harm a guest. In other words, *Westworld* offers guests a sense of unchecked power and privilege. *Westworld* demonstrates not only that the chaos *surrounding* death comes from delusions of immortality, seen in Robert Ford's desperate attachment to creating narratives, but moreover that the chaos of death only appears when death is no longer a reliable end to every life, seen in the realization of immortality in hosts.

In the second episode of *Westworld*, “Chestnut,” one of the park’s programmers, comments that everyone within the park seems to have a secret agenda, including the employees. The park’s creator, Robert Ford, is a shining example of the programmer’s comment. Ford is of the opinion that humans can attain immortality through the creation of great works, stating at the end of season one that “Mozart, Beethoven, and Chopin never died. They simply became music” (1:10). He clearly seeks similar greatness, and will likely achieve it given that his name calls to mind Henry Ford, a renowned inventor immortalized by his work and whom, perhaps, Robert Ford aspires to become.

Michel de Montaigne presents a similar idea of work facilitating death in his essay “Que philosopher c’est apprendre à mourir,” that to write is to prepare for death. Montaigne writes that “study and contemplation draw our soul out of us to some extent and keep it busy outside the body; which is a sort of apprenticeship and semblance of death” (9). In other words, by engaging in activities such as writing or philosophizing, one becomes so immersed that, for a moment, it is as if he has died. If death is the soul departing from the body, Montaigne believes that placing one’s focus entirely outside of oneself is a similar sensation, a simulation of death. Ford follows this philosophy by engaging with his final narrative. On one level he creates a park in which his narratives allow beings, namely hosts, to “practice” death in a less figurative way than Montaigne speaks on, and on another level in that he acknowledges and prepares for his own death by ensuring that he will not be forgotten. While Ford’s theme park contains technology advanced enough to immortalize him on those grounds, throughout the season he prepares a “final narrative,” a masterpiece that will ensure his immortality by exposing the unfortunate mortality of others. He is playing on, in the words of Montaigne, the “commonherd’s” denial of mortality, and will find immortality through a brutal reveal of truth (11). Montaigne bemoans that one of the most chaotic aspects of death is that many succeed so thoroughly in ignoring or denying it that it comes as a shock (13).

In the first episode of the season and one of the first scenes introducing Ford, a few *Westworld* employees are looking into a disturbance in the warehouse where all the “decommissioned” hosts are stored. These hosts have had their internal code wiped and now stand, naked, in rows, as one might imagine the mannequins in a warehouse for Madame Tussaud. The “disturbance” is none other than Ford sharing a drink with a host. They sit in a room at the back of the warehouse, some kind of operating or prep room. The host is Bill, one of the first hosts created

for the park. He appears human, but his movements are mechanical and stiff; he repeats himself and seems largely unaware of the world around him. He is fully clothed, unlike the other hosts in storage. When a programmer enters the room, Ford asks the host to “put himself away.” Bill pauses for a moment, and then proceeds to pack himself into a body bag, set his hat aside, and zip the bag closed. This action is not only bizarre because a “corpse” has just prepared itself, but also because this method of preparation makes no sense for an early-model host. He has no flesh to create an odor as decomposition sets in, he has no fluid that could leak, nor do the humans need to be spared his hauntingly dead appearance, as his complexion will not change. While it may initially appear to be a tender moment of respect between a creator and his creation, it is really a view into the attitudes that fuel the narrative paving the way to Ford’s immortality.

The instruction for Bill to place himself in a body bag, despite any logical need, demonstrates how thoroughly Ford has confounded the contemporary ideas and processes of death and foreshadows the content of his final narrative. These same views are what makes Ford the show’s largest driving force of chaos. His path to immortality is unique and doubly chaotic because the creations that will immortalize him are, themselves, immortal. Ford simultaneously creates chaos around and within death. Ford hints at his plan throughout the show, first in his discussion with Bill, when Bill alleges, “They don’t make men like they used to.” Ford responds, “They don’t make anything like they used to,” foreshadowing his belief that the hosts are the future of humanity.

While Bill was likely speaking about ‘contemporary’ men not expressing the same masculine ideals of men of the past, Ford’s confirmation comes from his belief that he has created the immortal being, that men aren’t made like they used to be because Ford’s hosts will eventually replace them. The world constructed in the series is at the peak of chaos, as only the hosts can escape death. Ford implies in the first episode that he may have plans to immortalize humans in an offhand comment, “perhaps we shall even resurrect the dead,” but until Ford executes his plans for resurrection, at least the park and at most the world is left in a transitory period of chaos. Ford demonstrates what may be a step in providing universal immortality by creating a host in the likeness of his old business partner. He even makes a reference to the well-known biblical tale of reincarnation, the story of Lazarus, stating that “We’ve managed to slip evolution’s leash now, haven’t we? We can cure any disease, keep even the weakest of us alive and one fine day perhaps we shall even resurrect the dead, call forth Lazarus from his cave” (1:1). In refer-



encing Lazarus, Ford implies that perhaps one day either there will be technology to resurrect mortal beings or, more sinisterly, that one day all beings will be hosts, capable of resurrection because death has been redefined. Ford has begun experimenting with recreating the likeness of a mortal being as a host, but cannot truly capture the essence of a mortal being in a host because he himself has unwavering power over the hosts. That said, it does not seem that Ford has a strong desire to grant immortality to humans. In his eyes, humans are imperfect and inflexible and the host likenesses are superior to their human inspirations because he made improvements in their code (1:10).

In a conversation between Bernard, the park's head programmer, and Ford, Bernard admits, "You taught me how to make [the hosts] but not how hard it was to turn them off," acknowledging a budding awareness that Ford is operating to fulfill some ulterior motive (1:2). Ford responds, "You can't play God without being acquainted with the devil. We practice witchcraft; we speak the right words, and we create life itself out of chaos" (1:2). Here, Ford acknowledges that they are not unwaveringly "good" gods. A part of his process to make the hosts seem "truly human" involves writing narratives in which each host will experience extreme suffering. The specific "chaos" through which Ford makes life is ambiguous. It could be the chaos created by guests wanting to experience their most carnal desires, the reason the park gained enough funding to be built; or, if "life" is equated to consciousness, it could be that the chaos is the park itself. Alternately, if "life is equated to consciousness, the chaos might be the concept of immortality, and Ford is godly for creating beings that are not restricted by the parameters of death and thus ought to be the most chaotic beings of all.

While the park occupies hosts with duties of pleasing guests and trying to achieve consciousness, its primary task for guests is to submit to the fictions of the park. Greeting each guest with the line "Welcome to Westworld: live without limits," it is no wonder that the guests are lulled into an already enticing sense of immortality and unending power. The offerings of the park are so desirable that many guests forget that the park cannot actually grant immortality. This shortcoming appears most clearly in a guest named William. Viewers are led to believe that they first encounter William as a young man, but the show reveals that each scene with William as a young man is a flashback. In the "present," William has grown older and become the infamous Man in Black, who appears in the series earlier than young William. The fact that William appears both in his youth and in more advanced years provides a stark contrast for viewers, reinforcing that, despite the

park making guests *feel* immortal and all-powerful, their sense of immortality is just that, a sense or a feeling, a belief. William ages in the park and outside of it, just as all the guests do, and will eventually die, just as all the guests will.

Despite obvious pulls back into the realm of mortality, such as William's aging, the park maintains the guests' sense of immortality largely by creating an environment that is well described by Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the carnivalesque. According to Bakhtin, "carnival celebrated temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions" (*Rabelais* 10). Therefore, the carnivalesque encompasses the specific, necessary violations of "the prevailing truth" and "the established order" as behavioral expectations, sacrilege without consequences, "misalliances" and interacting outside of familiar circles. Within Westworld, a guest is able to find his "true character" through granted permission to defy various social rules. The show's repeated use of the line "Everything would be what it is because everything would be what it isn't" from *Alice in Wonderland* reinforces the joy and potential truth in role reversal (1:7). In the park, society's behavioral expectations are lifted and sacrilege is permitted to such degrees that the rape and murder of hosts is permitted, and even encouraged. Misalliances and exceedingly familiar circles often occur when guests become lost in the "realness" of hosts. For example, in his first visit to the park, young William falls in love with an early model of a host called Dolores. Though he is visiting the park with a work colleague who is also his future brother-in-law, he defies his conventional obligation to side with his human compatriot in favor of assisting Dolores with a mysterious quest of her own. Even before he enters the park, a host tells him "the only limit here is your imagination" (1:2). Perhaps a truer statement would have been "the only limits here are your imagination and your mortality."

Bakhtin even seems to have considered the idea of immortality of the carnivalesque, saying that the laughter during carnival "buries and revives" various sentiments not appropriate for the "real" world (*Rabelais* 12). Having tasted these taboo reversals of reality, the guests choose to maintain certain carnivalesque reversals outside of the park. They are willing to accept their freedom to sin and their immortality but, upon returning to the real world, only leave behind their abhorrent acts, neglecting to acknowledge the true assignments of mortality and immortality. If the carnivalesque revolves around inverting reality and truths, then one who is immortal within the topsy-turvy carnivalesque is entirely mortal in reality, yet the guests neglect to accept the restoration of truth. Even within the park the

guests do not have uninhibited freedom, as their actions are constantly monitored and guided by park supervisors. The supervisors can intervene in such minor ways as increasing the strength of a host opponent to “slow [a guest] down” to denying “requests for pyrotechnics,” which would cause a gun not to fire or explosives to not go off (1:2, 1:6).

One of the first hosts to defy the carnival within the park and realize the immortality of the hosts and the mortality of the guests says to a human, “You don’t even know where you are, do you? In a prison of your own sins” (1:2). The host is speaking to Ford, and assumes that he, like the other guests, is in denial of his own death and maintains the carnivalesque reversal of mortality by pretending to be a god. The host believes that, in Ford playing God, Ford is in a carnivalesque environment by imagining that he is immortal and devoid of sin. In reality, Ford is one of the few mortals embracing his eventual demise, as demonstrated in his laborious preparation for his “Final Narrative.” Ford may be deluded in thinking that his work will keep his image alive, but his understanding of host immortality and human mortality is sound. The host also tries to share his newfound knowledge with other hosts before his discussion with Ford, but is only able to articulate the complex concept as a line from Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*: “These violent delights have violent ends” (1:2).

Aside from immortality, one of the biggest differences between the hosts and the guests is the concept of hosts attaining true consciousness. Their process to consciousness is based on Julian Jaynes’ theory of the bicameral mind, which claims that one becomes conscious, or self-aware, when she can recognize the thoughts in her head as her own, as opposed to orders from some omniscient god. Describing this process of developing consciousness, Jaynes writes, “volition (in bi-cameral men) came as a voice that was in the nature of a neurological command, in which the command and the action were not separated, in which to hear was to obey” (99). While Jaynes’ theory was debunked as an explanation for human consciousness, it was used as a basis to create the minds of Westworld’s hosts. However, unlike the “bicameral men” in Jaynes’ theory, hosts must not only lay claim to their internal dialogues but also to the reality of their deaths. The hosts may seem to die in the park, but, in actuality, they exist as immortal beings. They have more advanced cognition than the average human and only die in the park because they are programmed to—they do not seem to truly require blood or limbs as humans do. As bicameral individuals, many hosts believe they are humans being led by

an omniscient voice named after the first programmer in the park, “Arnold,” and operate on orders issued by this bicameral master. At times, a voice in the hosts’ minds order them to “remember”; other times, it orders hosts to kill. In the latter instance, because hosts memories are mostly erased each time they are killed, when a host selectively kills only hosts that have killed him in the past, because hosts have no concept of their extensive subconscious, the logic of the host can only be explained by his bicameral state. Arnold, his bicameral master, stands in for his latent memories of being killed, ordering him to act on a subconscious desire based on his latent memories.

Hosts themselves are startled to learn that they are not constrained by the same limitations as their human creators—for example, one host named Maeve malfunctions upon the brutal murder of her host “daughter.” It is not until Maeve discovers the true nature of her existence—as an immortal robot, and the true nature of death for her kind—that she finds freedom. Maeve’s coded ‘quest’ in the first season requires that she be programmed into pseudo self-awareness. She alters her own code and exhibits a frightening understanding of the world in which she lives, but none of it is genuine. She is, unbeknownst to herself and to the lab technicians who try to stop her, still without true agency or consciousness. The godlike voice of the unaware mind, along with her programming, remains in total control of her actions. It is not until a lab technician reveals that her daughter is not dead (in any sense) that she is truly liberated and defies the path Ford set her on. Maeve, in this moment, has fully grasped her superhuman existence and resolves to find her daughter. Her realization at this point is genuine, as she is able to apply it outside of herself, to her daughter, for instance.

In Maeve’s moment of extreme grief, she also accidentally invites a guest on a quest to exit the bicameral state. William, appearing as the Man in Black, was behind the murder of Maeve’s daughter. In what he describes as the only “real” moment he’s ever experienced in the park, Maeve carries the body of her daughter outside, where they both collapse in a bizarrely shaped trench. The Man in Black begins noticing the design of the trench all over the park, branded on tables, drawn in the sand, even inked onto the inside of a host’s skull. He figures out that the design is a symbol for a quest called “the Maze”. Throughout the show, William, now the Man in Black, tries to solve a quest called the maze and is repeatedly told that “the maze isn’t meant for [him]” (1:2, 9, 10). Despite this, he keeps searching, exemplifying the power and entitlement granted to the guests by the carnivalesque.

At one point, William even tells a host “You’re just scenery. I play,” reinforcing the narcissistic gaze of guests (1:1). The reality is, of course, that the guests are just that: guests in a world that belongs to the hosts.

The show’s most obvious link between death and the bicameral mind occurs when William finally arrives at the center of the maze, an old church with an attached cemetery. Dolores has just arrived as well. The Man in Black demands that Dolores explain the meaning of the maze to him, and, upon realizing that that young William and the Man in Black are the same person, says, “Time undoes even the mightiest of creatures. Just look at what it’s done to you (William)... One day you will perish... A new God will walk, one that will never die” (1:10). Later, Ford enters the graveyard and, much to the dismay of the Man in Black, reveals that the maze is an elaborate puzzle set up by Arnold in an attempt to lead Dolores to consciousness, past the bicameral mind. “The maze” leads Dolores all over the park, ending at a tombstone bearing Dolores’ name. Within the grave plot is a child’s toy: a wooden maze. At the center of the circular toy is a small human figure.

The quest is a physical manifestation of the journey to self-realization, an attempt to reveal to Dolores the final truth about her reality—that her death is different. She has been told that the maze “ends at a place [she’s] never been and a thing [she’ll] never do” (1:10). The show postulates that the reality of death correlates with self-awareness, with the hosts needing to realize that the deaths they have encountered so far and had erased from their ‘memories’ are impermanent. Despite being programmed with an understanding of death that parallels that of the guests, because Dolores is truly immortal, death is a concept that is simply incomprehensible for her. Earlier in the show she asks a programmer where his son is, and he responds “Nowhere you would understand” (1:3). Though she has been instructed in death and even seems to have some comprehension of Christianity, she cannot truly grasp the concept of death because hosts cannot experience it. She may be horrified when she sees another host brutally murdered, but the same mortal laws that drive humans cannot bind her. Similar lines are laced throughout the show speaking more generally about hosts, such as when a programmer calls Ford to chat in the warehouse and Ford comments that it’s an odd place to chat, “Here among the dead,” and the programmer corrects, “dead isn’t quite the right word” (1:9). Hosts can have their code wiped, and a host form can be disfigured beyond repair, but, if it exists at all, the totality of death in hosts is a currently undefined and unexplored concept.

Meanwhile, Ford reassures a disgruntled Man in Black that, though the maze was not meant for him, but for the hosts, he will likely find Ford's new narrative "a little more satisfying." The new narrative, Ford's infamous final narrative, is set in the same town that houses the church and the center of the maze. Later in the episode, Ford theatrically welcomes a select group of guests, mostly investors in the park, to the narrative reveal, announcing the narrative's title "Journey into Night." The Man in Black is among the select group of guests, shockingly dressed in a contemporary suit instead of his usual old-western attire. Guests wander around the town, hosts are present, but act as caterers rather than characters, letting guests borrow their guns to shoot apples or posing for photos. No one stops to consider the dark foreshadowing within the title of Ford's narrative. Once more he takes to the stage, promising guests that his new narrative will "have all the things that you have always enjoyed. Surprises. Violence." He continues, "It begins in a time of war." Little do the guests know that Ford is not speaking of the civil war, which is featured in other narratives, but a brand new, budding war between mortal and immortal beings. It is the guests who will be making the journey into night, surprised by their own, violent deaths carried out by hosts.

In his final narrative, Ford has exposed how guests took death for granted. While the show is far from nonfiction, by not only exposing the chaos surrounding mortal death and then revealing a more terrifying reality in which death, itself, is chaos, Ford as a character acts as an advocate for considering death as it exists in our reality. The show recognizes the tendencies of the "commonherd" who, according to Montaigne, suffer a more traumatic death by not properly preparing themselves for it in life. Ford's final "joke" is forcing hosts and guests alike back into reality by leading the guests to their entirely mortal ends, a punishment for their refusal to see their own mortality. Ford emphasizes his point by letting the truly immortal beings, the hosts, murder the mortal commonherd. The violent delights of the guests finally get their due, equally violent, end.

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# QUIN WISE

Quin Wise studies English literature. Quin plans to take a year off to substitute teach in local school districts, then return to the UO to pursue a master's in education.

Mentor: **Maxine Anderson**

## JAMES JOYCE'S "SIRENS": A NARRATIVE ADVANCING THROUGH LITERARY CHAOS

JAMES JOYCE WROTE *ULYSSES* USING ORDER AND DISORDER together to achieve a way of narration that was innovative. One of the episodes in *Ulysses* that has an experimental post-modernist writing style using chaos is "Sirens." The main sense of disorder comes during the introduction. The episode begins with an unorganized overture foreshadowing a much larger musical movement. When the chaotic resolve of the "Sirens" episode's overture occurs, it establishes a written arrangement of a range of musical movements that still sustain the Homeric frame narrative because the fragments of phrases in the voices heard during the overture foreshadow the individual parts of the narrative they advance.

Before the discussion of *Ulysses* begins, a preliminary discussion of chaotic literary theory helps to establish chaos as a useful tool for a writing style. Kenneth McLeod in his article "Interpreting Chaos: The Paradigm of Chaotics and New Critical Theory" discusses beneficial aspects of using chaos as a methodology in multiple fields of study. The impact chaos has had is felt widely across the sciences and humanities alike (42). He admits that ordered studies have also had huge benefits when looking for one particular outcome. When chaos is used in a study, both the outcome, and the amount of outcomes are left open (47). He discusses chaos' role in music, which is one that has not only influenced composers but also musical composition itself. McLeod notes, "Composers conventionally order sound



(tones, harmonies, rhythms etc.) that, though intentionally structured, produce a limitless variety of outcomes and interpretations,” which is why chaos is so useful in experimentation (47). For people looking to explore new territory, allowing disorder is something that will allow any number of results to happen. McLeod cites other authors that have views also supporting chaos’ benefits within his own article. Carolyn Abbate, for example, discusses how individual voices function in narratives throughout her book, *Unsung Voices*. She considers them “fugitive” because they change from work to work, always existing on more than one level in the arrangement. Abbate also explains how music itself is rarely performed by the narrator, only something that supports the narrative (19). When music supports the narrative, it is designed to relate and reflect the content connected with it in the subject matter to create related narrative techniques.

William Paulson in his essay “Literature, Complexity, Interdisciplinary” discusses how literature, primarily poetry, is a medium that provides ample room for exploration using disorder and chaos:

We suppose for example, that a poem presents itself to a reader as a complex system of relations. . . . The reader brings to her assimilation of the poem a knowledge of the linguistic codes; if she is an experienced reader of poetry, she also brings some general sense of where and how to look for further relations that make up the poem. . . . In other words, the reader does not initially possess all of the codes needed to understand the poem, so that some of its variety is uncoded, or in other words, it’s noise. (qtd. in McLeod 47–48)

Poetry serves as Paulson’s example, but according to him all literature can be an equally complex system of relations. The key does not have to be presented to the reader initially, and a straightforward way of understanding the overall meaning does not have to be given at all. Paulson explains that looking thoroughly at the structure and delivery is the only way to gain a complete understanding of the poem. The reader should complete the poem, then interpret the level of complexity and how the passages relate. Most importantly, McLeod establishes a learning experience out of the disorder. This results in artists using chaos as a way of layering different experiments within media. He suggests that, by “Viewing the world as a potentially limited series of creative strategies. . . the world simultaneously imitates and changes itself with every new creation” (54). This creates “a type of infinite

feedback loop, whereby art and any other type of cultural production, including science, progressively becomes more and more complex" (54). This author would likely consider chaos a force that creates unlimited and unrestricted complexity, giving way to unity between layers to make a sophisticated arrangement.

*Ulysses* as a whole would be a novel applicable for comparison with much of McLeod's points, but "Sirens" in particular should be examined. Because of the musical form and content found as a main theme of the episode, along with narrative advancement on subjects foreshadowed, it has all of the components of disorder McLeod considers useful: layering, complexity, lyrics, prose, and multiple segments. Also, because it is in the middle of the narrative of the whole novel, the amount of key events that occur in the plot and individual character development create a method of measuring how far "Sirens" progresses the narrative as a whole. The novel takes place over the course of June 16, 1904, and "Sirens" occurs at four in the afternoon. The episode begins with an introduction consisting of a sixty-three-line segment of text. This is what will be considered the overture. In the overture, Leopold Bloom and other major characters are mentioned frequently. Single words followed by exclamation points occur five times. Alliteration is featured, along with italicization and different languages. Historical references are made without any context. Words that are not actually words but gibberish are also present. For the conclusion, like a conductor giving a cue, it ends with the lines, "Done, Begin!" and the overture is complete (Joyce 11.62–63). Thus, the main movement begins.

Fortunately, the first line of the text following the overture immediately clarifies a large amount of initial disorder. The first line of the overture uses the same words as the first line of the main movement's text. The overture begins: 'Bronze by gold heard the hoofirons, steelyringing' (11.1) and the main text's introductory lines are "Bronze by gold" (11.65). This allows the reader to immediately understand there is a connection between the order of the overture and the order of the main text. The chapter begins with two characters described in the first lines of the overture: Miss Douce, who has bronze hair, and Miss Kennedy, who has gold hair. They are the barmaids at the Ormond Hotel Bar. What is significant about them is that they are the opposite of the Homeric sirens because they have no musical talent. Miss Douce does flirt with some of the men there, such as Blazes Boylan, but aside from him, neither of the barmaids are attracted to anyone in the bar (11.65). Being behind the bar provides the opportunity to bring men into their clutches and take what they value most. Joyce establishes a much more culturally resonant

comparison of exchanges. What was for Odysseus a deadly exchange of a song for a life, now is money for alcohol.

Lawrence L. Leven in his article “The Sirens Episode As Music: Joyce’s Experiment in Prose Polyphony” explains much of the form and content of the episode. Levin “acknowledges that not only is the chapter much like an entire musical movement,” but he notes that the overture is “an abstract and highly concentrated distillation of themes, characters, and events occurring in the entire episode” (19). However, he provides commentary explaining that multiple voices compose the whole movement. Readers need to consider “Sirens” as a *fuga per canone* as the technique used for the musical narration (19). According to *Ulysses Annotated*, the *fuga per canone* technique is defined as “A fugue according to rule” with three corresponding parts: the, “*Andamenti*, a complete melody,” the “*Soggetti*, a short passage with a characteristic interval,” and the “*Attaco*, a short figure usually staccato,” which organizes the style of music. The arrangement of the music features the overture, a series of songs in different keys, multiple characters, duets, climax, then coda (Gifford and Seidman 290). Multiple characters contribute their songs throughout the prose to create the complete movement. However, understanding the meaning and delivery of the voice of whichever character is speaking, and clarifying what this character contributes to the overture, is not straightforward.

Multiple segments of the overture can be examined to see their placement and usage in the narrative’s main text. These examples selected are found scattered throughout the overture. First, some phrases in the overture are significant to actions or characters. One example is “jingle.” It is an indicator and example of a phrase that stimulates phonic aspects of the episode due to the associations with that sound. It signifies money. Therefore, it is either signaling Boylan, who is rich enough to afford a carriage with bells, to enter or exit a scene, or when victims of the Siren barmaids buy drinks (Joyce 11.19). “Jingle” is never said, but it is constant throughout the episode as an indicator of either of the associations in the stream of consciousness. For, example when Dedalus buys his first whiskey for the evening, it is followed by “jingle.” Boylan’s carriage literally jingles wherever it goes, and Bloom can hear him coming or know where he will be. It is hinted at in the overture as, “Jingle jingle jaunted jingling,” because this is the chapter when he has sex with Molly (11. 16). When he first arrives at the Ormond Bar, he is announced by the percussive “Jingle jaunted by the curb stopped,” which is one of his two percussive actions in the episode (11.330). “Jingle” belongs in the overture because of the phonic value and the associations it bears in the main text.

Second, references are made to both of the songs played in the episode. First, "All Is Lost Now" is a phrase valuable for one of the most important themes in the episode's narrative. It has a perfect tone, mood, and timing for Bloom's situation as Boylan becomes the conquering suitor in Bloom's home (11.20). Once readers learn of the song's role, the phrase becomes vital for encompassing Bloom's feelings as he copes with the affair. The close similarities between the song's content and Bloom's narrative as he is cuckolded greatly trouble Bloom. Simultaneously, this is the peak of Dedalus' narrative within the novel as he performs. The audience reacts well to his song, even urging Dedalus along (11.586). The reader unfortunately realizes any chance Dedalus had of showcasing the talents that he still has have passed years ago and his opportunity is lost. This warrants the phrase's placement in the overture, both because Bloom has accepted Boylan's conquering, and Dedalus drank away his opportunities.

Third is a phrase that applies the letter Bloom writes to Martha. It encompasses all Bloom's loneliness and fears: "I feel so sad. P.S. So lonely Blooming" and this is vital because it shows an example of Bloom's poetry-driven conscious thoughts (11.32). This line is a compact version of the postscript Bloom writes under the pen name Henry Flower to a pen-pal he uses as entertainment (5.62). Bloom writes his direct thoughts out as his alter ego, Henry Flower. Flower writes, "How will you pun? You punish me? Tell me I want to. Know. O. . . . P. P. S. La la la ree. I feel so sad today. La ree. So lonely. Dee," showing Bloom's surprisingly playful and rhythmic working of rhymes with the music he imagines behind it (11.891-895). This speaking style is different than any other type of expression Bloom has used before and is different than that of his typical stream of consciousness thoughts, and especially from his dialogue thus far in the novel. This new style of expressions is one that is filled with playful lyrics and rhymes because Bloom is safely protected by his alter ego. This is Bloom's preferred type of affection: one with physical and psychological distance. These qualities result from Bloom's desire to escape and become someone different than his normal character, but still stay safe from a distance. This style of Bloom's expressions is only seen in "Sirens" when he writes Martha's response.

Fourth is the rhythm figure that provides the time signature appealing to the sexual and percussive aspect of the phonic sense: the phrase, "One rapped, one tapped, with a carra, with a cock," because it is the sound is associated with two things (11.50). First, it is the sound of the blind piano tuner traveling from place to place tapping his tuner. Bloom observes the piano tuner entering the bar while

tapping his tuning fork. Second, this occurs simultaneously as Boylan and Molly begin making love and build to the climax of the musical movement. It is Boylan's second type of percussive contribution. It begins sporadically in single taps and it picks up in the amount and intensity of taps while Dollard sings his song. This creates the rising action. The second to last time, also the most vigorous, it is heard eight times (11.1222). This is the time signature paralleling the narrative because of the percussive aspect increasing in intensity and frequency until the climax. After the song, there is also a falling action as the episode comes to a close. The tapping is referenced in the overture because of the pain that this gives Bloom and its value to the movement's time signature.

Lastly, Joyce completes his overture with a key phrase that establishes him as the conductor. He writes, "Done. Begin!", ending the overture and officially beginning the movement (11.62–63). According to *Ulysses Annotated*, these are the last words of Robert Emmett, an Irish Nationalist who rebelled against the English and failed (Gifford and Seidman 310). His last words exactly were "Nations of the earth. Then and not till then. Let my epitaph be written. I have done," which shows Joyce's support for Irish nationalism using the reference to lead his readers there once they finish the episode, giving them the final piece of code to the final line of the overture (Joyce 11.1289–1294). Naturally, the end of the episode warrants placement in the discussion regarding why it was placed in the overture. The end of the movement creates an experience with Joyce advocating for something he believes in, while clarifying a historical reference the reader was unaware existed, but most importantly rewarding the reader for finishing the musical movement. This shows a key component of the disorder theory presented by Paulson, and subsequently McLeod: once upon completion, now begin interpretation.

Two actual songs contribute to the episode, one from each of the siren figures. Joyce creates a way of juxtaposing Dedalus and Dollard's singing simultaneously with the audience's reaction. Dedalus sings the first song, which is foreshadowed in the overture, but this actually becomes a moment where the brightest side of Simon Dedalus shines through. His character develops immensely in this episode. It is the peak of his narrative arc for the novel because it shows singing with his friends is one of the few things that bring him enjoyment. Dedalus sings the song "M'appari," which gets a warm and heartfelt reaction from the audience (11.598). What is so special about this song is that this has the phrase "All is lost now" from the overture. It is a key phrase in the Italian song 'M'appari', which translates to "Martha" (Gifford and Seidman 292). This relates to the affair that occurs between

Boylan and Molly, but the content is also applicable to Bloom. It ends in a tragedy for the couple and is performed while Bloom writes to Martha. The content reflects how Bloom and Martha will never meet, and he will stay lonely.

Bed Dollard sings the second song. Joyce uses the juxtaposition with Dollard as he does with 'M'appari.' The title is "Croppy Boy," which is about a 1798 Irish rebellion, and "croppy" refers to an Irish Rebel. The song is about a soldier who dies in battle, loses his homeland, and is buried in end of the song. This song is applicable to Bloom because it represents the suitors that have come to Odysseus' wife and begin to take over by conquering his home as Odysseus is presumed dead. Looking back on the whole episode, one can reflect on how far the narrative has advanced. Dedalus has finally showcased his abilities as a musician. Boylan has conquered Molly. Bloom develops a voice previously unknown to the reader that he uses to write to Martha. Lastly, Bloom now has to cope with the affair for the rest of the novel. All of these plots points are foreshadowed by the overture.

What is crucial about the episode's musical movement is that it is an opera, so to speak. Some voices sing out loud, while others have their musical contributions in the prose. The episode has eight voices that progress the dialogue. Though Bloom and Boylan do not necessarily sing, their parts are indeed musical in nature in their own way, for example Boylan's percussive contributions. However, as Abbate would note, the music only supports the narrative. Bloom, Boylan, and Dedalus' voices each has its own value to Joyce's new interpretation of the *Odyssey*.

Nadia Zimmerman, in her article "Musical Form as Narrator: The Fugue of the Sirens in James Joyce's *Ulysses*," discusses that voices are vital to the understanding of what she notes as narrative simultaneity. Zimmerman notes that different voices represent different key signatures of individual movements within the opera. She notes that Joyce "trains the reader to become alert to the time at which events occur by repeating the main theme and then including the shared thematic material that ties time periods together," which Zimmerman explains is because Joyce followed the *fuga per canone*, style of arrangement (110). Joyce trains his reader by letting them piece together all of narrative themes and their functions in the musical movement (111). Zimmerman discusses the different voices, but also the timing of different events. This leaves simultaneous musical contributions available to multiple characters, such as the tapping outside of the bar by Boylan, but the events taking place within the bar are seen through Bloom. All are connected. Joyce helps negotiate which actions belong where by using dialogue-based cues given by different characters. As Zimmerman says, "As each character's iden-

tifying musical material transforms over the course of the piece—in counterpoint with the other characters—so do the characters themselves, so that, consequently, the story progresses” (117). Her textual analysis shows that not only are there multiple voices, but these voices advance the narrative individually. Each character develops a unique style and material that they themselves produce. The juxtaposition of two characters, especially if they are speaking at the same time, will advance the progressing narrative in unison.

Jon D. Green examines sound in a different way in his article “The Sounds of Silence in ‘Sirens’: Joyce’s Verbal Music of the Mind.” Arguing that the writing style in “Sirens” was different than any episode before or after it in the novel, he focuses on “verbal music” by analyzing the stylistic delivery in an attempt “penetrate the linguistic thickets of *Ulysses*,” a concept he borrows from Stephen Paul Scher (Green 491). Green suggests the episode is designed to represent a prose interpretation of a musical composition, and that the overture has valuable references to that composition. “Sirens” also features less prose in comparison to other episodes. Green acknowledges that there are separate voices in the episode that sing and contribute to the overall musical score, but he notes that there are also specific styles of singing that reflect each character’s impact on the narrative as a whole. Bloom and Boylan’s duet develops one of those styles. Though not a formal song, Bloom and Boylan share a figurative duet by blending two narratives simultaneously. Green notes that in the duet, Bloom contributes the stream of consciousness part by listening to the songs and thinking about Boylan and Molly. Green explains that Joyce uses “single sibilant words separated by commas followed by unpunctuated long-vowels liquids describing breath, air, and flight, soaring higher and higher,” to create Bloom’s thoughts (498). Boylan contributes the affair and the percussion, which is reflected the rhythm of the act itself (498). This is what establishes their duet.

Marilyn French discusses that there are three distinct voices in the narration of “Sirens” in her article, “The Voices of the Sirens in *Ulysses*.” In this article she describes the three voices vital to recognizing patterns from the overture: the naturalistic dialogue, Bloom’s interior monologue, and the narrational line (French 2). She notes:

In addition, there is a host of verbal motives that punctuate the piece, “distant music” reminding us of the world outside the Ormond Bar. None of the voices or motives remain discrete; all are at times merged with or submerged in the narrational voice.

Dialogue is transformed into direct discourse and played with; phrases or sentiments from Bloom's voice are scattered through a passage in the narrational voice. . . . The narrational voice is poetic, that is it depends on heavily poetic devices such as measurable rhythm (if not quite meter), rhyme, sound patterns, repetition, fragmentation, and unusual word order. (2)

These distinct voices contribute individual ways of advancing the narrative. Because all of these voices are juxtaposed in the text, they often blend and make scattered meters and patterns. This creates a variety of rhythms throughout the text to partner with the music, which creates harmony. French's explanation of the voices in the episode are consistent with both Green's exploration of literary voices and Levin and Zimmerman's explanations that certain voices contain character specific narrative components. French's reflection on Bloom's stream of consciousness is one that deserves sympathy and praise. According to French:

[Bloom] is sympathetic to most of the characters in the scene, his charitable view of them and their feelings is legitimated. However, Bloom is more emotionally vulnerable than any other character; he too drowns in the general wave of feeling if not an ocean of porter; and he is more than the other figures the butt of narrational hijinks. The narrational voice is so dominant that Bloom's perceptions become, at moments, mere accompaniment in what is not steadily a duet. (9–10)

For French, Bloom's contributions throughout the episode have incomparable value and significance to the advancement narrative of *Ulysses*.

In this chaotic chapter, Bloom's voice seems to be one of the few things that the reader can consistently know will be rational. This is because Bloom is like the reader. He may be overwhelmed and find it difficult to complete the episode, but he is the most consistently reliable force surrounded by all of the chaos and disorder. There are multiple singers simultaneously creating a variety of rhythms. There are often multiple characters advancing the narrative simultaneously, creating two separate melodies and making a harmony. There are multiple movements occurring in a fully arranged textual opera.

The overture, combined with the rest of the orchestral chapter, has many voices, and translating a musical movement into prose is something that has a variety of moving parts and variables. It is understandably chaotic. However, as



Zimmerman explains, “By translating a *fuga per canonem* into prose, Joyce is able to appropriate music’s capacity for simultaneous development and thus offer a new approach to literature,” which is a testament to his abilities as a groundbreaking author (117). This overture uses chaos to give a better understanding of *Ulysses* and establish a well-rounded musical movement. The way that Joyce employs the chaos and confusion forces the reader to expand and be open for experimentation. Because the episode starts off with the total disorder, two things are achieved: the episode is a successful and complete musical movement from beginning to end, and moreover, once the disorder is resolved, the reader can finally experience something that the chaos had previously kept hidden.

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