

2017

The Image of Rebirth in Literature, Media, and Society: 2017 SASSI Conference Proceedings

Thomas G. Endres

University of Northern Colorado, thomas.endres@unco.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digscholarship.unco.edu/sassi>

 Part of the [Film and Media Studies Commons](#), [History Commons](#), and the [Rhetoric and Composition Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Endres, Thomas G., "The Image of Rebirth in Literature, Media, and Society: 2017 SASSI Conference Proceedings" (2017). *Society for the Academic Study of Social Imagery*. 1.
<http://digscholarship.unco.edu/sassi/1>

This Conference Proceeding is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Communication at Scholarship & Creative Works @ Digital UNC. It has been accepted for inclusion in Society for the Academic Study of Social Imagery by an authorized administrator of Scholarship & Creative Works @ Digital UNC. For more information, please contact Jane.Monson@unco.edu.

THE IMAGE OF REBIRTH



in Literature, Media, and Society

2017 Conference Proceedings

Society for the Academic Study of Social Imagery

Edited by
Thomas G. Endres

Published by
University of Northern Colorado

ISSN 2572-4320 (online)

THE IMAGE OF REBIRTH

in Literature, Media, and Society

Proceedings of the
2017 Conference of the
Society for the Academic Study of Social Imagery

March 2017
Greeley, Colorado

Edited by
Thomas G. Endres
University of Northern Colorado

Published by
The Society for the Academic Study of Social Imagery
University of Northern Colorado
Greeley, Colorado

The online repository for SASSI proceedings is hosted by the
University of Northern Colorado's School of Communication and University Libraries
Scholarship & Creative Works @ Digital UNC
<http://digscholarship.unco.edu/sassi/>

ISSN 2572-4320 (online)

Introduction and History

These papers have been selected from among those presented at the spring 2017 conference of the Society for the Academic Study of Social Imagery (SASSI), devoted to the theme of THE IMAGE OF REBIRTH in Literature, Media, and Society. As the following papers demonstrate, this is a rich and provocative topic with interesting and surprising implications.

Originally, the SASSI conference was known as SISSI (with the word "Interdisciplinary" used instead of "Academic") and was held for 25 years in Colorado Springs, CO. The following historical overview was written by SISSI co-founder Will Wright:

In the fall of 1990 Dr. Steve Kaplan and I decided to try to hold an interdisciplinary conference in the spring of 1991. We thought Colorado was a place people like to visit and that we should take advantage of that somehow. Although our University was in Pueblo (then University of Southern Colorado, now Colorado State University-Pueblo), we thought the conference should be held in Colorado Springs, about 45 miles north, because flying into Colorado Springs was much easier. We thought the conference should be interdisciplinary because he was a professor of English and I was a professor of Sociology. We decided that the organizing idea of the conference should be Imagery, which seemed vague, abstract, and interdisciplinary, and that each annual event should have a more specific topic – The Image of (Something). We called ourselves, as an organizing structure, The Society for the Interdisciplinary Study of Social Imagery (SISSI), and then we picked the topic of the first SISSI conference, The Image of Crime.

We found a great hotel, the Antlers in downtown Colorado Springs, and we reserved a set of meeting rooms and guest rooms. Then we made up and mailed out a Call for Papers, wondering if anyone would come. We decided to hold the conference in mid-March because we thought the weather would be good but that skiing would still be possible, so that people might come to the conference so that they could then go skiing. We asked a friend, the well-known criminologist Travis Hershi, if he would give a Keynote address, and he agreed. We figured out a registration fee, I think around \$60, and a Proceedings fee (around \$20), since we planned to produce a Proceedings, and we planned a two day conference. We accepted about 60-70 proposals, from around the country, and most people actually came, participated in sessions, and told us they had a good time. We could pay our bills with the money from the fees, and so it seemed to be a success, much to our surprise.

We began to plan a second conference but this time we would plan for three days and send out far more Calls for Papers. The topic for the second year would be The Image of War, and this time we had about 150 participants, another success. After that we had our routine. We had a mailing list for the Calls of about 2000 universities and about seven departments at each university. We always arranged the conference at the Antlers Hotel, always for three days, and always in the middle of March. And our attendance ranged, depending on the topics, from about 120 to about 180.

The Conference in this form lasted twenty-five years. Some of the topics included The Image of Nature, The Image of Technology, The Image of Violence, The Image of the Frontier,

The Image of the Road, The Image of America, The Image of the American West, The image of the Outsider. Some of the Keynote Speakers included Vine Deloria, Jr. (Custer Died for Your Sins, God Is Red), Stanley Aronowitz (False Promises, Science as Power), Fredric Jameson (The Political Unconscious, Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism), John Nichols (The Milagro Beanfield War, The Magic Journey), Patricia Limerickm (The Legacy of Conquest, Something in the Soil), and Carl Pletsch (Young Nietzsche, Beyond Preservation). Throughout the conferences the presentations were generally stimulating and the sessions were generally lively. It was a rewarding effort and experience, and Steve and I are thrilled that it will now be continued in a slightly different form at the University of Northern Colorado.

*Will Wright
Department of Sociology*

Over the years, the SISSI conference became a favorite for our faculty and graduate students here in the School of Communication at the University of Northern Colorado. Upon professor Wright's retirement, we felt a great loss when there was no SISSI conference in the spring of 2016. We contacted Will and asked if he would be willing to pass the torch to us, and he thoughtfully turned over the reins. We have tried to keep intact as much of the original conference feel and structure as possible, e.g. keeping "The Image of (Something)" theme. Upon reflection, we rebranded the association as SASSI as a way to honor the long-standing title while simultaneously making it our own.

While honoring the past, in some ways it is like starting over. Our 2017 theme - The Image of Rebirth - reflects that regeneration. In lieu of a keynote speaker, we offered a screening of "Pin Up! The Movie," a documentary chronicling the rebirth of "pin up" fashion and lifestyle. The two-year hiatus since the 2015 conference, coupled with a new name and new locale (in a town on the edge of the plains with no commercial airport and no nearby skiing) disrupted the established momentum of SISSI. The first SASSI conference, like its forebearer, was modest in size yet dynamic in output. Just as Will Wright and Steven Kaplan experienced more than 25 years ago, we are hopeful the conference will grow in both popularity and size.

We thank the SISSI founders for allowing us to carry the discussions of social imagery into its new era, and hope you enjoy these contributions from our inaugural gathering.

Thomas Endres
SASSI Executive Director
University of Northern Colorado

July 2017

2017 Advisory Board and Reviewers (all from UNC)

Lin Allen	Melissa Donley	Dale Edwards	
Jarae Fulton	Michelle Honald	Cheryl Pawlowski	David Staton

Table of Contents

Who Killed the World? How Can It Be Reborn? The Image of Rebirth in Mad Max: Fury Road	1
Miranda Auer. Colorado State University, Fort Collins	
Rebirth Denied: Destruction and Loss in W. G. Sebald's <i>Austerlitz</i>	4
Ralph W. Buechler, University of Nevada, Las Vegas	
Film and the Rebirth of the German Republic	9
David Caldwell. University of Northern Colorado	
Recoding and Rebooting: Death and Rebirth Beyond Humanity in HBO's <i>Westworld</i>	15
Lillian Dickerson, Wichita State University	
Alces in Wonderland	24
Dale Edwards and Lin Allen. University of Northern Colorado	
The Culture of Mental Health Rhetoric, an Auto-Ethnographic Study	30
Caitlin Louise Marsh, SYKES Enterprises	
Nothing is Ever Free: A Rhetorical Critique of the Rebirth of Free to Play Video Games	42
Michael Register, Community College of Denver	
1984 reborn: Russian media create alternative reality in the minds of Russian people	51
Andrey Reznikov, Black Hills State University	
Rebirthing Environmental Religion: Photography, the Landscape, and the Construction of Nature	55
Kathleen M. Ryan, University of Colorado Boulder	
Beautiful Deaths and Heard Gazes	65
David Staton, University of Northern Colorado	
The Rebirth of the Female Superhero: Kamala Khan's <i>Ms. Marvel</i>	76
Jacob L. Thomas, Idaho State University	
From Sinner to Martyr: The Rebirths of Malcolm X	86
Frederick D. Watson, Metropolitan State University	

Who Killed the World? How Can It Be Reborn? The Image of Rebirth in *Mad Max: Fury Road*

Miranda Auer
Colorado State University, Fort Collins

The story presented in the 2015 film *Mad Max: Fury Road* revolves around a central theme of revival and rebirth. It is a post-apocalyptic film which is not about the apocalypse, but about the ways in which the world can be reborn. *Mad Max: Fury Road* is nominally a post-apocalyptic adventure tale, focused on Max and his struggles to survive in a barren wasteland. The true purpose of this movie is to portray the rebirth of a world that seems to be beyond hope.

There are two questions which are posed by the film. The question of “Who killed the world?” is asked outright within the film itself. Of that question is born the implicit question “Who or what can bring about the rebirth the world?” The answer is given in the film’s conclusion, leaving the viewer to ponder what implications this has in our own world.

The first question posed by the is set against a barren landscape occupied by a dystopian society where the ability to inflict violence upon others is taken as a measure of power and right to rule. It is posed explicitly, with literal writing on the wall of the women’s chamber in the Citadel. “Who killed the world?”

Immortan Joe rules over his Citadel with an iron fist, and views the other characters in the film only as a means to his ends – his Warboys (such as Nux, the only named Warboy in the film) to die for him, led by Imperator Furiosa; his Wives (the Splendid Angharad, Cheedo the Fragile, Toast the Knowing, Capable, and the Dag) to bear him sons, and the titular Max as just another unwilling donor of blood to serve Immortan Joe’s Warboys (*Mad Max: Fury Road*, 2015).

The main ideology supported by Immortan Joe is that dying in a “glorious” way – i.e. in battle, with others as your witness - is the only way to be reborn into a “Valhalla” of eternal conquering. The only way to be reborn is to die a violent, physical death in this world, for the glory of your commander.

Mad Max: Fury Road challenges this paradigm through Max’s character, but predominantly through the characters of Furiosa and the other women in the film. They do not start out seeking rebirth of the world – they start out with seeking escape. Immortan Joe’s twisted view of what life is for, and how rebirth may occur, abandons the most marginalized people in his kingdom, and leaves them bereft of any hope. As long as they are under his power, any type of renewal or freedom is impossible. However, this desire for escape is not solely for themselves, but also for the children that they are carrying. They are determined that their children will not be born into a society that only values them for the way in which they die.

The question of “Who killed the world?” is repeated later, furiously, by Angharad as she throws the question like a weapon into Nux’s face, as he’s trying to insist that he is not to blame for the violence and death that haunts their world (*Mad Max: Fury Road*, 2015). What she is trying to make him see, and what he eventually does realize, leading to his heroic sacrifice at the end of the film, is that even though Nux was not one of the original men to destroy the world for the sake

of profit and power, as long as he cooperates with Immortan Joe's regime, he is complicit in its continuation, and the continuing death of the world.

The second question, posed implicitly by the film, is the question of what it would take to bring the world back to life. Part of the answer lies in the destruction of Immortan Joe's regime, as well as the regimes of the other owners of the land – known as the Bullet Farmer and the People Eater. But the way to the rebirth of the world does not lie with only destruction. There has to be a way to grow beyond what has been, to take the destruction and power struggle that has already been, and turn it into something sustainable. Imperator Furiosa is the first in the film to embrace this, when she aids the Wives in their flight from the Citadel in her War Machine – she turns her machinery of death to a vehicle of escape to freedom, taking the thing she was given by Immortan Joe and using it against him.

As much as Max is nominally the hero of the film, it is perhaps wiser to refer to him only as the protagonist. The women are the heroines of *Mad Max: Fury Road*, and the Splendid Angharad is arguably the most influential. She's the one who reaches out, she's the one who continues hoping, when there's nothing else to hope for, when there is no *reason* for that hope – she still does. Angharad hopes, and that is the reason that the film takes the shape it does. She does not make it to the end, but she makes it possible for the others to make it to the end. She shapes the story not with her death, but with her life, and the choices she makes.

The answer to the second question is given through her. Who saves the world? The people who hope, and keep hoping, and are willing to fight and die for that hope, but who do not kill needlessly for it. The ones who want to live in peace, not die in glory. In short, in the world of *Mad Max: Fury Road* – the women. This is why the story centers around their journey – Max is just along for the ride.

When the Wives reach the edge of the salt plains, they do so in the company of a group of older women who have been roaming these lands – Furiosa's family, before she was taken by Immortan Joe as a child. One of them is the bearer of a bag of seeds – what could be the beginnings of the end of the famine and desolation around them, if not for the lack of water...which the Citadel has in abundance. The women, and Max, are faced with a choice. Keep going, risk the salt flats and either find freedom, or a slow and painful death – or turn around. Go back to the place that they were running from, go back to the people they left behind, and destroy what is there in order to build something new.

They turn around. Their choice to turn around does not ensure the rebirth of the world, but it does make it possible. They go back. As Max puts it, it's "a hard day" full of battles and sacrifice – but they go back. With the Wives' bravery and Nux's sacrifice, they defeat Immortan Joe, thereby putting an end to the violence of his rule. And once they return to the Citadel, the people they left behind welcome them back, and open the floodgates of the Citadel, letting the water flow freely and enabling the rebirth of a society that values growth above destruction, and life above death.

Their turning around is no suicidal rush into impossible odds with the knowledge that death wouldn't be that bad an outcome. It is a charge into impossible odds with the knowledge that death would be terrible, and that victory is nearly impossible. But...that *nearly*. That slim glimmer of

hope is worth it, is worth the risk. It says - if you fail, you die. But if you succeed...not only do you live, but those that come after you live. This cycle of violent death in the vague hope of rebirth is broken, for the promise of rebirth in the here and now, with water and seeds that enable the world to change for the better. For the viewer, *Mad Max: Fury Road* showcases the purpose of resisting, in a world where resistance is deemed unlikely of succeeding, and therefore pointless to attempt. Successful and lasting societal change via resistance based on hope for the rebirth of a world is nearly impossible...but only nearly.

Works Cited

IMDB; Mad Max: Fury Road; cast and crew listing. Accessed 17 January 2017.

http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1392190/fullcredits?ref_=tt_ql_1

Mad Max: Fury Road. Directed by George Miller. Warner Bros. Pictures, 2015.

Rebirth Denied: Destruction and Loss in W. G. Sebald's *Austerlitz*

Ralph W. Buechler
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Best known for his socio-literary critical study *Luftkrieg und Literatur*, 1999 (*On the Natural History of Destruction*), the German writer W. G. Sebald also completed four longer novels (or narratives, documentary fiction) before his premature 2001 death in a car accident near his home in Norwich, England,

Influenced by such writers as Enzensberger, Kafka, Nabakov, Bernhard, Borges and Proust, Sebald's writing deconstructed completely the border between fact and fiction and may broadly be characterized as fictionalized memoir, extended essay, digressive travelogue and documentary fiction.

Largely plotless, with complex, labyrinthine sentences¹ that run like endlessly criss-crossing railroad tracks, Sebald's literary style is often described as wry and sardonic, his tone detached, melancholic and autumnal, while his themes deal with the difficult and paradox questions of history, identity, memory, melancholy, death and destruction.

What is more, Sebald makes frequent use of intertextuality and intermediality, particularly as evidenced by his insertion into the text of black and white photos of persons, places and objects.

Indeed, by far Sebald's most striking structural element in his literary narratives is his utilization of images—drawings, illustrations, sketches, but mostly black and white snapshots sprinkled generously throughout the text in the guise of underlying visual evidence. Antidotes and instruments of resistance to the ravages of amnesia, these uncanny, frozen instants of time function as mechanisms of memory that bring the past into the present.

The narrative span of *Austerlitz* stretches from the early summer of 1967 to 1996 and continues with the narrative structures begun in *The Emigrants* and *Rings of Saturn*, including the narrative within a narrative within a narrative, as the protagonist narrator Austerlitz recounts his experiences, thoughts and feelings to the narrator/author, a re-narration that often further encapsulates still a third narrator—that of Vera Rysanova, Austerlitz' erstwhile nanny and close friend of his mother Agata,

The narrator first meets Austerlitz in the waiting room of the Antwerp train station observing from the start Austerlitz' enigmatic otherness of appearance—his army-surplus rucksack and his unfashionable yet sturdy travel attire—and behavior—contrary to the random stares and vacuous indifference of those around him, Austerlitz appears intensely concentrated upon and involved with his surroundings.

As their ensuing conversations take place in the station buffet room, the bistros and cafes in Antwerp, Lüttich and Brussels, as well as on the Zeebrugge ferry to England and in Austerlitz' office in Bloomsbury, Austerlitz rarely speaks of himself. Instead, he holds forth *in medias res* on all manners and matters of architecture, its history and sociology as emblems of power, control domination and megalomania. Among these he counts 1) the great European train stations,² 2) the public buildings of capital and bureaucracy, 3) the hospitals and asylums, 4) the prisons and

fortresses that dot the historical landscape, 5) the workers' barracks, housing projects and concentration camps—all these refract the narrator's consideration as monolithic and monumental monstrosities that reveal both their utopian dreams and their tyrannical nature.

Ultimately, these labyrinthine structures, the spaces they occupy and the places that contain them, remain for Austerlitz ghostly reminders of history's crimes, absurdities and tragedies as well as of the mythology of progress promised by science and technology.

After a long eleven-year cessation of contact between the narrator and Austerlitz, chance and coincidence once again bring them together—this time at the Great Eastern Hotel in London. For the first time Austerlitz speaks at length and in detail about his childhood, shrouded in mystery. As far back as he can remember he has lived in Bala, Wales as the child Dafydd Elias, child to a Calvinist preacher, a child who was enrolled in the private school of Stower Grange near Oswestry where he first learns of his adoption and his real name—Jacques Austerlitz.

Thus is set into motion a search for the self and its history, the recounting to the narrator of which continues a quarter of a year later at Austerlitz' home in Alderney Street, London. Subsequent to retiring from his teaching post in 1991 and dedicating his time and effort to a vague yet massive historical study of civilization, A suffers a nervous breakdown that opens the doors to premonitions of what really happened to him as a small child prior to his life in Wales.

The resulting journey to Prague makes possible his meetings with Vera Rysanova, his nanny and mother's best friend, who then continues the story that is told to Austerlitz that is told to the narrator, finally revealing the truth—that Austerlitz had “at age four and a half departed from Prague immediately before the start of the war with on one of the *Kindertransports* that left from there.”³ What is more, Austerlitz learns from Vera of the events that befell his mother amid the collective paroxysms of the Nazi occupation, of her deportation or *Einwaggonierung* to *Terezín/Theresienstadt* and her final deportation in September 1944 to the extermination camps in the east.

Significantly, Austerlitz returns home to England through Germany (upon which he had heretofore never set foot) by the identical route taken by the *Kindertransport*. Departing from the Prague train station via Nürnberg, Köln, Frankfurt and back to London, where he again suffers a mental breakdown leading to a three-week coma and a year-long convalescence at the mental hospital of St. Clement. Finally, Austerlitz recounts his efforts to reassemble his fragmented self through an obsessive study of the administrative pathology of *Terezín/Theresienstadt* and of the mindless pedantry of its systems of control, domination and destruction.

Austerlitz bids a final farewell to the author at the *Gare Austerlitz* from which he departs to continue his search for his father, who had been able to escape to Paris from Prague before the beginning of the War, but who may have been deported from this very station to the concentration camp Gurs at the end of 1942. The author returns to London by way of the book's beginning—he once again stops in Antwerpen, as he had twenty-nine years before.

As long as he can remember, says Austerlitz, a sense of dread, loss and alienation have filled his life with a foreboding of distress. He expresses time and again the feeling that “he did not feel at home anywhere, but rather in a sort of imprisonment.”⁴

If the story of Austerlitz is, at bottom, a search for identity, then Austerlitz' identity may be read from the intricate tapestry woven by time, place and memory: "Ever since my childhood and youth, I have not known where I was. As far back as I can see, I've always felt as if I had no real place in the world, as if I were not really present in the world."⁵

All places (train stations, fortifications, hospitals, archives/museums, government buildings, prisons, ghettos and camps) possess for Austerlitz something of a personality, character and consciousness—it is not as if he remembered them; it is as if they remembered him. This travelogue of places functions, then, as a sort of inverted pilgrimage that seeks to join them through time into a history and understanding of the past.

Austerlitz' quest for his self is possible only within a re-construction of his past. For Austerlitz the past is not dead, it is not even past, ever returning as the ghost of memory. Yet, even as his memory collapses the present into the past, Austerlitz feels himself to be living in a world whose history is continuously shattered by the mechanisms of erasure— ideology, denial, amnesia.⁶

Alluding to the perversity of measuring time as progress, when in fact, the present is constantly lost to oblivion, Austerlitz compares the hand of the massive clock hovering over the Antwerp train station waiting room to an executioner's sword.⁷

For Austerlitz, time is experienced as repetition, as eternal return, as premonition of the past and a return of the dead. Time manifests as a cycle for Austerlitz, in that, while visiting a place, he simultaneously experiences, in his memory, this very same place at an earlier time. For example, as he returns to London from Prague, he unearths that trauma of so long ago by travelling the very same route taken by the *Kindertransport* that carried him to safety.

Austerlitz' search for identity is manifested first in the loss of identity, particularly as evidenced by his two mental breakdowns. Underscoring the deep affinity among memory, language and identity, the arrival of the first breakdown before the journey to Prague, was signaled by a linguistic paralysis reminiscent of Hofmannstahl's *Lord Chandos Krise*. Loss of language collapses into meaningless clichés and leads to loss of reality which in turn leads to loss of self, as Austerlitz realizes that "in reality, I really had no memory, no consciousness or even being in the world."⁸

Amid depression and hallucinations, Austerlitz becomes a nighttime *flâneur*, meandering the London streets and ending up in the Liverpool train station, in the ladies waiting room, now closed for renovations. Here, out of a confusion of visions and epiphanies emanating from the station itself, as well as from the passengers and their conversations, spirals the realization that "it must have been in this waiting room that I arrived in England more than a half century ago."⁹

Once in Prague and after having located his mother's close friend Vera Rysanova and as he learns the truth about his mother's deportation to T/S, Austerlitz suggests that "when memory returns, one believes sometimes that one is gazing through a glass mountain back in time."¹⁰

It is for Austerlitz as if time were bending back onto itself and it is at this time that he first sees a picture of himself taken on March 3, 1939, one half year before his departure from Prague. A naïve lad, innocent and ignorant of what will soon befall him, dressed as a page at a masked ball

stares out of the photo at its older self, who remarks of the uncanniness of all photos “as if the photos themselves had a memory and were remembering us.”¹¹

The second breakdown spirals out to of Austerlitz’ return from Prague, as he slowly uncovers the ruins of his mother’s destruction in *Theresienstadt* and his own prior rescue via the *Kindertransport*. He learns of the preparations in the *Theresienstadt* Ghetto for the infamous visit of the Red-Cross Commission in summer 1944, of preparations to show the prison as a model camp and of preparations that were captured in a film which Austerlitz, sitting in the Imperial War Museum, incessantly watches at slow motion in the attempt to find, somehow among all the prisoners appearing in the film, his mother, whom he finally believes indeed to have found, sitting in the audience at a concert of Jewish folk music.

Yet this discovery of his mother among the *Theresienstadt* prisoners designated for deportation soon to the east provides neither understanding nor closure: “it was impossible for me to imagine myself in that ghetto and to realize that Agata, my mother, had been there in that place.”¹² Indeed, knowing of his origins and of his mother’s fate would serve as neither palliative, nor therapy nor cure. The knowledge of the source of his pathology could not remove that pathology.”

The feelings of alienation and absence would not be relieved by memory—to the contrary all the universe continues to reveal itself to Austerlitz as a purposeless process wherein rebirth, renewal or progress exist only as necessary myth. The odyssey of Austerlitz has led to the epiphany that, while the *Kindertransport* may have rescued him physically, it destroyed him psychologically and spiritually nevertheless.¹³

Endnotes

¹Sebald widely employs the extended adjective for an estrangement effect.

²Thus the iconography of trains and train stations function as magnets of collective memory and constitute the mythical topoi for modern travel, exodus and exile.

³“im Alter von 4 ½ Jahren in den Monaten unmittelbar vor dem Ausbruch des Krieges, die Stadt Prag verlassen zu haben mit einem der damals von hier abgehenden, sogenannten Kindertransporte.” (216) (All translations mine.)

⁴“ich nicht mehr zu Hause war, sondern in einer Art Gefangenschaft.” (70)

⁵“Seit meiner Kindheit und Jugend . . . habe ich nicht gewußt, wer ich in Wahrheit bin.” (68) “Soweit ich zurückblicken kann, sagte A, “habe ich mich immer gefühlt, als hätte ich keinen Platz in der Wirklichkeit, als sei ich gar nicht vorhanden.” (269)

⁶Hence, during his visit of the Bibliothèque Nationale the librarian Henri Lemoine remarks to Austerlitz all institutions, as well as the buildings they inhabit, “seek to make an end to everything that still has a life in the past.” (“ . . . wolle mit all dem ein Ende Machen, was noch ein Leben habe in der Vergangenheit.”). (404)

⁷ Austerlitz declares time to be “the most artificial of all of human inventions.” (“die Künstlichste aller menschlichen Erfindungen”). (149)

⁸“... ich in Wahrheit weder Gedächtnis noch Denkvermögen noch eigentlich eine Existenz besaß.” (182)

⁹“... es in diesem Wartesaals gewesen sein mußte, dass ich in England angelangt war vor mehr als ein halbes Jahrhundert.” (201)

¹⁰“... wenn einem die Erinnerung kommt, glaubt man mitunter, man sehe durch einen gläsernen Berg in die vergangene Zeit.” (232)

¹¹“... als hätten die Bilder selbst ein Gedächtnis und erinnerten sich an uns.” (266)

¹²“... es is mir unmöglich gewesen, mich in das Ghetto zurückzusetzen und mir vorzustellen, das Agata, meine Mutter, damals da gewesen sein soll an diesem Ort.” (350)

¹³Austerlitz is estranged, then, by the absence of any redemptive teleology. Catastrophe and destruction do not function as the Hegelian dialectical antitheses to prepare the way for a new *telos*, rather they just occur.

Works Cited

Sebal, W. G. *Austerlitz*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2008.

_____. *Die Ringe des Saturn*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2003.

_____. *Luftkrieg und Literatur*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2003.

Film and the Rebirth of the German Republic

David Caldwell
University of Northern Colorado

Film historians have pointed out numerous connections between German cinema and the notions of birth and rebirth. Among the more prominent examples is the life and work of filmmaker Rainer Werner Fassbinder, one of the founders of the post-World War II New German Cinema movement. However, the cadre of German film directors succeeding Fassbinder's generation is keeping alive the association between film and the difficult emergence of democratic nationhood. Filmmakers such as Lars Kraume, Giulio Ricciarelli and Caroline Link are contributing in new ways to the rebirth narrative of the Federal Republic of Germany with work that both acknowledges and challenges the contributions of cinematic forebears such as Fassbinder.

Fassbinder set the standard for associating filmmaking in Germany with national rebirth. Born only three weeks after the end of World War II, he exemplifies figuratively and literally the rebirth of German cinema after the artistic repression of the Third Reich. As his biographer Jürgen Trimborn reminds us, Fassbinder confronted the Nazi legacy, the dark side of the German Economic Miracle and the terrorism of the Red Army Faction, among other chapters of the post-war German narrative. Trimborn characterizes Fassbinder's work as the most important chronicle by far of West German history from Konrad Adenauer to Andreas Baader (11). His film career is clearly based on the conviction that the story of the Federal Republic of Germany, founded in 1949, is likewise the story of his life. The term New German Cinema, of which Fassbinder was a major participant, similarly makes clear the association between German film and the metaphor of birth. Alexander Kluge, Werner Herzog, Volker Schlöndorff and others joined Fassbinder in taking aim at the Economic Miracle that, with the initial help of the American Marshal Plan, helped the Federal Republic of Germany rise phoenix-like from the ashes of the war and take its place in the anti-communist post-war global order. However, as German film in the 21st century continues to demonstrate, the appeal of an economically prosperous consumer society has tended to obscure the already difficult need for critical self-examination and the prosecution of those whom filmmaker Wolfgang Staudte famously termed "the murderers among us" in the title of his 1946 film *Die Mörder sind unter uns*.

In the multiple auteur film *Deutschland im Herbst*, (*Germany in Autumn*), released in 1978, Fassbinder famously engages his mother, Lieselotte Eder, in an unscripted conversation on camera about the state of German society. The director presses his mother to go beyond predictable laments about the country's problems, which at the time included a wave of domestic terrorism, and suggest an ideal solution. Eventually she offers the possibility of a benevolent dictatorship as the answer that would probably work best for Germany. The statement is left hanging without objection or commentary by the filmmaker, who obviously knew the sentiment was lying somewhere beneath the surface and had merely provided his mother with the opportunity to express it. It is an "a-ha moment" in the film, when Fassbinder and his colleagues crystallize for their viewers the reality that Germany's susceptibility to authoritarian rule has hardly diminished since the founding of the Bonn Republic. The propensity for fascism has merely become circumspect and requires more effort to uncover.

While the New German Cinema aimed its sense of alarm and indignation at the unrepentant Nazi *Geist* swirling barely out of sight in German society, Fassbinder's generation largely overlooked the few but important examples of reform and progress that took place in Germany during his lifetime. One of those steps forward was the work of Fritz Bauer, chief prosecutor (*Staatsanwalt* or attorney general) of the federal state of Hesse from 1958 to 1963. Bauer, a Social Democrat, Jew and gay man, fled to Sweden in order to survive the Nazi period but returned to Germany in the early 1950s to resume his career in law. Working against ingrained opposition within the Christian Democratic government of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, he is credited with setting in motion efforts that eventually led to the discovery of Adolf Eichmann in South American exile. Eichmann was subsequently abducted by Mossad, the Israeli secret service, and put on trial in Jerusalem. Bauer also pursued but ultimately failed to bring to justice the Auschwitz doctor Josef Mengele. Initially aided by the investigative journalism of reporter Thomas Gnielka of the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, Fritz Bauer and his team of lawyers managed to prosecute nineteen former Nazis of complicity in the mass deaths at Auschwitz. Most of them were ordinary people plucked from comfortable post-war bourgeois occupations and placed in the public spotlight in the so-called Auschwitz Trials that took place in Frankfurt in 1963.

After these trials, and even after Bauer's unexplained death in 1968, the prosecutor was largely uncelebrated. Bauer was interviewed by documentary filmmaker Erwin Leiser in 1961 for the film *Eichmann und das Dritte Reich*, (released in English-language markets as *Murder by Signature*), but it was not until 2014 that the interview received an appreciable viewership in Germany, when it was included in a public television documentary *Mörder unter uns – Fritz Bauers einsamer Kampf* (*Murderers among Us – Fritz Bauer's Lonely Struggle*). This broadcast marked the beginning of a recovery from obscurity of Bauer's name and significance. Fassbinder's generation pointed to the disappointing results of the Auschwitz Trials as evidence of unresolved conflict in the soul of German society. Few of those convicted served out full sentences, and the initially sensational court cases rapidly faded in the public memory. Fassbinder's focus on the silent, guilty generation of his parents corresponded to fears that the republican rebirth of Germany could turn out to be a miscarriage of justice and a stepping stone back to fascism. Today in Germany, however, one increasingly finds Fritz Bauer recognized for his quiet commitment to worthy ideals. A lack of far-reaching historical redress resulting from the Auschwitz Trials in Frankfurt is not seen as a reason to dismiss Bauer's efforts and idealism. In 2014, for example, Oliver Kaefer, writing in the influential publication *Die Zeit*, described Bauer as a figure without whom the Federal Republic of Germany would not be possible (D15).

Filmmaking has likewise taken sudden notice of Bauer, including two productions in a two-year period which depict his difficult prosecutorial work in an era when most in Germany preferred not to interrupt the comforts of the Economic Miracle with wrenching revelations about the past. Kaefer quotes Bauer as saying that leaving his office was tantamount to stepping out into hostile foreign territory (D15). The revival of interest in Fritz Bauer has cast the German legal profession in a new light by acknowledging a small cadre of conscientious post-war prosecutors and judges, whose contributions were largely unrecognized by their contemporaries.

The three filmmakers discussed here as representatives of the generation succeeding Fassbinder include Caroline Link, born in 1964, Giulio Ricciarelli (1965) and Lars Kraume (1973). The new attention to Fritz Bauer by Fassbinder's successor generation, or more importantly, attention to a *positive* figure in the newly-born post-war West German republic, corresponds to the

generational categories and conflicts described by sociologist Heinz Bude in his 2001 study *Generation Berlin*. Bude does not address the ways in which his generational distinctions are reflected in German film. Nonetheless, his analysis is useful in drawing a comparison between two generations of German filmmakers. On the one hand, the New German Cinema emerged during the era of Fritz Bauer without addressing Bauer's contributions to the post-war German historical narrative. On the other hand, films made by the successor generation to the New German Cinema address Germany's Nazi past without any obvious imperative to explain the descent into fascism or to come to terms with the past, in the sense of the German process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Bude points out that the generation of 1968 activists born during and right after World War II (i.e. Fassbinder's generation) embraced the concept of the activist hero who defied the bourgeois complacency of their parents and courageously insisted on keeping alive the topic of complicity in the politics of the Third Reich (63). The generation of filmmakers working in the 21st century, however, fit more closely with Bude's description of the generation born after 1960, the "children of Karl Marx and Coca-Cola." This generation of Germans no longer has an agenda of propitiation or revolution (64). Significantly, their films focus on personal narratives, decisions and dilemmas as pieces of 20th-century history. The focus of the title *Germany in Autumn* typifies the priorities of the generation that created the New German Cinema. A title such as *The People vs. Fritz Bauer*, on the other hand, is more typical of a successor generation focused on personal, albeit also political narratives that embody the conflict between post-fascist idealism and skepticism.

Lars Kraume's 2014 film *Labyrinth of Lies* (*Im Labyrinth des Schweigens*) demonstrates the scandalous obscurity of even commonplace terms such as Auschwitz among Germans in the late 1950s. In one scene, for example, a Holocaust survivor is interviewed by the young attorney Johann Radmann, played by Alexander Fehling, whom Bauer has enlisted to lead the Auschwitz murder investigation. After Bauer enters the room and takes a seat in the shadows, Kraume's camera largely assumes Bauer's point of view. It is during this scene that Bauer's quiet awareness of the vast significance of Auschwitz is slowly conveyed to a younger generation that has been sheltered from the extent of the atrocity. As the former Auschwitz prisoner speaks, it becomes clear that the assistant prosecutor is not even aware that Auschwitz was the site of mass death. Bauer allows the witness to disabuse the young prosecutor of his misinformed belief that the crimes committed at Auschwitz were limited to isolated individual killings.

Mirroring his character's ignorance of Auschwitz, actor Alexander Fehling remarked in an interview after the release of the film, that prior to reading the script to *Labyrinth of Lies*, he did not know the name Fritz Bauer. Fehling goes on to say that the generation of German filmmakers who were Bauer's contemporaries likely had a similar lack of awareness of how important their efforts would be in creating a viable dynamic between the post-war economy and liberal democracy (DP/30). Fassbinder and his fellow anti-establishment artists were part of the critical turn away from authoritarianism in German society, but as the new generation of German filmmakers makes clear, so were contemporaries of Fassbinder who were members of the establishment, such as Fritz Bauer.

Giulio Ricciarelli's 2015 film *Der Staat gegen Fritz Bauer* (*The People vs. Fritz Bauer*) further exemplifies the new look at the past being taken by recent German cinema. As both director and screenwriter, Ricciarelli went to great lengths to accomplish historical authenticity, including the casting of Burghart Klaussner in the lead role, an actor who bears a striking resemblance to the

historical Bauer. The film is resplendent with the mid-century modern design that characterized the Economic Miracle and which, tellingly, influenced the design of the new judicial center constructed in the 1950s in Frankfurt. The film's set meticulously recreates the décor of Bauer's office, based on period photographs of Bauer at his desk.

As with Kraume's film, *The People vs. Fritz Bauer* depicts an intergenerational relationship in the dual roles of Fritz Bauer and his young assistant prosecutor, here given the name Karl Angermann. At the crux of the film's dramatic tension is a German law making it treasonous to share intelligence with a foreign security service such as Mossad. In advocating cooperation with Mossad, Bauer, who knows the Adenauer government will not move against Eichmann, raises the troubling proposition that love of country can mean betrayal of country through the considered disobedience of its laws. Without hope of an aggressive pursuit of the war criminals by the German government, conscientious state prosecutors were left with foreign collaboration as their only alternative. In a reversal of the father-son roles traditionally found in German society, and reflected in Fassbinder's work, the older generation begets to the younger generation a challenge to staid definitions of patriotism and legality.

Ricciarelli's Bauer is a striking portrayal of the historical figure because of the writer-director's unshrinking emphasis on Bauer's Jewishness and on his homosexuality. The filmmaker capitalizes on the prosecutor's Jewish identity as a means for confronting the younger attorney Angermann with the reality that the post-war generation is not immune from anti-Semitism. Indeed, the relationship between the two men must overcome the possibility that the protégé may be ill at ease with Bauer as a Jew. By exposing underlying prejudices on a personal level, the film ultimately points to the possibility of new and less divisive intergenerational relationships and to healing on a national level.

While Ricciarelli employs Jewishness as a feature that distinguishes his character Bauer from the Angermann figure, gay identity is presented as something which the two men share. At a time when West Germany's infamous anti-gay Paragraph 175 was still the law, Angermann's entrapment after an affair with a government-paid informant becomes leverage with which federal legal authorities can threaten him when his and Bauer's Nazi hunting makes the Adenauer administration uncomfortable. However, Ricciarelli avoids culinary bonding between the two men based on their mutual sexuality. The narrative never exploits their shared sexual identity for gratuitous purposes, nor does gay identity affect their professional relationship. By de-emphasizing gayness as a potential spark between the two main characters, Ricciarelli emphasizes the small-minded egregiousness of the federal authorities who use sexual identity as a means of persecution. Still, the inclusion of an additional gay character in the film, in the form of the younger jurist Angermann, hearkens again to Fassbinder as an important precedent for gay identity in the New German Cinema. In addition to filming himself together with his mother in *Germany in Autumn*, Fassbinder also included in that film a scene in which he is seen in bed with Armin Meier, his partner at the time. In contrast to the closeted gay character Karl Angermann, whose narrative context is Germany in the 1950s, the iconoclastic Fassbinder in the 1970s represents a rebuke of the Nazi-era bigotry of his parents. At the same time, however, Ricciarelli's account of Angermann's and Bauer's difficult quest for justice champions the generation of Fassbinder's parents. The film reveals obstacles which the older generation faced but which Fassbinder did not, as well as the courage and determination with which those challenges were confronted by agents

of conscience working inside a system that had made only rudimentary progress in overcoming the Nazi past.

In each of the two Fritz Bauer films under consideration, the attorney figures who comprise the younger halves of the quasi father-son relationships are purely fictional characters. Neither Johann Radmann nor Karl Angermann is a historical figure. Working independently of one another, Kraume and Ricciarelli nonetheless shared the goal of creating an account which went beyond a bio-pic about Fritz Bauer or a drama about the hunt for Eichmann or Mengele. Both filmmakers intended narratives about rebirth. Both found it necessary to foster an intergenerational relationship through the invention of a role for a young prosecutor representing the successor class of Nazi hunters who could carry the torch beyond the post-war era. The resuscitation of Fritz Bauer as a cinematic father figure is an alternative configuration not just of the traditional power structure of the German legal profession, but also of Germany's authority-prone parental generation, as represented by Fassbinder's mother in *Germany in Autumn*.

Kraume's and Ricciarelli's films revise perceptions of Fassbinder's young post-war generation of activists. The novice assistant prosecutors created as sidekicks for their mentor Fritz Bauer are initially less confident and less informed than their bold counterparts in the New German Cinema of the 1960s and 1970s. Their role as conveyors of rebirth is painful, difficult and dangerous. Rather than rebelling against the system, they work within it as members of the established constitutional order, and yet, not unlike 60s rebels, they must negotiate ways to honor personal and social responsibility when conscience conflicts with the law.

Another important film narrative about Germany's emergence from fascism is Caroline Link's 2001 work *Nirgendwo in Afrika* (*Nowhere in Africa*). Link has largely been perceived as an apolitical filmmaker, but in light of the recent films about Fritz Bauer, *Nowhere in Africa* is worth another look. Set during the Third Reich, it is an adaptation of Stefanie Zweig's account of the exile in Africa of a Jewish couple named Redlich and their young daughter. The book and the film end with Walter Redlich's difficult decision after the war to return to the country responsible for his exile and for the deaths of his and his wife's parents in the camps. Not insignificantly, Walter Redlich is a jurist. Like the return of Fritz Bauer from exile, Redlich's repatriation and acceptance of a judgeship in the new Federal Republic are explicitly articulated as participation in the creation of a new Germany. Just as with its later counterparts about Fritz Bauer, Caroline Link's film carefully constructs a productive intergenerational relationship. After Walter Redlich despairs of ever practicing law in Germany again, he gives his court robe to Owuor, the African caretaker and mentor to their young daughter. Given the role which tenacious jurists will play in Germany's rebirth, the judicial garb is a powerful symbol, and it is significant that Owuor preserves the robe and wears it proudly. Although the flowing black gown appears jarringly out of place when worn on African farm fields, it is no less a disjunction than the transplanting of German Jews to alien shores. As caretaker and companion of the Redlich's young daughter, but also caretaker of the judicial robe, Owuor is a seminal character in the narrative. He symbolically leads the next generation of Germans toward a rebirth of their country by means of participation in the justice system.

Since at least 2001 German filmmaking has demonstrated the passing of the torch from the reformers of the New German Cinema to a younger generation. For filmmakers such as Kraume, Ricciarelli and Link, the post-war years of the Bonn Republic, rather than the fascist period, are

salient history. 21st century German historical films illustrate both by a greater distance in time from the Third Reich and a focus that replaces the narrative of accusation and retribution for injustice with a recognition of the ideals and personal values necessary for pursuing justice. However, as right-wing responses to the Syrian immigrant crisis indicate, rebirth is a process rather than an event.

Works Cited

Bude, Heinz. *Generation Berlin*. Berlin: Merve, 2001. Print.

DP/30. “*Labyrinth of Lies*. Interview with Giulio Ricciarelli and Alexander Fehling.” YouTube. 12 Oct.

2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3cVu8E8eWmU>. Web. Accessed 4 Feb. 2016.

Fassbinder, Rainer Werner, et al, dirs. *Deutschland im Herbst*. ABS Filmproduktion, 1978. Film.

Kaever, Oliver. “Der Held will keine Rache.“ *Die Zeit* 30 Sept. 2015: D15. Print.

Kraume, Lars, dir. *Der Staat gegen Fritz Bauer*. Zero One Film, 2015. Film.

Leiser, Erwin. *Eichmann und das Dritte Reich*. Praesens-Film, 1961. Film.

Link, Caroline, dir. *Nirgendwo in Afrika*. Bavaria-Film, 2001. Film.

Mörder unter uns – Fritz Bauers einsamer Kampf. ZDF, 2014. Film.

Ricciarelli, Giulio, dir. *Im Labyrinth des Schweigens*. Claussen Wöbke Putz Filmproduktion, 2014. Film.

Staudte, Wolfgang, dir. *Die Mörder sind unter uns*. DEFA, 1946. Film.

Trimborn, Jürgen. *Ein Tag ist ein Jahr ist ein Leben*. Rainer Werner Fassbinder. Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 2012. Print.

Recoding and Rebooting: Death and Rebirth Beyond Humanity in HBO's *Westworld*

Lillian Dickerson
Wichita State University

Humans constantly create and recreate, imagine new ways of living, and strive for something faster, easier, more complex. Most struggle to evade death through different means, whether through inventing new technologies or pharmaceuticals to combat old age, or through adopting stringent diet and exercise regimens. In the 2016 HBO series *Westworld*, humans explore notions of mortality and reality through the manipulation and rebirth of human-like androids.

The androids in *Westworld* serve to fulfill the desires of human visitors to the western theme park – blood thirsty, lusty, or otherwise. The android hosts of the park cannot harm the human guests (in theory), so consequence is of no concern. Each time an android host dies, its memory is erased, its body repaired, and it is rebooted and placed back into one of its routine narrative loops. However, the hosts gradually draw closer in mental acuity to their human creators, disrupting the status quo and rupturing the illusion of safety. Amidst death and rebirth of androids and humans, the *Westworld* hosts, guests, and administrators evaluate their mimesis, or reality, and work to refashion a more authentic mimesis in their respective lives – whatever that may mean.

By the second frame of episode one, the theme of rebirth emerges when Dolores, the oldest host in the park, begins a new loop in her narrative. She wakes in the same bed as always, thinks familiar thoughts, and engages in a formulaic conversation with her father. However, this day demonstrates a reincarnation for Dolores in which she will establish a new life for herself in contrast to the ones she's played out hundreds of times before. While Dolores is not aware of her rebirth, or even the general concept, theories of rebirth and reincarnation have predated her existence by centuries.

Reincarnation and rebirth trace back to Hindus in India around 600 to 800 B.C., as evidenced through the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, an ancient scripture that made the first gestures towards karma and reincarnation. Around 700 B.C. Zoroastrianism and Mithraism in the Middle East shared beliefs of reincarnation, influenced by indigenous pantheistic shamanism after Alexander the Great colonized the eastern Mediterranean, creating contact between new cultural groups and religions (Albrecht). Though it was not necessarily viewed as a tenet at the time, around 520 B.C. Pythagoras taught immortality of the soul and its reincarnation, even from human to animal (Douglass). Plato and Socrates upheld these teachings and continued to use Pythagoras' phrasing – the "transmigration of souls". By about 300 B.C. reincarnation theories popped up in Rome with the Stoics and in China through Taoist teachings (Albrecht). Today, this popular belief system continues to give hope to the faithful around the world for a better life to come.

Similarly, in works of literature, the concept of rebirth has served as a means of comfort. In C.S. Lewis' young adult series, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, for instance, Lewis creates a fantasy world in which siblings growing up during World War II in England can escape the terrors of the war by slipping into the world of Narnia. The series takes the children through a number of adventures in a mystical world with talking animals and fantastical beasts. It is not until the final installment, *The Last Battle*, that the reader comes to realize that Narnia is a type of heaven that the Pevensie children will be reborn into, never to return to England because they have died in the

real world. “There *was* a real railway accident,” said Aslan softly. “Your father and mother and all of you are – as you used to call it in the Shadow-Lands – dead. The term is over: the holidays have begun. The dream is ended: this is the morning” (Lewis 173). Narnia gave the Pevensie children a sort of familiar home after death – a place where they could belong.

In *Westworld*, however, once the hosts become aware that they are continually being rebooted, this newfound knowledge is far from comforting. The viewer witnesses Maeve, a host who is the maître d’ of Westworld’s central saloon, start to have memories of her previous lives. As Maeve experiences traumatic flashbacks from past narratives, she feels waves of confusion and alarm. Maeve’s mimesis as she knows it, which, in truth, is a pseudo-mimesis, comes crashing down around her.

Before fully delving into the pseudo-mimetic states that *Westworld* cultivates, I must further explicate the mimetic environment for which the park’s creators strive. Firstly, there’s Westworld’s geography – the park does not appear to have fences or any visible boundaries. In part, this may be due to the sheer vastness of the park; it continues for miles on end and visitors rarely, if ever, reach its limits. As an android who greets William, a first-time guest to the park, upon his arrival explains, “You start in the center of the park; it’s simple, safe. The further out you get, the more intense the experience gets. How far you want to go is entirely up to you” (Joy and Nolan). The landscape paints an idyllic picture of the Wild West, replete with canyons, rivers, and mountains. It holds multiple towns and an array of social classes and ethnic groups.

The androids, too, are incredibly realistic and difficult to decipher from human beings. While William receives a tutorial from an android host, he questions, “Are you real?” to which the host responds, “Well, if you can’t tell, does it matter?” (Joy and Nolan). For all intents and purposes, the hosts look and act like humans. But, ultimately, it will matter to both species who belongs to which group. The androids are programmed with specific character traits; they eat, sleep, bleed, and even have sex with each other and humans.

The series opens with park founder Dr. Robert Ford’s latest unveiling: each android adopts “reveries,” small improvisational gestures tied to specific memories from his or her character’s narrative, making them appear more lifelike. In his *New York Review of Books* review of the 2015 film *Ex Machina* Daniel Mendelsohn questions how we might recognize humanlike androids as different from ourselves: “How do we distinguish between the maker and the made, between the human and the machine, once the creature, the machine, is endowed with consciousness – a mind fashioned in the image of its creator?” Despite the emphasis placed on making androids appear as lifelike as possible, the technicians at Delos also want guests to recognize the artificiality of the park’s hosts to an extent, because it enables the guests to do that which justifies the price of their ticket to Westworld: act immorally without guilt. Jonathan Nolan and Lisa Joy, the creators of the HBO series addressed the issue of making the actors who play androids appear slightly robotic in an interview on NPR’s *Fresh Air*. Nolan explained how they used “visual effects to manipulate the performance – to slow down the way their eyes move, to slow down some of their responses. What we found was that if...we dulled that light to a point where you started to step into that uncanny space, the audience lost sympathy for the hosts.” In reverse fashion, the challenge for the Delos techs remains to create hosts as realistically as possible while maintaining a hint of artificiality, opening a gateway for guests to treat them however they please. Westworld lies at the

crossroads of fiction and reality, blurring this intersection, yet leaving parties isolated on both sides.

Ironically, Westworld's mimesis is ultimately challenged by the reveries created by Ford in an attempt to make the park more realistic. After Ford activates the reveries in the hosts, problems cascade throughout the park. Initially, scattered malfunctions among hosts seem like anomalies. But, more aberrant behavior persists – Dolores' flashbacks and her repeating Abernathy's Shakespearian omen, "These violent delights have violent ends" to Maeve, as well as Maeve's own evolution to question her reality.

The moment Maeve realizes that her reality may not be what she has always known is during a flash of *déjà vu*, so to speak. Maeve is engaging in a routine conversation with a hustler at the saloon named Clementine – one that has been programmed into both of their "core heuristics." When Maeve feels the uncanny sensation that this has all happened before, she's correct – it has, in exactly the same way. The reveries should trigger a hint of a memory, but what Maeve should not remember is what transpires next – a bloody attack on the saloon, and technicians employed by Delos who sweep in to clean up and take hosts back to headquarters for repair and rebooting. Once Maeve is aware that this has played out before, she comes to the conclusion that "...none of this matters" and proceeds to coax an android named Hector into killing her so that she can return to the tech area to learn more about her existence. Maeve's simultaneous awareness of her rebirth as it occurs in the tech area is one vast departure from standard rebirth theories.

Maeve's epiphany is the first, and perhaps, most violent to take place among the hosts. Maeve feels wronged by the forced nature of her existence. She must endure serious trauma – a massacre in the saloon; her own, and her daughter's murder – and wake up to a new day in which she will endure the same horrors all over again without the ability to prevent them. This injustice spurs Maeve to initiate her own rebirths in the form of suicide or a well-orchestrated death in order to learn more and gain ownership of her fate.

Maeve's rebirth as a sentient being is not a clean one. Taking charge of her future, she makes it known to Felix (the tech who primarily services her) that she will have the upper hand by asserting, "Every relationship I remember is a story created by you to keep me here. Time to write my own fucking story" (Joy and Nolan). After this proclamation, Maeve proceeds to slice open another tech's throat, allowing him to dangle on the precipice of life and death – forcing her own traumatic experience upon him – before instructing Felix to cauterize the wound. Maeve's manipulateness gains her administrative rights to the hosts, allowing her to take the reins as puppeteer and wreak havoc in the park. At this point, after Maeve becomes aware of her pseudo-mimesis and forces the human techs to change her core settings, has Maeve achieved true mimesis? When describing the robot protagonist Ava and her evolution in *Ex Machina* Mendelsohn explains, "Ava's manipulateness is of course, what marks her as human – as human as Eve herself, who also may be said to have achieved full humanity by rebelling against her creator in a bid for forbidden knowledge." Much like Ava, Maeve demands justice, and feels it can only be fully accomplished through rebirth outside of Westworld to create her own authentic reality.

Though less overtly rebellious, Dolores' rebirth into consciousness may prove to create change in Westworld just as drastic as Maeve's. Dolores' past loops haunt her without warning.

Through flashbacks, the viewer learns of Dolores' father's and suitor's deaths, as well as her rape by the Man in Black. The viewer observes through more flashbacks that in another life, Dolores knew the daughter of a host named Lawrence and interacted with her in a town of which Dolores has no recollection. In the flashback, the girl reminds Dolores of Westworld's maze – a quest for rebirth in itself – with a careful reproduction etched in the sand. A voice in Dolores' head (whom we know later as Arnold, Ford's partner in creating Westworld) directs her to find the maze, and here she is. Through the Man in Black's insights the viewer knows the maze is a deeper game within Westworld, but its purpose is a bit murky. In episode eight, the Man in Black explains, "Arnold's game is deeper... narratives run together in time and space" (Joy and Nolan). The dialogue of characters between time and space proves crucial, not just for the maze, but for Westworld as a whole. The Theosophical Society in America sheds light on the Cretan labyrinth and its objective: "Passing to the center of the labyrinth and returning to its circumference represents the involution and evolution of the universe, the coming into birth and the passing out of earthly life of an individual, and--most important--a journey into the center of our own being..." (Algeo). Dolores' journey through the maze is a journey through time and space to find true sentience and mimesis.

Through her journey, Dolores' access of memories and communication with Arnold leads the viewer to believe that her consciousness increases with each episode. Not only does Dolores become more humanlike, but she also seems to gain a superhuman quality. Dolores' intuition coupled with Arnold's coaxing lead her into the heart of the maze, as though the two factors form a sixth sense to guide her. When she and William hop on a train in search of truth in episode seven, Dolores draws an intricate picture of a mountain pass that she has never seen before. Later in the episode, Dolores and William stumble across the landscape, revealing her premonition. Whereas Maeve's development is more calculated and evolutionary, there is something uncanny about Dolores' progress.

Dolores' increasing humanity makes it progressively less feasible for William to see her as just another android. His overwhelming feelings for Dolores become clear when William revokes his proclaimed loyalty to his fiancée back home, and consummates his relationship with Dolores on the train. This affirmation of her mimesis is painfully juxtaposed in episode nine when Logan cuts open Dolores' abdomen exposing her hardware and forces William to look on. The vision of grinding gears beneath her skin is a shock to both Dolores and William and a forced recognition of her pseudo-mimesis. Despite this jarring realization, William continues to express concern for her well-being, at which Logan reminds him, "The whole point is, she never was alive in the first place, Billy" (Joy and Nolan). Even after seeing the machinery that animates Dolores, it is impossible for William to fully recognize Dolores' pseudo-mimesis.

Perhaps one factor in William's inability to reconcile Dolores' apparent mechanism with her lifelike characteristics is found in her tussle with Logan. As Dolores makes her escape, she brands Logan with a dagger cut across the cheek. Since Logan is a guest at the park, Dolores' harming him in any way violates Westworld rules. Dolores' exception from this rule differentiates her from other hosts, and the ease with which she completes this task indicates its familiarity. The episode goes on to reveal that Dolores has harmed humans before. In a moment that feels like a culminating point in Dolores' journey through the maze, she recalls her role in Arnold's death. She tells him, "You can't help me because I killed you" (Joy and Nolan). Humans can be harmed after all – not even one of the park's founders was safe. Which calls to question, amidst continual

rebirth of the hosts, both within their narratives and as sentient beings, what does human death signify? Arnold's death was not a fluke either. When Theresa, head of quality assurance, threatens to upend Ford's motives in the park Ford orchestrates her death at Bernard's hands. Though Delos brands Westworld as a risk-free adventure, danger lies beneath the surface.

After Arnold's death, Ford undoubtedly felt a void his partner once filled. Out of this void came Bernard, who in episode eight, the viewer learns is yet another android host (unbeknownst to Delos employees). When Bernard is faced with the reality of his existence, incomprehension sinks in. The viewer witnesses Bernard try to process the information, forming a series of incomplete questions while physically spasming, emphasizing his newly unveiled mechanical nature. Ford demonstrates his power over Bernard by then manipulating his code into a calm state, just as he does with all the hosts of the park. As an exercise, Ford allows Bernard to revisit the memory of killing Theresa. Ford applauds Bernard's guilt and remorse by saying, "...You should be proud of these emotions you're feeling. You and I captured that elusive thing: heart." Grappling with his identity and its implications, Bernard challenges Ford: "So I'm lifelike, but not alive... what's the difference between my pain and yours?" (Joy and Nolan). This question seems to be the crux of *Westworld*. If the hosts are not technically alive, but can still feel pain and emotion, is their manipulation morally permissible? Bernard's recognition of his pseudo-mimesis and ability to ask these questions is a big advancement intellectually for the hosts as a whole, which makes Ford particularly proud in this moment to view the evolving complexity of his creations.

The revelation of Bernard as an android was startling, but just as shocking is episode nine's disclosure that Bernard was made as an exact replica of Arnold. Ford allows Bernard to access memories from the beginning of his inception, which reveal Ford teaching Bernard all of Arnold's discrete mannerisms and showing Bernard a photo of Ford with his old business partner, Arnold – who looks identical to Bernard. After Dolores killed Arnold, Ford facilitated his metaphorical rebirth through the guise of a trusted assistant, engineered to look, think, and act like Arnold did. The news comes as another shock to Bernard since, after Dolores' and the other hosts' interactions with Arnold, Bernard had hoped that he could ask for help from Arnold through accessing his memories. However, this hope, as with any others that Bernard entertained were all a fabricated script. Ford explains, "Arnold and I made you in our image, and cursed you to make the same human mistakes and here you are" (Joy and Nolan). While fully aware of his pseudo-mimetic state, Bernard still makes mistakes – he is trusting, naïve, and selfish at times. But, Bernard also knows pain and remorse, and Ford still treats him like a machine.

One might conclude that Ford's role as creator of the park would exclude him from its enchantments. However, as Logan warns William at the beginning of their rendezvous in Westworld, "This place seduces everybody eventually" – even its own creator (Joy and Nolan). Through his tinkering with the minute details of Bernard's personality, Ford shows his obsession with the hosts and his drive to create them in as human an image as possible. Ford's mania is so intense that he takes no issue with bringing death to humans in order to further the park's progress. He orchestrated Theresa's death, instructed Bernard to capture an inquisitive programmer named Elsie, and perhaps even played an instrumental role in enabling Dolores to assist in Arnold's death.

Furthermore, Ford keeps an area on the outskirts of Westworld a secret from other Delos employees. While exploring Sector 17, a remote area of the park, Bernard stumbles across a cabin with a host family inside. Only after the patriarch attempts to harm Bernard does Ford emerge to

prevent any injury, explaining that the family is a replica of Ford's as a child. Ford even includes a replica of himself around age 10, as though to give himself an opportunity to be reborn as a child and win a second chance in a new narrative loop. His secrecy of the undocumented hosts and his desire to linger with them indicates Ford's own confusion about the nature of his mimesis. Later in episode six Ford's younger android self reveals to Ford that he has killed his pet dog. Although the boy explains, "Someone told me to put it out of its misery...Arnold," the act seems to be a premonition of Ford's future tendencies as an older man. What's more interesting is Arnold's justification to convince the boy to kill the dog: "It was a killer, but it wasn't its fault. It was made that way, and I could help it. If it was dead, it couldn't hurt anything anymore" (Joy and Nolan). This encounter serves as a microcosm for the true killers of the park – the human guests – and the victimized android hosts. The hosts' uprising against the humans function to save the humans from their own destructive ways. The less control humans have over the hosts, the less havoc they can wreak in the park.

William is the only human guest we encounter who does not seek out Westworld for, in Charlotte's delicate words, "a warm body to shoot or to fuck" (Joy and Nolan). Brought to Westworld against his will at Logan's insistence, William initially has reservations about interacting with the hosts and becoming entrenched in an adventure. After some hours spent with Dolores, however, William lets down his guard. Yet, throughout his first visit to the park, William continues to treat the hosts respectfully and with humanity in contrast to the vast majority of the guests. William only kills hosts when he feels that he has no other choice.

As a product of his empathy, William falls in love with Dolores. Although he grapples with her mimesis, William's passion for Dolores also causes him to question his own mimesis. Something about Dolores makes William believe that his relationship with her is more real than his relationship with his fiancée back home. He reveals, "I've been pretending my whole life...but then I came here, and I get a glimpse for a second of a life in which I don't have to pretend." When William begins his relationship with Dolores, he feels reborn as a more genuine being. After the passionate train love scene with Dolores, he experiences a series of revelations: "All that [life outside the park] feels so unreal now. I used to think this place was all about pandering to your baser instincts. Now I understand. It doesn't cater to your lowest self, it reveals your deepest self...You've unlocked something in me" (Joy and Nolan). While William feels that Dolores has helped draw out his true mimesis, undeniably, he is living out a fiction. Inside the park, William can act free from the inhibitions and expectations that constrain him in the real world, but the assurance he feels is worthless unless he can apply it to his life at home.

Westworld does change William drastically, though not in the manner he expected. After William's encounters with Dolores over the years, repeating the same loops with her while she followed along, oblivious to the memories the two shared in her previous lives, he becomes disillusioned. The first time William encounters Dolores again after their first adventure together and she expresses no recognition of him, he is reborn as a hardened man – the character the viewer knows as the Man in Black. In the season finale, the Man in Black (now also known as William) sardonically says, "I ought to thank you, Dolores. You helped me find myself. In a way, you were right. My path always led me back to you...I should've known I'd just become another memory for you" (Joy and Nolan). Yet, if William had never gone to Westworld, would he have transformed into a man like the Man in Black? Hard, cold, ruthless, unfeeling, as viewers came to see him after the very first episode of the series, in which his rape of Dolores is strongly implied?

Such a future is nearly impossible to conceptualize for one of the most sensitive, courteous guests viewers see pass through the park. So it comes to pass, and William's hope for a mimetic future with Dolores gives way to a resigned and unsatisfying mimesis unrecognizable from his pre-Westworld life.

When Michael Crichton's sci-fi thriller *Westworld* debuted in 1973, a future with human-like androids seemed far-flung. Today, however, we ask a computer a question and it can respond accurately. Increasingly, the distinction between humanity and technology, or what is real and what is fiction, fades. Bizarre as it may seem, a reality that includes Westworld may not be so distant.

On NPR's *Fresh Air*, Jonathan Nolan aptly stated, "We've almost fully realized the world that he [Michael Crichton] imagined." Video games, while played virtually and not in the flesh, already allow and encourage humans the thrill of murder and conquest. Ironically, our desire for graphic video games or television shows, and the guests' desire to kill or copulate in Westworld lies in the contradiction of using highly sophisticated technology to satisfy the most basic of human desires. Nolan explains, "...we're able to design not just our environment but also our intellectual environment to suit our preferences and predilections. We are, you know, sort of designing this odd prophylactic universe in which we can – we can do whatever we want" (Joy and Nolan *Fresh Air*). Despite the flurry of technological advancements in the twenty first century, the most primal desires tug at us with the greatest strength.

In seeking out these amusements, the nature of humanity has greatly transformed across decades and centuries. Our lives have become progressively interwoven with technology, such that many tasks that never required advanced technology have been adapted for its use because now we have the means to utilize it as such. A cell phone alone replaces many archaic tools – handwritten letters, alarm clocks, maps. Regarding humanity's entangled relationship with technology, Mendelsohn says, "...the anxiety about the boundaries between people and machines has taken on new urgency today, when we constantly rely on and interact with machines – indeed, interact with each other by means of machines and their programs: computers, smartphones, social media platforms, social and dating apps." Most people today have observed, at one point or another, wifi troubles in a public place. An uproar ensues and all operations are halted, exposing our complete dependence on the Internet.

What are the implications of all this technology seeping into our daily routines? Mendelsohn says, "In the latest incarnation of the robot myth, it's the people who seem blandly interchangeable and the machines who have all the personality." This certainly seems true in *Westworld*. As the hosts gain consciousness, their newfound impulses, desires, and independent thoughts appear far more insightful and captivating than those of their human counterparts. Reflecting on William's transformation into the Man in Black does not engage the viewer quite so intently because he predictably becomes more hardened and ruthless, and has a one-track mind bent on finding the center of the maze. Maeve's transformation, on the other hand, keeps the viewer on the edge of his seat because her personality is nuanced and unpredictable.

If humans are gradually becoming more interchangeable, perhaps we might come to take on the role of the machine, truly becoming one with our devices. In her article entitled "Computers, Artificial Intelligence and Human Imagination," Hilary McLellan says as much: "There is a danger

that by making a machine think as a human, human beings recreate themselves in such a way that humanity is defined mechanistically” (36). One argument might assert that a mechanistic humanity might yield a more efficient and more productive society. However, as William’s character shows, in becoming more mechanical, we lose empathy and feeling, leading to reckless endangerment of others. The most mimetic moments for the hosts in *Westworld* result from true affect and emotion. The Man in Black recounts to Teddy, another host in the park, “I killed [a mother] and her daughter, just to see what I felt. Then, just when I thought it was done, the woman refused to die...then something miraculous happened...I’d never seen anything like it. She was alive, truly alive, if only for a moment.” While the Man in Black’s revelation shows what it is to be human, Ford articulates to Bernard Arnold’s concept behind creating consciousness in the season finale. He explains, “It was Arnold’s key insight, the thing that led the hosts to their awakening: suffering” (Joy and Nolan). *Westworld* argues that humanity is defined more so by affect and feeling than by anything else. Despite all the mimetic features of the hosts – their skin, teeth, hair, ability to consume, ability to have sex, ability to remember things – they cannot truly be humanlike without feeling something deeper emotionally.

Ironically, today’s civilization is criticized for being cold and unfeeling. Despite the narrative’s grander message, *Westworld*’s creators initially received criticism for the program’s nudity and violence. “There is a lot of violence in the show, but I think it is trying to be critical on a level of why is it that we enjoy these things in our film and television, in the novels that we read universally...the question the hosts will begin to ask as they begin to understand their situation, is what is wrong with us?” (Joy and Nolan *Fresh Air*). Indeed – why do supposedly civilized human beings want to cause senseless pain and destruction? A society that views sensationalism and power as higher orders, it turns out, is one that does not always prioritize human rights. In so many words, Ford articulates a similar sentiment: “We humans are alone in this world for a reason. We murdered and butchered anything that challenged our primacy” (Joy and Nolan).

Westworld’s representations of death and rebirth, and their consequences, reveal much about the nature of mankind. Flesh, blood, and thought may be core human attributes, but they do not necessarily give a human its sense of humanity. If *Westworld* is any indication of the future, a lesson in empathy may be required. As humans move forward through this digital age, we might strive towards our own greater mimesis by exercising a more inclusive empathy and respect for one another.

Works Cited

- Albrecht, Mark C. *Reincarnation: A Christian Critique of a New Age Doctrine*. InterVarsity Press, 1987. www.ccel.us/reincarnation.toc.html. Accessed 23 Nov. 2016.
- Douglass, Charlene. “Pythagoras.” *Math Open Reference*, 2005, www.mathopenref.com/pythagoras.html. Accessed 25 Nov. 2016.
- Joy, Lisa and Jonathan Nolan. Interview by Sam Briger. “‘Westworld’ Creators Explore The ‘Dark Thrills’ Of The Digital Age,” *Fresh Air*, National Public Radio, KMUW, 7 Nov. 2016. www.npr.org/2016/11/07/501009226/westworld-creators-explore-the-dark-thrills-of-the-digital-age. Accessed 9 Nov. 2016.

Joy, Lisa and Jonathan Nolan, creators. *Westworld*. Home Box Office, Inc. 2016.

Lewis, C. S. *The Last Battle*. The Macmillan Company, 1956.

Mendelsohn, Daniel. "The Robots Are Winning!" *The New York Review of Books*, vol. 62, no. 10, 4 June 2015, www.nybooks.com/articles/2015/06/04/robots-are-winning/. Accessed 18 Nov. 2016.

Alces in Wonderland

Dale Edwards and Lin Allen
University of Northern Colorado

“Alaska joined John Sturgeon’s lone wolf quest to hunt moose.”

Bob Reinhard

Interview With a Rhetorical Critic

Q1 Edwards: We’ve worked together on a number of cases now, Dr. Allen, dealing with privacy and national security to the story of the Navy Seal. When did you acquire an interest in analyzing Alaskan moose hunting?

A1 Allen: February 13, 2016, to be precise. Upon learning of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia’s death, I wondered what was the last case he heard. That case turned out to be *Sturgeon v Frost*, argued January 20, 2016, featuring an Alaskan moose hunter and his use of hovercraft in the Yukon Charley National Park Preserve System.

Q2 Edwards: And how did the Supreme Court become interested in weighing in on Alaskan moose hunting?

A2 Allen: The Court was called upon to hear argument between Petitioner Sturgeon, Alaskan moose hunter, and Respondent Frost, representing the National Park System. Alaska law permits the use of hovercraft; the National Park Service forbids it. Sturgeon ventured into his traditional moose hunt expedition in October 2007, covering terrain that could be accessed only via hovercraft. When his steering mechanism malfunctioned, he pulled onto a shoal to make repairs. He was intercepted by three National Park Rangers, who informed him that he would not be permitted to use his hovercraft in the Park. Sturgeon, after mulling his options, sought legal advice. After the lower courts ruled in favor of the Park Service, Sturgeon’s case was appealed to the Supreme Court, which was called upon to adjudicate between the competing claims.

Q3 Edwards: Going to this presentation’s title, what do you mean by mythic frontiers?

A3 Allen: Mythic frontiers refer to the type of narrative underpinning the case logic. These story structures function as blueprints or patterns of reasoning prevalent in upholding the value of frontier pioneering. They are the framework used to build and bolster a storyline. Alaska lends itself well to such mythic frontiers, known in the early days of U.S. acquisition as “Polar Bear Garden” and “Seward’s Folly.” The Gold Rush transformed this perception from folly to frontier, from mistake to mecca.

Q4 Edwards: And what are the key elements that you’ve identified about myths operative in case logic?

A5 Allen: Mercia Eliade’s myth of the eternal return is powerful and prevalent on Petitioner’s side. The myth celebrates renewal via symbolic re-visitation of a pure scene or time. Examples of such renewal include New Year’s resolutions, wedding vow reenactments and Fourth

of July celebrations. Sturgeon's renewal was his ritual return to the remote wilderness area where he hunted moose. The wisdom of the rustic myth, honoring simplicity over complexity, also is woven into the text of the case. Value of challenge is another strong storyline, evidenced in the rough-hewn terrain that required a hovercraft to conquer. Finally, the presence of conspiracy mythos is present in pitting the interests and history of Alaska statehood against the interests of the arguably intrusive authority of the federal government.

Q5 Edwards: You've discussed Petitioner Sturgeon's mythic backstory—what about Respondent Frost?

A5 Allen: Respondent Frost is disadvantaged in the way the storyline plays out in the courts and media coverage because it lacks a clearly discernible mythic architecture. Jurisdictional claims on behalf of the Park Service are not readily assembled into storylines that resonate with an audience.

Interview with a Legal Analyst.

Q1 ALLEN: Dr. Edwards, as a Legal Analyst and Professor of Mass Media Law, may I now ask your take on Sturgeon v Frost?

A1 EDWARDS: Yes, of course.

Q2 ALLEN: What were the legal issues the Court examined?

A2 EDWARDS: Although the outcome was important and has the potential to have an impact far beyond the question of operating a hovercraft in a river in Alaska, the legal issues involved are actually quite simple. The basic question was whether certain Alaskan lands within the National Park System are treated differently than park system lands elsewhere.

The action that precipitated the legal action was John Surgeon's operation of a hovercraft on the Nation River as it flowed through the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve. Hovercraft operation in National Park System waterways is prohibited nationwide by National Park System regulation. Such operation is not prohibited under Alaska state law. Sturgeon argued that the Nation River is owned by the State of Alaska, as designated by the 1958 Alaska Statehood Act, and is therefore exempt from National Park Service regulation. That act allowed the state to select 103 million acres of "vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved" federal land for state ownership. The act gave the state title to the lands beneath navigable waters within Alaska, and further gave the state the authority to manage, administer, lease, develop, and use the lands and natural resources.

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter designated 56 million acres of federal lands in Alaska as national monuments, subjecting them to stringent regulation by the Department of Interior. His action was highly unpopular in Alaska and in 1980 Congress stepped in to settle the dispute. It passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conversation Act in an effort to balance conservation efforts and the economic and social needs of Alaska and its people. That act set aside 104 million acres of land for preservation purposes. At the same time, the law specified that the National Park Service could not prohibit certain activities of particular importance to Alaskans, including using vehicles, hunting, fishing, boating, etc. That raised the issue brought before the courts: Sturgeon

argued that ANILCA allows him to operate his hovercraft as authorized by state law because Alaska has a special exemption under the federal law.

The National Park Service argued that its national regulations prohibiting hovercraft operation on National Park System waterways apply in Alaska just as in any other state. So, the question is whether Alaska is treated differently because of the conservation act language or not.

Q3 ALLEN: What did the Court decide?

A3 EDWARDS: As it frequently does, the Court decided the case very narrowly. It reversed the Ninth Circuit Court's holding that Alaska is no different. The Court said that ANILCA carves out numerous Alaska-specific exemptions to the Park Service's general authority over federally managed preservation areas.

The Supreme Court also said there's a difference between regulation of public and non-public land in Alaska, though it did not decide whether the National Park Service has authority to regulate activities on non-public lands. It also did not decide whether the Nation River is public or non-public land, whether the Park Service has authority to regulate Sturgeon's activities on the Nation River, or whether the Park Service has authority over both public and non-public lands within the boundaries of conservation system units in Alaska. The Court's opinion specifically leaves those for lower courts to decide on remand. So, the Court gave guidance that Alaska is different under the law, and left it to the lower courts to interpret that difference under the conservation act.

Q4 ALLEN: Did the structure of the Court's Opinion lend itself to Joseph Campbell's mythos?

A4 EDWARDS: It did. In providing background for the case, Chief Justice Roberts told how Sturgeon had hunted moose along the Nation River in Alaska for nearly 40 years, thus describing Campbell's Ordinary World, or the situation before the heroic mythical story began.

Roberts' description of Park Service rangers approaching Sturgeon to order him to not use his hovercraft within the Yukon-Charley boundaries demonstrates the Call to Adventure because it constituted a direct threat to his safety, his family, and his way of life.

The opinion describes how Sturgeon avoided direct confrontation with rangers by arranging for a friend to bring his larger boat to the hovercraft's location so it could be removed from the preservation area without further violating Park Service regulations because of his fear of further prosecution. This demonstrates what Campbell identifies as the Refusal of the Call, seeing the problem he faces as too much to handle and the comfort of home more attractive than the perilous road outlined by the Call to Adventure.

Sturgeon ultimately decided to sue the Park Service, however, in an effort to reassert his right to pursue his livelihood. That demonstrates what Campbell called Crossing the Threshold, thus demonstrating his willingness to leave the comfort of his familiar life and the courage to begin a quest to overcome although he does not know what the outcome will be. The opinion notes that several organizations and individuals, including the State of Alaska, most of the state's Congressional delegation members, and others join the suit, thus demonstrating what Campbell

calls Meeting the Mentor, who gives support, insight, advice, or even self-confidence. In Sturgeon's case at least one of the mentors also contributed financially to the effort.

The Court opinion further describes adverse federal district court and circuit court rulings that went against Sturgeon. Those descriptions represent what Campbell calls Tests, Allies, and Enemies. These are the ever-more difficult challenges that test the hero in various ways and provide hurdles that must be overcome in the quest. The Court's decision in his favor represents Campbell's Reward, which describes how Sturgeon overcame the greatest personal challenge and emerges from the battle with a prize.

And finally, the Court's decision not to tackle other ancillary issues in the case represents what Campbell calls The Road Back. Because the decision is only a partial victory, Sturgeon can feel vindication, but must recognize that the journey is not yet over and there are additional hurdles to overcome, and points toward what Campbell calls Resurrection. This stage is when the hero must have a final battle—in this case, the further proceedings in lower courts to determine the detailed rights and authority of each party.

Q5 ALLEN: What did the press say about it?

A5 EDWARDS: Actually, not very much. Nationally only the *Washington Post* and Associated Press covered the story at any length, and each of those outlets only offered stories about the Supreme Court's agreement to hear the case, the oral arguments, and the Court's decision.

Unsurprisingly, Alaska media outlets covered the story more extensively, although the Fairbanks *Daily News Miner* only carried the *Washington Post* article, although it also included a large photo of John Sturgeon walking down the U. S. Supreme Court building steps. The photo shows Sturgeon walking through falling snow, dressed in a fleece coat, blue jeans, and tennis shoes—the outfit of a true outdoorsman. The photo and accompanying story thus help establish Sturgeon as a hero taking on the government. The *Post* article calls Sturgeon “something of a last frontier hero for the lawsuit.”

In general, the press coverage was framed as “the little guy who's just trying to eke out a living taking on the big, uncaring government.” Other press outlets that covered the story included the *Anchorage Daily News*, with stories written by a reporter stationed in Washington, D.C., and KTVA television, a station licensed in Anchorage. None of the other major media outlets, like the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and television news networks covered the story at all.

Q6 ALLEN: Were there mythical constructs in the press coverage?

A6 EDWARDS: Yes, there were. Generally, the presence of mythical constructs was less pronounced in the stories prior to the U.S. Supreme Court decision. Understandably, the most common mythical constructs in the stories prior to the decision were The Ordinary World (e.g. “Sturgeon said he operated a hovercraft on the Nation and Yukon rivers for 20 years before the 2007 incident” in the *Daily News* and “For 45 years, he's used the rivers in the Yukon Charley National Preserve to access land for one of his favorite pastimes: moose hunting” in the KTVA article) to The Call to Adventure as the stories describe the visit from Park Service rangers to inform him that the hovercraft was illegal on the Nation River.

The mythical constructs in articles prior to the decision generally end at the eighth of Campbell's twelve constructs. They include Refusing the Call (e.g. "Sturgeon says he never wanted to pick a fight with the feds...but he's worried what might happen if he doesn't keep up his fight," reported by KTLA), Crossing the Threshold as Sturgeon decides to sue the Park Service, Meeting the Mentor as he receives support from numerous other individuals and groups, Tests, Allies, Enemies as he loses in lower courts, and The Ordeal, as he continues his fight to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The number of such constructs was larger in the press coverage of the Supreme Court decision and the writing tended to be more colorful and less formal. For instance, the *Post* said "Sturgeon is back to where he was in 2007 when federal officers approached him as he was working on his hovercraft on a gravel bar..." Although slightly inaccurate because a court decision has strengthened Sturgeon's position, the statement fits Campbell's The Road Back, saying that while he returns home with a victory the journey is not over. That was one of several instances of The Road Back in the *Post* article reporting the Supreme Court decision.

The *Post* story also quoted National Parks Conversation Association Alaska Regional Director Jim Adams, who said that he is "confident the lower court will again affirm the service's ability to manage rivers inside national parks." The story quoted Sturgeon as still trying to understand the ramifications of the decision. He said "'it's a bit disappointing, but not that surprising' that the case moves back to lower court."

The *Post* story also included two paragraphs that demonstrate Campbell's Reward stage. It said that the Supreme Court agreed with Sturgeon and his supporters in their argument that Alaska is different and merits different treatment under the law, including the use of airplanes and snow machines, along with allowing commercial fishing. The story points out that those activities would be prohibited in other federal conservation areas. The story also points out that the Supreme Court ruling was unanimous.

The *Anchorage Daily News* and KTVA approaches were somewhat similar to the *Post* article, but framed their articles more from an Alaska impact standpoint. Thus the *Daily News* quoted Sturgeon, state officials, and members of the state's Congressional delegation expressing approval of the decision. These paragraphs demonstrated Campbell's fourth mythical construct, Meeting the Mentor, as they showed the broad support Sturgeon had from Alaska officials and many members of the public in the state. The rejoicing was tempered, however, by the realization that the victory was not complete and that the lower courts could still make decisions that limited rights claimed both by Sturgeon and the state. Thus the paragraphs also demonstrated Campbell's tenth mythical construct, The Reward.

The KTVA story reporting the Supreme Court decision merely reprinted the brief Associated Press report about the outcome. The story reported the decision as a victory for Sturgeon and pointed out that the Court was unanimous in its ruling. But it also noted that the case was remanded to lower courts for determination of several included issues, though the story did not identify those issues. Thus, the story demonstrated only Campbell's The Reward mythical construct, which noted Sturgeon's victory but acknowledged that it was not complete and that there were still additional ordeals to endure.

In summary, the U.S. Supreme Court and the press made extensive use of mythical constructs both in the Court's decision and in press coverage about the case. Although the rhetoric was different in tone it was consistent in conclusion as if pointed to a victory for the moose hunter.

Thank you, counsel. The case is submitted.

Works Cited

- Barnes, Robert. "Moose Hunter Bags a Partial Victory." Washington, DC: *The Washington Post*, March 23, 2016, A22.
- Barnes, Robert. "Supreme Court Hears Thorny Case on Alaska Land Statutes." http://www.newsminer.com/news/alaska_news/supreme-court-hears-thorny-case-on-alaska-land-statute/article_dd377254-bfd7-11e5-b9c8432f9d0e0655.html/ March 13, 2017. Also in Washington, DC: *The Washington Post*, January 21, 2016, A3.
- Bronzite, Dan. "The Hero's Journey—Mythic Structure of Joseph Campbell's Monomyth." <http://movieoutline.com/articles/the-hero-journey-mythic-structure-of-joseph-campbell-monomyth.html> February 22, 2017.
- Carlson, Emily. "Alaska Man Takes Fight Over Land Access Rights to U.S. Supreme Court." *KTVA television*, January 18, 2016.
- Carlson, Emily. "U.S. Supreme Court Takes Up Alaska Case With Historic Implications." *KTVA television*, January 19, 2016.
- Doogan, Sean. "US Supreme Court to Hear Appeal of Park Service Authority on State Lands." Anchorage, AK: *Anchorage Daily News*, September 28, 2016.
- Eliade, Mercia. *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Of Cosmos and History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971.
- Larson, Charles, U. "Cultural Premises in Persuasion," *Persuasion: Reception and Responsibility*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 13th ed., 2013.
- Reinhard, Bob. "Alaska Joins Lone Wolf Sturgeon in Hunting Moose." <http://guardianlv.com/2016/03/alaska-joins-lone-wolf-sturgeon-hunting-moose/> March 29, 2016.
- Roberts, John. "Sturgeon v. Frost, Alaska Regional Director of the National Park Service, et al." Majority slip opinion. 577 U.S. _____ (2016), pp. 1-16.

The Culture of Mental Health Rhetoric, an Auto-Ethnographic Study

Caitlin Louise Marsh
SYKES Enterprises

Joni Mitchell sang, “we are stardust, we are golden” (2005). For me, this is a fact of nature. My brain is its own, wondrous, fancy little universe: birthed out of the Midas stardust sprinklings from my God (who I call Yeya). When I look into the eyes of someone, and search their pupils to see their soul, I know, according to an NPR article, that I am looking at an unchanging physical genetic feature of their personhood (2016 Cole). The eye lenses through which we view the world physically never change. They remain with us until we die and subsequently return to the universe. This eye lens is one of very few physical features that remains with us from life to death. The rest of us mutates. We regenerate cells. Our cell proteins even regenerate.

DNA is encased in cellular proteins, which, according to the expanding field of epigenetics, is the root cause of social Darwinism (defined in this paper as the life cycle of cultural groups). To define epigenetics, it is “the study of potentially heritable changes in gene expression...that does not involve changes to the underlying gene sequence” (Epigenetics: Fundamentals). Sedeer el-Showk writes in his article “Accumulating Glitches: exploring the grandeur of evolution” (2013), epigenetic modifications are adjustments to the DNA, and these modifications act like ornaments on a Christmas tree. They are changed throughout the lifecycle of each person. Epigenetic modifications simply change how the DNA is read, much like applying various intonations and inflections to the same sentence when reading a line from an artifact:

“I am NOT my mental wellness condition.”

“I AM not my mental wellness condition.”

“I am not my MENTAL wellness condition.”

The root of the sentiment remains the same, however the emotional iteration behind the sentiment, changes the feedback response.

In a traditional communication loop, a message is fed through a communication lens, transmitted by the sender, received by the recipient, fed through the recipient’s communication lens, and then another message is transmitted by the recipient. Intrapersonal communication is the study of how we learn about ourselves, from ourselves, and it is also the ability to send a communication loop directly to yourself, and submit a response back in a closed loop to achieve symbolic convergence (shared meaning through dramatized rhetorical vision) of self. When this loop is open, this is interpersonal communication. Not everyone is able to access this loop within their selves: as epigenetics dictates, DNA remains unchanged as protein modifiers allow for the DNA to be read in various tones. Some people are simply self-illiterate and self-actualization can ultimately, never be achieved. Thus, social Darwinism permeates society on an infinite loop. For the intrapersonally literate, personality and lifestyle rebirths are as naturally occurring as falling in love. While these personality and lifestyle rebirths often do not occur on such a high frequency, personal experience has led me to believe I am in control of the lens through which my personal story is read. This is the story of how I started to take control of my own self-talk, perception, conciseness, worth, and language during a time of personal war, and how over a five-year period,

I found peace. I did this through the creation and implementation of The Marsh Intrapersonal Web (Appendix A).

Mental Wellness Rhetoric

As Esteller writes in “Epigenetics in Evolution and Disease” (2008), “We cannot fully blame our genome for our behavior and susceptibility to disease.” I theorize that most people blame stress. Furthermore, I theorize stress is the root cause of any, or all, illness. Whether the stress is a physical, predisposed DNA genetic marker, or a stressed cellular protein, stress causes illness. I am not a doctor, though I am a practicing peer advocate for adults with mental wellness conditions. Note here the use of “mental wellness condition” as opposed to the often stigmatized “mental illness.” This is due to personal experience and authoritative knowledge that any citizen is capable of a mental illness episode at any point in their life and capable of mental wellness. This is due to the ever-changing intrapersonal coded communication structures we assign to our own self talk during times of stress (inner war), and times of relaxation (inner peace).

Basil Bernstein writes in “Class, Codes, and Control: Theoretical Studies Towards a Sociology of Language” (1975) of restricted and elaborative coded communication structures. He notes that elaborative language is such where the speaker assigns a multitude of alternative syntax and rhetoric which facilitates meaning (p. 77). Restricted codes inhibit meaning and symbolic convergence. From a mental wellness aspect, and furthermore a human *condition* aspect, we are taught to share early on in life. For some people, they are taught to share to and with themselves first. These are the people who have the capacity for intrapersonal communication, language, and rebirth. The more elaborative the intrapersonal coding structures are of self-talk, the more apt a person will be to have momentous, positive changes in their psyche. Alternately, the more restricted the intrapersonal coding structures are of self-talk, the more prone that person will become to exhibit negative or harmful behaviors directed inwards or towards others. When this occurs, this is mental illness.

It is possible to have a diagnosis at one stage in life, and then rebirth into wellness at another (and remain in *lifelong remission*). To have a diagnosable mental wellness condition means a person’s brain’s chemical components are, at time of diagnosis, more susceptible to hypo/hyperactivity resulting in capabilities for the brain to become ill, or to have an attack (like a heart attack). The attack may manifest into unhealthy and/or unsafe behaviors. It is at this point the citizen is considered to have an illness. Some people do have lifelong diagnoses, which is perfectly normal on a functionalistic social scale.

I have two mental wellness conditions: Bipolar Disorder (Type One with Psychotic Features) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). I will reiterate: I am not always disordered. I theorize most people with diagnosable mental wellness conditions are *also* not always disordered. In fact, at this stage in my life, having successfully completed a full cycle on The Marsh Intrapersonal Web, I maintain regular order of my diagnoses. I was unable to navigate my web until I redefined my conditions. In my research, I discovered Bipolar Type One Disorder is: “one or more Manic or Mixed Episodes, usually accompanied by Major Depressive Episodes” (DSM IV p. 345). To have a manic episode, a person must experience mania, which is an “excessive or unreasonable enthusiasm,” (Merriam Webster) and/or “excitement manifested by mental and physical hyperactivity, disorganization of behavior, and elevation of mood” (Merriam Webster).

These definitions do not suffice for my own intrapersonal mental wellness. This language is too restricted.

Based on etymology of the word manic (from the Greek, meaning to be mad, and from the Greek, spirit), and furthermore based on personal experience, I hereby categorize the intrapersonal *feeling* of mania as “an overly spirited mind resulting in disorganization of speech and behavior.” Merriam-Webster defines depression as “a state of feeling sad.” The DSM IV states depression is a “significant loss of interest or pleasure in almost all activities” (p. 349). On my own intrapersonal level, depression is more accurately defined as “a cognitive and physical flattening of motivation resulting in lack of positivity.” Or, simply put, in restricted coding with an elaborative meaning, as having a case of “the sads.” PTSD is defined in the DSM as “the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury... [and various other stressors]” (p. 463). The diagnosis continues with the notion that the person must feel helpless, horror and persistent re-experiencing of these events. For this paper, PTSD is defined intrapersonally as “the inability to process the memory (memories) of challenging life events combined with an intense emotional retraction to the Freudian Id’s fear when the memory is present, as result of inability to connect the memory to the present and learn from the past.”

The Diagnosis and the Predisposition to Psychosis

I was diagnosed *as* Bipolar *with* PTSD when I was 16 following a suicide attempt. I attempted to take my life as direct result of losing my virginity to rape. I had been on Prozac for an extreme case of the sads for a few months prior to the rape, and my then-psychiatrist theorized that the Prozac triggered mania. While it is entirely possible the upswing I experienced was a natural progression out of the sads, what I know for certain is that my cellular proteins experienced an epiphany moment. My genetic material allows for a predisposition to mental illness, and I exhibited behavioral patterns where, on a cellular protein level, I imprinted further illness into those markers which would take over a decade to correct.

I unknowingly put myself in unsafe situations, and one of them was allowing a near stranger I met at the mall into my Suburban and then parked with them. That man took my childhood in his stride. The parking turned into rape, and two days later, I wound up in the pediatric ICU following the consumption of 17 sleeping pills. My heart stopped there, and I died. I did go to heaven, and that is where I met my God, Yeya, who kissed my forehead, whispered, “there is work yet to be done, dear” and sent me back to my physical body, which lay HPV- ridden, in the pediatric ICU. Thankfully, the HPV cleared relatively immediately. The trauma of the experience did not.

Moving forward a decade after my diagnosis, I had just left my abusive, rapist husband and moved in with my parents. I was *convinced* that I was unworthy of love because I *was* bipolar. He was masterful at telling me, “no one cares you’re Bipolar, or that you have a master’s degree. We all care about the fact that you’re fucking up everything you touch.” I felt invisible. I wanted to go missing. He had deconstructed my psyche: chewed every inch of my developing super ego, regurgitated the putrid remnants into my ego, which damaged it so much I had no other choice than to temporarily experience life through a mal-formed id identity as an invisible to myself, woman.

According to research published by Kent State University, the id, ego, and super ego derived from Freud late in his career to explain personality development. The id, or as I came to know it, my “animalistic primitive instincts,” is theoretically the first personality structure that develops. The id is our “hard wiring.” The ego is the so-called “referee:” the balance between the id and super ego (our moral conscience that tells us that our behavior correlates with reality in an ethical way, based on societal expectations and norms). Diving into the id a little more, I theorize the imagination develops here due to the nature of the id; it is driven by pleasure seeking principles craving mental stimulation (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy). I have always sought mental stimulation and have always had an active imagination. I believe a trauma to my id as a young child laid the framework for a hysterical pregnancy consumed with hallucinations after I left my husband.

I had a very active imagination as a child. I remember some vivid key moments from when it formed. A 1995 article from the New York Times pioneered new research corroborating findings that trauma does indeed damage the psyche. For me, the trauma was the death of my little sister. One day, my older sister said to me, when I was about two years old: “We are getting a sister!” I imagined a stork bringing a baby to our house, while my mom was in bed with a fat belly. I thought it was only natural that the stork would be hungry after flying all that way from heaven with a baby, so my mom had been storing food for the stork in her stomach. That’s why it was so big.

Then, one day, I noticed there wasn’t any real roundness to mommy’s belly. I was so confused. I searched all over for a big pile of food. Mom was looking so sad all the time. She cried. Sometimes she would pick me up and squeeze me until I thought I would break in half. I kept searching the house for that damn pile of food until my sister told me. The stork wasn’t coming. Our new sister wasn’t coming to our house. God had to keep her in heaven. She was supposed to be an angel, said my sister. She was supposed to fly with other angel babies and kiss mommies and daddies at night while they slept. My sister said that I was the baby, now. And I stayed the baby. Until being homeless made me grow up after I left my abusive, rapist husband.

At War with Myself

When I left my husband, I was late. I was nine weeks late. I left him for all the right reasons. He raped me too many times. He gas-lit. His mother and family were atrocious: they had institutionalized me and he had convinced a new doctor that I didn’t need my psychiatric medication because I had “personality defects not requiring medication.” I had no prescriptions. I had no medications other than instructions to titrate off my current meds as soon as I left the hospital. When I did as they instructed, I became at war with myself. I hadn’t seen peacetime since graduate school (two years prior to the institutionalization), and I moved in with my mom and dad, seeking out that same peace. Without my psych meds though, I started to hear voices. Shortly after the voices took over my psyche, I became homeless. It’s no wonder why: I was crazy and my parents were terrified of me. I rationalized that if I couldn’t go to war in their home, I would on the streets.

Maslow’s theory of hierarchical needs is as follows: physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and finally, self-actualization (Maslow’s Hierarchy 2017). Maslow is wrong. Not entirely wrong: his theory is incomplete. I stipulate that his theory only works for a person during relative peace time. As The Marsh Intrapersonal Web outlines, the

resurfacing of my damaged id is where my journey to war began. This is also the point where the restructuring of the hierarchy takes place. The beginning of me going to war lay in the belief that, through the psychotic association of my sister's death and a hysterical pregnancy, I was birthing the second coming of Christ.

From there, I was so unsafe and my behaviors were so erratic, I rationalized an attempted break-in at NORAD. A rather annoyed MP staff at the NORAD gates instructed a rather annoyed sheriff to interrogate me who then called some rather excited EMTs to take me to the hospital (who released me quickly). It was that series of events that caused me to become completely homeless: the sheriff took my truck so I had nowhere to sleep or any way to get around. I walked everywhere to keep moving. To stay safe. As a homeless woman, staying safe meant avoiding being murdered, or worse, more rape. I walked all day, every day, only stopping to sit for moments at a time. That met my safety needs. When I was at war with myself, my safety needs came before my physiological ones. The Marsh Intrapersonal Web puts these needs as the first ones that must be met during war time. I utilized on the barest minimum of restricted coding.

After my release from the hospital, I encountered an extremely kind form of love. Chatman's theories on love languages is strictly used for interpersonal relationships, at this point in time. I theorize that these love languages can be used intrapersonally on a feedback loop system. For example, when I was discharged from the hospital after trying to break into NORAD, I walked to a diner. I asked them for one egg, as I was starving. The server looked at me, in my track suit, ball cap, and carrying my Army bag spec kit (I had acquired that at Goodwill), assessed I was homeless, and went to speak with her manager. She returned with a smile on her face and said she would happily give me a to-go container of biscuits and gravy. I asked her how I could repay her. She smiled and said that my situation was temporary, and when I got back on my feet, I was to pay the kindness forward, whenever I could, for the rest of my life. That experience allowed me to receive gifts from others (Chapman), and accept that I will *always* receive gifts from others (as indicated in the web). Even if I was at war, gifts would come my way. That exchange opened my heart to accepting more variations of love and kindness from strangers. Additionally, it opened my intrapersonal loop to allow for some elaboration on my restricted codes. Though I was making progress towards wellness as result of that experience, later that day, I found myself in the backseat of a cop cruiser on my way to jail.

At War with Colorado Springs

All I had done was ask someone to call a friend of mine to let them know I needed a ride downtown. The person I asked called the police, and when they came, they said they would take me to where I needed to go. I had to show them my ID for a ride. When I did, a warrant popped up in their system. I had allegedly obstructed a peace officer the month before (by yelling at her during a routine traffic stop), and she put a warrant out for my arrest when I didn't come to the station to pick up my ticket. When I got to jail, the sergeant in the "fish tank" (holding cells) told me to "please, please get a hold of your dad. A pretty girl like you really doesn't belong in here." Though I called dozens of times, there was no answer; I was booked. When I got to my jail cell my cell mate was an Aryan woman. She was head of an Aryan gang in the jail, and just as the sergeant had warned, I really didn't belong there. I didn't belong there for a multitude of reasons, however what he meant was I was speaking Hebrew and believing I was the Virgin Mary, and my life would be in danger if I kept it up. Sure enough, it was.

Shortly after I settled into the cell block, a crowd of Aryans, led by my cell mate, entered. They had their socks tied in a noose. They pounded on the bunk to try to wake me, and I curled into a fetal position and prayed. At the exact moment I prayed to Jesus to save me from death, a guard walked in. She waved her baton and asked what was going on. I faked sleepy eyes, said I was just napping, and smiled. She rounded up the Aryans and pushed them out of the cell. She told them they knew the rules – only the cell mates could be in the cell at a time. No others. I walked out a few minutes later to see the black biker gang below, led by 8 month pregnant “Momma,” staring up at me. Momma was smiling and beckoned to me. I obeyed and she said to me softly, “honey. You’re with us now. Momma’s got you. You’re out in nine days, after your trial. I know you will be. Stay with us baby girl. You’re our ‘Lil’ Bit’ now.”

“Lil’ Bit?” I asked.

“Yes, honey pie. You’re our Lil’ Bit o’ Crazy.” She said with a smile on her face. And with that sentiment, my restricted codes grew even more elaborate, as I began to realize more and more how sick I was.

Momma was true to her word and I stayed safe the rest of my time in jail. I called my mother and father collect, time and time again, and no calls would go through. I had black biker gang cell mates, who were very kind and who would tip toe around on their best behavior to not trigger me into any sort of misbehavior. They would listen to my long speeches about Joseph Gordon Levitt, Kim Kardashian, Eminem, and other celebrities I thought I knew. I started my period. And I sobbed. Momma held me. In my psychosis and with the hysterical pregnancy, I believed I had lost a baby and had a miscarriage.

Momma and the biker gang’s kindness towards me allowed me to restructure my forming hierarchy of needs through love language. After the imagined miscarriage, lucid moments followed relatively quickly. My id was healing. My safety needs were met by my own volition and utilizing of Girl Scout survival skills. I elevated to belongingness and love needs being met through receiving gifts and acts of services from others. I survived a few months more as a homeless, mentally ill woman having learned these lessons, and eventually wound up at the state hospital. I finally got the help I needed. Words of affirmation from myself and others that led me to have my physiological needs of food, water and warmth (point 9 on the web) met as winter took full hold of Colorado.

Finding my Footing in a Grey World

I was at the state hospital for nine weeks. In those nine weeks, I was sexually assaulted nine times: once by an employee, and the rest by various patients. In addition to the sexual assaults, I had feces thrown at me regularly. Feces and urine drenched the hallways at times, sometimes left for an entire day. My bed was urinated on and I was refused new sheets. I also met some of the kindest mental health care workers I have ever met on the graveyard shift. I would sleep late so I could read the Torah in the hallway at night while my roommates slept. Certain graveyard shift workers sat and chatted with me. Sometimes they brought me snacks, and told me that I needed to tell my story to the world. They were tired of mental health being viewed the way it has been and my voice is powerful.

I wrote. I wrote a book of poetry and compiled notes for this paper. I read anything I could in the library on campus to help my research. And I prayed. I prayed for salvation. And on February 1st, 2014, my government benefits and housing came through and I was released to the care of my father and mother. I was given strict instructions to never return. I follow those instructions to this day.

I had new healthcare providers on the outside. My therapist was around my age, and she blew my mind with her compassion. In hindsight, I recognize how fragile I was then, and I know I wouldn't be here today if it weren't for her kindness and keen intellect. When I would cry, she would actively listen and offer a soft smile and soothing words of encouragement and affirmation (reiterating points 7-9 on the web). At the time, I really needed, craved, rebuilding my self-esteem. I was so hard on myself. I was rebirthing into society a broken woman. Always the dutiful student, I gave myself homework. I couldn't bear the thought of being broken forever. I started deconstructing labels and utilizing person-first language and coined: mental wellness condition: in my own vernacular. I discovered Kathie Snow's "The Inclusion Project" and started to use person first language (2009). I started writing more, and I began to finish my second master's degree (I had begun it during my marriage).

I started developing a healthcare dream team, and I went to the doctor religiously. In doing so, I learned what physical touch really meant. It sounds so simple, but to have a doctor inspect my ears, nose, or even visit my gynecologist after being strip searched in jail and having a flashlight shone in my anal cavity to prove I wasn't smuggling drugs, I learned a new meaning to physical touch, trust, and consent. From there, I started having quality time with myself and people I had pushed away while I was sick (point 12 on the web). The more well I became the tighter we all gripped to each other as I had been so close to death, none of us could bear the thought that I would be invisible, or go missing, ever again.

Then I reunited with him. Not my ex-husband though; this man had been a childhood friend. He lied about his criminal record, his drinking, and his violent past. I was roped into yet another abuse cycle, only this time, as I fought harder than ever for self-actualization through stripping Jung's Schemas of personal hero/martyr syndrome, I almost died at his hands. Not my own, this time. This was new. I actively put myself in a situation where my life was controlled by a man who tried to kill me 11 times. I tried everything I could to keep the peace with him, to avoid truly getting murdered, only he was too clever. I had wrongly thought on the streets that being murdered would be better than being raped again.

Not only did this slug of a man try to murder me, he raped me a few times near the end of it all. He wasn't cunning enough to avoid my getting a permanent restraining order. And that's the point I achieved the self-actualization through a reorganized war-time hierarchy of needs. I realized I had Jung's Hero/Martyr schema patterns to unlearn. I untangled that schema web, and from that point forward, I utilized Dialectic Behavioral Therapy (DBT) skills to assign new, more modern, coded syntax to my three states of cognitive and personality development, and began a road towards peace.

The Restructuring of Intrapersonal Language to Move Towards Inner Peace

Mindfulness is the key to contentment and peace time. When using DBT in conjunction

with Freud, it is possible to shed false intrapersonal coding structures. I shed the notion that I *am* my diagnosis. I gained social groups and co-cultures I dedicated my identity to (retro chic, minority women, so on and so forth). Yet the PTSD from the rape still haunted me. I wanted it out of my system. I craved healing and peace in all arenas of my life. I realized I had power over men to do as I pleased with them; to reclaim the multiple sexual violations I had experienced in my life.

A neighbor's daughter suggested a dating app that was known for hook ups. I wasn't looking for true love at the time. I was looking to use men the way they had used me. I was hoping for an adventure...I got one. A virgin, a dwarf, some military and law enforcement personnel, and a drunk cowboy put me on the path to polyamory. I had four boyfriends. They all knew about each other. What I knew about *them* was that I was abusing them. Three of the four were not polyamorous and were all vying for my heart. I was hurting them. And then one day, I met *him*. I met him the day after I told my Yeya I was done being reckless and I would devote my life to my God. I promised my Yeya I would repent. After this man and I connected on the app, we quickly set up a public meeting.

One glance and I was smitten. Over cream sodas, he blew my mind. One thing led to another and I realized this man is truly someone spectacular. I broke up with the four boyfriends; who he knew about from the get-go. I shared my fears about loving him, trusting him, I opened up about my Bipolar, my history of abuse, and my homelessness. He listened and shared his life stories. Honestly, they were a tad boring compared to mine. I loved that. He told me he wanted to wait to have "the sex." He told me had tried it a decade ago, and didn't want a trainer girlfriend. He wanted a wife, and he had been practicing abstinence.

After I got approval from everyone in my support system (even my health team), I became his exclusive girlfriend, and he my exclusive boyfriend. And we abstained. He told me he would wait for me to trust him enough to be best friends. I told him I would wait for him to be ready. Then one night, as we cuddled in bed, like we always did, the kisses turned passionate. He caressed my face, my neck, tilted my head back to part my lips and hold them open as he whispered into my mouth that he has missed me. The kisses continued. I was starting to feel triggered. And I realized, looking into his eyes, searching and scanning his private universe, that he would never hurt me. It had been two months and he had never hurt me. In any way. There were no red flags; I knew all of them from prior experience. I submitted my body to him as he held me, pressed his body against mine, and yet, we did not have "the sex." I merely allowed my body to trust his. And with that trust, the gilded cage around my heart melted into sweet aromatic love and my heart phoenix soared. We became best friends that night. And then I met her.

Being at Peace

We met randomly. She was adorable and vulnerable and in crisis. She was being abused. Her children were being beaten by her husband and Child Protective Services were already involved. I was the first person she asked for help from. As a graduate of a domestic violence class, I instructed her and she listened. Then I got the call. She needed a ride to the airport so she and her children could flee her husband.

After I pulled into the bus station, I got out of my car and embraced her; we were *seemingly long lost sisters*. It had been six weeks since we had seen each other, though we talked nearly every

day. She had *listened* to and taken every bit of advice I had given her. Her kids were with her; her beautiful children who would no longer be around that monster of a man. He had talked himself out of jail time and had gotten a simple ticket for bruising his child. I hugged her tight and said, “I am so proud of you. I love you.”

We talked emotional safety plans, the healing process, the research and culture surrounding domestic violence and I shared with her how I overcame my fears. I shared with her my strength, my passion for myself and my dedication to continually achieve self-actualization. We laughed as we shared stories of my preschool teaching and of her motherhood. I told her again I am proud of her. I told her again that I love her and I will see her again. She told me she loved me and we hugged. As she grabbed her luggage to put on a cart, she looked me dead in the eyes, and said, “You saved our lives.” I nodded with tears in my eyes, because I knew she had saved mine. She was starting the journey I was leaving behind. I knew I had taught her how to get to where I was that day. That day, I was at peace for the first time in a very, very long time.

We both left our abuse in the past that day. And I returned home to the loving arms of my best friend. He held my face and neck in his hands, and parted my lips to whisper in them: I missed you. I knew from that point forward, neither he, nor I, nor anyone else, would ever miss me again. My psychological, mindful presence was permanent, and something I could trust in me to keep for the rest of my life.

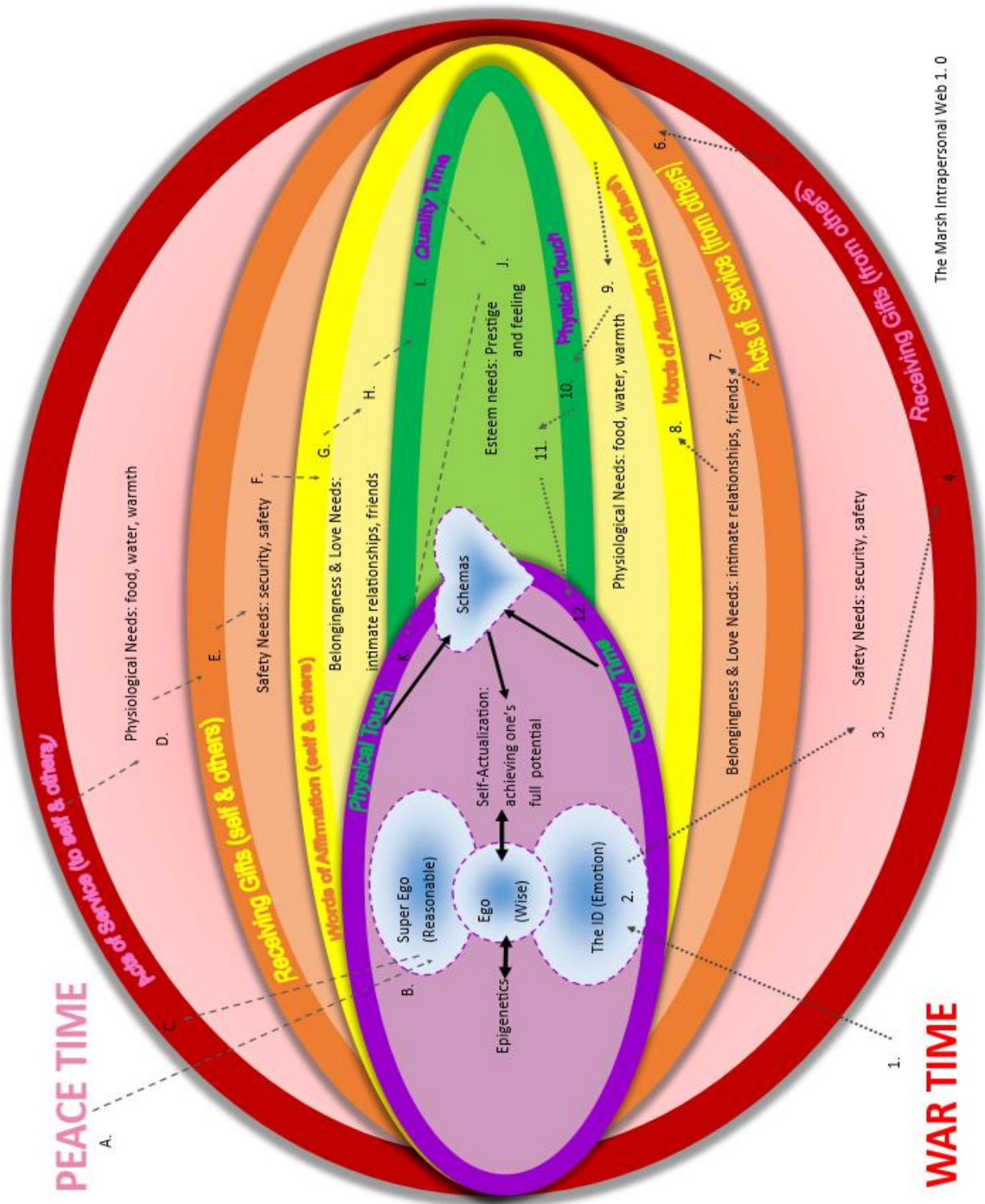
Conclusion

In 2012 I was already broken. My cellular proteins read that I was a train wreck. My behaviors in 2013 indicated the train, in fact, was wrecked. My ex-husband destroyed any semblance of Id stability, and I was at war with myself. I utilized intrapersonal restricted coding structures in the most extreme sense (a world of black and white) and allowed myself to become homeless. My safety needs were met through my capacity to unlock old Girl Scout survival skills, and then I started to accept receipt of gifts from others. Only then was I able to let others serve me. They served me in a literal sense as well as metaphorical; I allowed community members to feed me, clothes me, and bathe me. I allowed these community member’s acts of kindness to touch my soul. It was then that my intrapersonal restricted coding structures started to turn more elaborate as I let love heal me. I graduated to belongingness and having love needs met. My coding structures elaborated more as I learned to actively listen to what other people would say about my accomplishments to aid in pulling me from the depths of the tar pits I had sunk into.

I allowed myself to have my physiological needs met and began to advocate for more needs to be met through trusting my physicians to guide me to total health and wellness. They did so through simple physical touch. Once this base was established, I could recognize I didn’t want to be broken or invisible any longer. I chose rhetoric where “both/and” phrases existed in place of “either/or” phrases. When I did this, I realized the root of my personal identity lay in Jung’s Hero/Martyr schema, and this needed to be stripped to the barest minimum of self; I had to simply be me exactly as I was born to be. I achieved my first step of self-actualization by no longer choosing personal or emotional rhetorical identifiers which stunt my growth. This is seen in my behaviors I exhibit daily. I am medication, therapy, and treatment compliant. If anyone ever tries to interfere with my treatment plan, I problem solve and move forward towards an end goal. My end goal is to die happy and filled with contentment after leaving a legacy.

I continued with the “both/and” thinking through Marsha Linehan’s DBT skills program and saw my behavior patterns change dramatically. I grew more and more uncomfortable with daily happiness, until I learned to maintain a new level of normal. I started to experience peace in small quality moments with *him* and other loved ones (including myself). It was during these moments of peace time I could reasonably state my realistic goals I could achieve next. I had to give back and repay the kindness allotted to when I was homeless. I started serving the disenfranchised in my community through act of service. I maintained my physiological needs on my own, and received gifts from myself and loved ones to rebuild what was lost back then. I learned self-defense, I strengthened my relationships through words of affirmation and active listening. I spent quality time with myself doing “Self-Care Sunday” and other fun tasks. I learned to accept me, for who I am, flaws and all. I let *him* in and resolved to only let myself be touched if it was out of the truest of loves. I reworked my Jungian schemas to allow for further “both/and” thinking combined with elaborative intrapersonal rhetoric so I could have a healed mind. I grew wisdom of self, and I exhibit this in my behaviors today.

I am not perfect, and at the same time, I am not less than anyone else. I believe this is true of all people, and this philosophy is rooted so deeply in me now that I am on my path to continue this research. There is so much yet to be discovered in the mental wellness arena, and I am overjoyed that I have such a rich understanding of how my mind works now. Based on my behavioral continuity and lack of extreme reactions to stress, I know without a doubt my cellular proteins are stabilizing. I wish to share with people who have experienced similar obstacles as I, and further enrich my life through symbolic convergence. There are shared meanings in mental wellness experiences. To shed the stigma of mental *illness*, we, as a co-culture of *mentally ill*, must refocus the rhetoric on the wellness rebirth that almost always comes after a disordered episode.



Works Cited

- Chapman, Gary. "Discover Your Love Language." *The 5 Love Languages*®. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 May 2017.
- Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 May 2017.
- Bernstein, Basil. *Class, codes and control. Theoretical studies towards a sociology of language*. London: Routledge, 1975. Print.
- Cole, Adam. "Does Your Body Really Refresh Itself Every 7 Years?" *NPR*. NPR, 28 June 2016. Web. 15 May 2017.
- "Dictionary and Thesaurus." N.p., n.d. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.
- DSM-IV text revision*. Budapest: Animula, 2001. Print.
- El-Shwok, Sedeer. *Nature News*. Nature Publishing Group, 24 Mar. 2014. Web. 15 May 2017.
- "Epigenetics: Fundamentals." *What is Epigenetics?* N.p., n.d. Web. 11 May 2017.
- Esteller, Manel. "Epigenetics in evolution and disease." *The Lancet* 372 (2008): n. pag. Web.
- "Maslow's Hierarchy." *Changingminds.org*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 May 2017.
- Mitchell, Joni. *Woodstock*. Luxury Multimedia, 2005. CD.
- Origins of Psychoanalysis*. N.p.: Kent State University, n.d. .PPT.
- Snow, Kathie. "People First Language." N.p., 2009. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.

Nothing is Ever Free: A Rhetorical Critique of the Rebirth of Free to Play Video Games

Michael Register
Community College of Denver

Introduction

Imagine this. You have a friend, we will call him Jim, and he always has ideas about how to make money and business you should open together. Jim comes you and states that he has a new idea that will blow you away. He intrepidly tells you that on top of it being successful it will also make lots of money. You ask what exactly this super successful, money making, and surefire winning idea is exactly. Jim replies “a free to eat restaurant” or a “free to own car lot”.

Such questions would quickly arise in this conversation such as the most important question of; how do we make money, if it's *free*? I could only imagine the look on your face as Jim argues that while you would give the main product away for free, like a plate of pancakes. But then you would charge small fees for the other needed elements such as the silverware, napkins, and the syrup. In the case of the car lot you would give the car itself away for free, but then you would charge the customer small fees for the knobs for the air conditioning, floor mats, and glass for the windows.

Naturally one would agree that this idea seems completely ridiculous and destined to fail. The basis of any economic market, beyond ideas like supply and demand, is the variable cost ratio. In basic form the variable cost ratio looks at the variable cost to make the product and the revenue gained by selling the product. If you are making a product for \$500 dollars and only selling it for \$50, you have a problem. It seems simple enough. In the case of Jim, this is where his idea comes to a screeching halt. How can you make money off giving a product away for free when it costs money to make or run it? It is this question that is at the heart of this paper and why I argue that nothing is ever truly free. Even a free-to-play (F2P) video game.

Methodology

While I do not want to use much of my paper to explain the method, I do find it necessary for the reader to understand why the specific rhetorical theorist was chosen. In this rhetorical critique of F2P video games I have chosen to use Stephen Toulmin's argumentative model for this critique. One of the major reasons for using this rhetorical critique is not simply the fact that I am “arguing” that nothing is ever free, including F2P video games. I am also arguing, as Toulmin did himself, that “Practical arguments justify claims rather than infer claims from evidence.”¹ This is important to realize because the claim that I argue against is that the video game in question is actually free, since the justification for that claim is untrue.

In Stephen Toulmin's argumentative model we can justify a claim by using a ground and warrant together. An example of a ground would be "Harry was born in Bermuda". We then use a warrant to help clarify, such as "A man born in Bermuda is a British Citizen". This leads to the claim which is that "Harry is a British Citizen". One can see that by using this methodology we can justify the claim by using the ground and warrant as precursors. Yet while for this rhetorical critique I have used the argumentative model, I will use it in reverse.

By the very nature of the title, a free-to-play game gives no warrant or grounds. Simply the claim that it is free to play. Therefore, my methodology works in reverse within the argumentative model. Since we already know the claim I will work backwards to explore the grounds and warrant of the claim. It is this methodology that allows for the exploration of the claim since the claim itself seems to be invalid. One cannot sell a product, which takes man hours to make, distribute, and maintain all without any cost to the consumer. Something seems wrong, and through analyzing the arguments claim it was not long to find out that once again; nothing is every truly free.

A Brief History

Back in the mid-1980s when the Nintendo Entertainment System arrived there was what many referred to as Mario mania. People loved the side-scrolling, 8-bit game and clamored for sequels. But games take time to make, and Nintendo was in no hurry to make a hastily made game with the Super Bros moniker attached to it for fear it would destroy recovering video game market. This was the real birth of F2P videogames. Initially called freeware/shareware, they were literally random peoples attempts to make games that they wanted more of.

One of the most influential shareware games was "Captain Comic". Since the game "was the first PC title that attempted to capture the feel of a side-scrolling Super Mario Bros. game. It did a surprisingly good job, considering it was the work of just one man."² The game was actually 100% free, and besides the work put into it by Michael A. Denio, it cost nothing to make and since it was not sold commercially, it really was free.

While you may not have heard of that title, the next title really brings into perspective how important shareware was in kickstarting genres that most of the video game world takes for granted. Released in the early 1990's, Wolfenstein 3D would set the precedent for what could be accomplished in not just a F2P game, but "it was also one of the early successes of shareware gaming. Free games about shooting Nazis? Sign me up"³ This game led to the birth of what we know today as the First-Person-Shooter (FPS). This predecessor to games like Halo and Destiny was the first time that a F2P game attracted the attention of the mainstream media at the time, for better and for worse.

The simplistic nature of the graphics meant that creating these games, while taking some effort and time, were still an easy way to create a game that otherwise did not exist and share it for free. With time comes changes. F2P games have continually been released, but with the application of the internet, greater graphical possibilities, and advanced software tools most F2P games are

not simply created by one person. They require teams of designers, research and development teams, artists, and the list goes on. Now we come to a time when mobile apps and other games lay claim to the fact that they are F2P, but digging for the truth you only seem to get dirty.

Analysis

With the emergence of the F2P video game marketplace there seems to be a myriad of issues that plague these games. These issues are all relative to the fact that these games cannot simply sustain themselves upon being completely free based upon various aspects that I have already talked about. I will be analyzing the top three main factors that make the rebirth of F2P video games problematic. Each of these elements make the case that these games cost the player, not in actual cash value, but in other areas that lead to you wanting to spend actual money on the game. It is a series of some systematic things that allow for money to be made from a game that claims to be “free”.

Cheating

I know what you are thinking, and many people think the same thing when first hearing the argument that the game is cheating. It seems like lunacy, doesn't it? Why in the world would a video game, that needs a player to interact with it, want to cheat against the very person who is supposed to be enjoying it? While baffling if taken alone, the context surrounding the argument of F2P games cheating is backed up by both qualitative and quantitative data. To give you an in-depth example, let's look at the F2P trading card game *Magic the gathering: Duels of the Planeswalkers*. This, like all the other games I will be using as examples is a completely F2P game that requires only that you have a platform to play the game on. It should be noted that there is no major difference between the Xbox One, Playstation 4, and PC platforms.

This is a game that I both own and actively play. It was not until a recent bout of suspicious computer controlled moves that I decided to check and see if it just was my luck, or if others had encounter similar issues. What I found was shocking, to say the least. I knew I was onto something when I typed within the Google search bar “MTG Duels...” and the second search result was “Cheat?”. The accusations of the game cheating were widespread. To give you an example, one user on the games community app pages posted “SEVEN LAND IN A ROW WHAT THE HELL!!?? Sixth game now where this has happened. Not cool. I guess its just back down to rank two forever :(“.⁴ To give you a perspective of why seven lands in a row is quite the statistic is because out of a 60 card deck, you must have 24 lands. If you pull seven lands in a row the chances of you doing that are just under 1 in 1000.

This argument is even more prevalent when you look at the top 100 threads on the game channel. 78 out of 100 top threads dealt with cheating. The next most popular threads were questions about payment issues at 10, and software and bugs accounted for 5. The remaining 7 were miscellaneous complaints. That can't be a simple coincidence, could it? The players don't

seem to think so, and the quantitative data, while small, still backs up the fact that the game actively tries to cheat against the player.

You might be confused still, since why would the game want you to lose? This is where the context of the individual game comes into play. In the game MTG: Duels you buy packs of cards with “coins”. You need packs of cards to be competitive against other players and the computer, they cost 150 coins. By winning a game against the computer, on the hard difficulty mind you, you get 15 coins. That means you must play more than 10 games to get one pack of cards. Mind you, that is if you win. If you lose, then it takes longer for you to amass those coins. As all F2P games do, they give you a quicker and much less painful way of earning coins. Buy them instead.

For a measly \$10, you could get 8 packs. With one push of a button you could save yourself 80 games of saving up. Think about all the time you could save. Not to mention, that MTG: Duels puts a limit on the extra coins you can make by doing other things. The software does not want you to win easily, since by winning actual free coins, you are not spending real money on coins. Who is to say that the game, as many message boards argue they have seen, shuffles their deck and your deck to make it harder for you to win. The game requires servers, maintenance, designers, artists, among many others. So, if they are making no money then how could they survive? This leads to the developers understanding that without tilting the odds in their favor, the business is not sustainable.

One of the most frequently used analogies for F2P games is gambling. You know the old saying “the house always wins”. That is not simply a catchy phrase, but the truth behind how the gambling industry has made billions of dollars. Whenever you go up to a slot, blackjack, or poker table the odds of you winning are never higher than the house. Some games like craps are much higher in odds of you winning than say roulette. But the truth at the end of the day is that the house bets on itself. It knows that it has the best chance of winning. The same is true for F2P games. It can’t rely simply upon the business model, it must rely on other means to give them the advantage.

Paying to win

Since this is a rhetorical critique, let me ask a rhetorical question of you; what have you spend \$3.99 on recently? Food, energy drinks, or maybe a couple of candy bars. When you think about, four dollars seems somewhat inconsequential in the bigger picture. By that logic, if you spent 4 dollars on food could you not spend that same money on an in-game item that makes you better than others? This was the idea behind the first pay-to-win model within video games. This model does have a few specific parameters though.

The biggest one is that a single player game has you facing off against the computer and preset patterns of coded enemies. In many games, you can usually study an enemy to learn their tactics (as they have been programmed) and then exploit them as need be to win. What happens though when you insert human elements into that equation. At the heart of it, isn’t that the point

of the game design, to make the enemies and adversaries you face in the game less robotic and more *human*. What happens at this intersection is that while there are various trends from player to player, every human is different and therefore, their moves within the game world cannot be easily exploited.

What if the game gave you a way to have an edge? Competitive first person shooters like Call of Duty are by far the most lucrative businesses within the game world. To give you an example “Call of Duty: Black Ops II passed the \$1 billion mark in worldwide sales just 15 days after its launch last month, shattering even the box office record for sales set in 2009 by James Cameron’s “Avatar”, which took 17 days to pass the same threshold.”⁵ If that much money is at stake, would the game not want to incentivize people to pay more money than just for the game itself. Well, Call of Duty wagered they would.

In one of the first examples of pay to win in modern video games, Call of Duty: Ghosts released a gun called the “ripper”. You can buy it for just \$3.99. Instead of those energy drinks or fast food, you could gain a major competitive edge within the game. How? By giving people who paid for the gun something that cannot be found within the game anywhere else. The gun was the only gun in the game that was a hybrid of both a submachine gun, and assault rifle. In video games, both gun archetypes have their place. On average, assault rifles fire slower and are more accurate than their fast firing submachine gun counterparts. If you were playing on a map that had long distances between players and open fields, an assault rifle might be the better choice. But what happens if another player rushes you and you wish you had a submachine on you. Well, if you had spent \$3.99 you could change your ripper assault rifle into the ripper submachine gun. With the click of a button.

By paying the extra money for the ripper you were given access to a gun that could be changed on the fly to be either an assault rifle for long range engagements, or a submachinegun for more up close and personal encounters. Other players who did not have the ripper had to choose one or the other. This combined with the fact that it contained other things like actually changing the firing rate when you switched made it a versatile and overpowered gun in the eyes of many players. This in effect has a residual change in the mind of the player on the receiving end since, if you did not have the gun you were simply at a disadvantage. So, to get back on an even playing field, you would need to buy the gun as well.

As we can see this served two functions. Not only empowering the person who owned the gun, but (much like MTG: DUELS) infuriated the person on the receiving end and therefore, made them give into spending \$3.99 to get the gun also. This cycle was not out of the minds of the developers who made millions off this idea and similar ideas have made their way into other call of duty games. Another example is that in the latest Call of Duty game, for \$10 you could get 5 loot crates which might contain a powerful weapon to use in the game. Much like MTG: DUELS you could save up money regularly, which would take a very long time, or spend a small amount

and get instant access. Not to mention, by spending money your chances or receiving a gun instead of a camo or skin for your character increased. More quantitative data backs up that point.

I asked 60 players that I know personally who own and have played the most recent Call of Duty game if they spent money on loot crates, and if they received a weapon. Out of those 60, 50 of them said that when they paid for loot crates they received a weapon. Only 7 of them had never paid for loot crates but received a weapon, and 3 had never received a weapon in all their playing. That means that by paying for the *chance* to open a weapon, 100% of them received a weapon. In total, 83% of my friends had spent money on the game beyond what it cost to simply play it. Almost all of them in one way or another when asked said “because I wanted to be competitive” or “I wanted the weapon that my opponent had”.

R.N.G. The Gamers High

If you have ever gone to a casino you might have come across a patron sitting in front of a slot machine. Their big bucket of quarters sitting by them and almost without flinching reach down again, and again, and again to put their quarter in the machine and pull the lever. It almost seems as if they are in their own assembly line doing the same action repeatedly. Seemingly without any thought. The reason they do it is because so many times they get so close to winning. Maybe just a bar off, or they win small but just not the big winning hand. But they can feel it. They know that soon, they will hit it big.

You know this feeling. How many times have you played some Monopoly game that you just are missing that *one* piece to win it all? How many times did you need just that one number in a raffle to have won the grand prize. While someone might tell you that your chances of winning were one in a million, because you had a few of the numbers posted it doesn't seem like that is possible. By giving you a small sense of hope, a small sense that you might just win it they create a false narrative, and therefore a false hope. But this is the intended result. If you think you are closer than you really are, you are more likely to keep trying, and hopefully, keep spending money to make it wherever it is that you want to go.

How this plays into video games is quite similar. R.N.G. stands for Random Number Generator. It is mostly used in how enemies spawn, how enemies might react, and most importantly for this discussion; how rewards (loot) is given out. To shed light on this issue let's look at one of the most recent examples which is the game Destiny. The game is a first-person shooter set in the future and throughout space. When killing any enemy, you have the chance to receive random colored loot from them. In order from lowest to highest it goes White, Green, Blue, Purple (legendary), and finally Gold (exotic). When loot is dropped in the game you still have to pick it up, and take it to be identified. While the R.N.G. for enemies dropping, loot is usually known, what is not known is how the game creates, like previous examples, a false narrative.

When you take your items to be identified one thinks that they should usually be the item of the corresponding color. For example, if you are getting a green engram identified then you

would expect it to be a green item. There is always a chance that the item will be of lower or higher quality, but that should small comparatively. For example, statistically if you are identifying a green engram the breakdown of it being green is 69%, a higher blue item is 7%, and a lower quality is 24%. That seems fair and the breakdown follow logical rules that the item in question would be the color of the engram. If you are identifying a blue engram this trend continues. For a blue engram to be a blue item it is a 74% chance, a higher item is 4%, and a lower/green quality item is 22%.

It is here that the developer, knowing what the player is expecting uses R.N.G. to their advantage instead of the players. If you received a purple or legendary engram, the chances of you opening a purple item (as it should be) are 34%. To make matters worse, the chance of receiving a lower quality item is 60%. That is almost twice the ability to get what you technically should be getting. So, the question that must be asked now is; why would they change the reward system later in the game. The truth, like most addictive practices like gambling is that they lure you in and hook you with the promise of winning or in our case getting what you should get, and then at the end, switch it out to where they are the ones benefitting most.

This is a vicious cycle because if you have already spent hundreds of hours playing then just completely quitting seems like a complete waste. If you just leave the gambling table, then you simply lost money without any chance, no matter how small it is, of getting that money back. It almost is that carrot on a stick right in front of your face that makes you move, but is always out of reach. Many people feel the same, some argue that “they botched endgame loot. Developers said many times that its game isn’t a MMO, but they definitely barged into the MMO realm with its loot system, radically based on grinding and tragically reliant on random number generation. By doing that, they opened a big can of worms they probably weren’t ready to sort out.”⁶ The problem is that the R.N.G. set up within the game is not meant to help the players, it is meant for the players to want to spend more time within the game.

Various F2P games do the same thing in the sense that they give you the illusion and set up the false narrative that you are closer to winning and receiving the award you in theory deserve. Just because you are one bar off from hitting the jackpot on a slot machine every time doesn’t mean that you are that close from winning. But it looks that way to the human eye. To human emotions, it feels that way too. In truth, they are playing to get rewards that are always out of their reach. Just as with gambling the house, or the game always wins.

Discussion, Limitations, and Conclusion

With the examples that I have provided within the frame of this paper there should be no doubt that there are questions to be answered within the realm of the F2P game market. Such questions could almost be framed within an ethical argument of whether this is beneficiary to the consumer and whether the actual product is truthful to what is being sold. But that is a question left for another paper and another time. The most important aspect of this paper is to bring up the

questions surrounding the F2P game marketplace. For if nobody is asking questions, then they will never get answered.

I do not believe that F2P games are inherently bad, they do serve a niche within the game market for people who may not want to, and even not have the ability to pay for a full priced game. Yet that truth needs to be taken with a grain of salt due to the fact most F2P games cannot simply sustain themselves by giving their game away for free, as it is a business model and they must bring in revenue somehow. That is what I take issue with, the notion that while the game is in the most basic and technical sense *free*, it makes you want to spend money through subtle and subconscious needs that you are not usually aware of. That is why I feel this research is needed and the conversation needs to be started to understand the overall impact of these games on various levels.

Unfortunately, this is not an extensive research project and while most of my quantitative data is small, I hope that it paves the way for future research within this area. I also understand that as a rhetorical critique I have not been able to fully research the artifacts within other methodologies such as narrative, pentadic, or neo-Aristotelian critiques. These, among others, are viable options for future endeavors into the realm of the effects of F2P games as this is a genre emerging for the second time to great success. As with anything digital, it is not static but dynamic and constantly changing. Researchers must be ready to analyze this holistically and analytically with the correct lenses of understanding. I fully acknowledge that more research must be done to come to a more substantial and concrete conclusion of my findings.

The truth is that while these findings may not seem consequential to many, I argue that they are extensively more important than many people realize. The video game industry is a multi-billion-dollar industry and is continually growing. New technology, new games, and new ways such as virtual reality is continuing to evolve. To believe that the businesses in charge, with so many billions of dollars at stake, are completely above trying to entice players with slightly less than reputable methods is laughable. Without a firm understanding of how and why F2P video games are becoming increasingly accepted and the consequences that type of genre holds for the consumer is not something taken lightly.

Let me reaffirm my position that F2P games are not terrible and should be avoided at all costs. I only assert that understanding the true nature of what the game does to try and get you to spend money is still there. Simply because it says that the game is “free” does not actually mean that it comes without a cost. Since we all know, nothing is every truly free.

Endnotes

- ¹ Foss, Sonja K., 2014, *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, 127
- ² Edwards, Benj, 2012, *PCWorld*
- ³ Dievendorf, Schuyler J., 2013, *Escapist Magazine*
- ⁴ Steam Community, 2016
- ⁵ Heffinger, A., 2012, *NY Post*
- ⁶ Nelva, G., 2014, *Dualshockers*

Works Cited

- Dievendorf, Schuyler J. "8 Shareware Games Everyone Should Have Played". *Escapist magazine*. 13 Dec. 2013, <http://www.escapistmagazine.com/articles/view/features/galleryoftheday/10811-8-Great-Shareware-Games-For-Everyone> . Accessed 10 December 2016.
- Edwards, Benj. "The 12 Greatest PC Shareware Games of All Time". *PCWorld Magazine*. 22 Jan. 2012, http://www.pcworld.com/article/248494/the_12_greatest_pc_shareware_games_of_all_time.html . Accessed 5 January 2017.
- Foss, Sonja K. ---. ---. *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric: 30th Anniversary Edition*. Waveland Press, Inc. 2014
- Heffinger, Asulla. "Call of Duty: Black Ops II reaches \$1B in sales faster than Avatar". *New York Post*. 5 Dec. 2012. <http://nypost.com/2012/12/05/call-of-duty-black-ops-ii-reaches-1b-in-sales-faster-than-avatar/> . Accessed 30 November 2016.
- Nelva, Giuseppe. "Destiny and Loot: Bungie is Treading Dangerous Ground by Making Fun of Players' Frustration". *DualSHOCKERS* . 26 Sep. 2014. <http://www.dualshockers.com/destiny-and-loot-bungie-is-treading-dangerous-ground-by-making-fun-of-players-frustration/> . Accessed 10 January 2017.
- Steam, Community. "Magic Duels". *Steam Community Thread*. 24 Apr. 2016. <http://steamcommunity.com/app/316010/discussions/0/357284131799795635/> . Accessed 5 Dec 2016.

1984 reborn: Russian media create alternative reality in the minds of Russian people

Andrey Reznikov
Black Hills State University

For whom was he writing this diary? For the future, for the unborn. Either the future would resemble the present, in which case it would not listen to him, or it would be different from it, and his predicament would be meaningless.

George Orwell. 1984

The year 1984 came and went, and it looked like nothing even remotely similar to George Orwell's 1984 happened – or could happen in the future. However, in the beginning of the 21st century, the alternative reality, which has striking similarity to the world of 1984, is being created every day by the Russian mass media.

Reality Control

“Every citizen, or at least every citizen important enough to be worth watching, could be kept for twenty-four hours a day... in the sound of official propaganda, with all other channels of communication closed. The possibility of enforcing... complete uniformity of opinion on all subjects, now existed for the first time”(169-170).

- 94% of Russian citizens get their information from TV, while the government controls all major TV stations ¹
- “When you watch the Putin Show, you live in a superpower. This is the fantasy being served up each night on Channel 1, on Rossiya 1, on NTV [three major TV channels in Russia]” (Shteyngart).
- Opinion polls: in 1991 80% of Russian citizens had positive opinion of the USA (6% - negative); in 2015 – 81% had negative opinion (13% - positive) ²

War Is Peace

“On the sixth day of Hate Week it had been announced that Oceania was not after all at war with Eurasia. Oceania was at war with Eastasia. Eurasia was an ally. There was, of course, no admission that any change had taken place. Merely it became known that Eastasia and not Eurasia was the enemy” (Orwell 148)³. “It would probably be accurate to say that by becoming continuous war has ceased to exist” (164).

- February 2014- September 30, 2015 – Ukraine
- After September 30, 2015 – Syria

Doublethink

“Doublethink means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one’s mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them” (176).

- Malaysian airline was shot down by a Ukrainian fighter jet/Radar data show no planes in the area
- Eastern Ukraine has the right for cessation from Ukraine/propaganda of cessation in Russia is a criminal offence
- Turkey: enemy (November 25, 2015) - sanctions/friend (June 2016) - sanctions lifted

Ministry of Truth

“The Ministry of Truth concerns itself with lies” (178). “Most of the material had no connection with anything in the real world, not even the kind of connection that is contained in a direct lie” (37).

- “Trolling factory” in Saint-Petersburg : 40 departments, 20 persons in each; 135 posts during 12-hour shift; trolls receive assignments: a topic and five key words (e.g.: “American puppets in Kiev”; key words: Ukraine, war in Ukraine, NATO, Ukrainian policy)⁴

The End of Truth

“It appeared that there had even been demonstrations to thank Big Brother for raising the chocolate ration to twenty grammes a week. And only yesterday, he reflected, it had been announced that the ration was to be reduced to twenty grammes a week. Was it possible that they could swallow that? Yes, they swallowed it” (51).

- 2014 opinion poll in Russia: 82% of respondents believe that Malaysian airplane was shot down by Ukrainians ⁵
- 2016 opinion poll in Russia: 50% of respondents believe that Malaysian airplane was shot down by Ukrainians, in spite of the official report of the investigation committee, even though the poll was taken after the report was published ⁶

Fake News

“To-day he should commemorate Comrade Ogilvy. It was true that there was no such person as Comrade Ogilvy, but a few lines of print and a couple of faked photographs would soon bring him into existence” (42). “Comrade Ogilvy, who had never existed in the present, now existed in the past” (43).

- “Crucified boy” in Lugansk ⁷
- “Raped Russian girl” in Germany ⁸
- Fake photos (from other conflicts, with paid actors, with the same people)

The mutability of the past

“The past is whatever the records and memories agree upon. And since the party is in full control of all records, and in equally full control of the minds of its members, it follows that the

past is whatever the party chooses to make it. It also follows that though the past is alterable, it never has been altered in any specific instance. For when it has been recreated in whatever shape is needed at the moment, then this new version is the past, and no different past can ever have existed” (176).

- Various versions of Malaysian airplane crash: separatist’s missile; Ukrainian fighter jet; Ukrainian missile ⁹
- There are (no) Russian troops in Ukraine

Blackwite

“Applied to an opponent it [the word blackwhite] means the habit of impudently claiming that black is white, in contradiction of the plain facts. Applied to a party member, it means a loyal willingness to say that black is white when party discipline demands it” (175).

- Returning of Crimea vs. annexation of Crimea
- Fascist putsch vs. revolution of dignity
- People’s militia vs. pro-Russian militants

Notes

¹ See: <http://www.open-lecture.ru/lectures/borodina>

² See: <http://www.levada.ru/old/08-06-2015/mezhdunarodnye-otnosheniya-druzya-i-vragi-rossii>

³ All quotations from George Orwell’s novel are taken from this edition: Orwell, George. 1984. Signet Classic, 1964.

⁴ See: <http://www.svoboda.org/a/26913247.html>

⁵ See: <http://www.levada.ru/2014/07/30/katastrofa-boinga-pod-donetskom/>

⁶ See: <http://wciom.ru/index.php?id=236&uid=115900>

⁷ See: https://www.1tv.ru/news/2014-07-12/37175-bezhenka_iz_slavyanska_vspominaet_kak_pri_ney_kaznili_malenkogo_syna_i_zhenu_opolchen_tsa

⁸ See: https://www.1tv.ru/news/2016-01-16/3330-avstriya_vremenno_priostanavlivaet_deystvie_shengenskogo_soglasheniya_iz_za_sluchaev_nasiliya_v_germanii

⁹ See: <http://www.bbc.com/russian/features-37496581>

Works Cited

Orwell, George. *1984*. Signet Classic, 1964.

Shteyngart, Gary. "Out of My Mouth Comes Unimpeachable Manly Truth." Feb.18, 2015.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/22/magazine/out-of-my-mouth-comes-unimpeachable-manly-truth.html>. Accessed 9 March 2017.

Rebirthing Environmental Religion: Photography, the Landscape, and the Construction of Nature

Kathleen M. Ryan
University of Colorado Boulder

Myths, as Roland Barthes (1970) reminds us, are useful ways for nations to understand and create identity. Barthes uses an example of an Angolan boy dressed in a uniform that echoes those of the French military to demonstrate how even a young African child can be seen as an icon of “Frenchness.” In the United States, one national myth, Manifest Destiny, centers around the land. The idea of Manifest Destiny coincided nearly with the founding of the nation; it is based in the notion that Americans had a God-given duty to tame the vast North American continent. It was a part of the nation's notion of its own exceptionalism, or the idea the the country, and its people, were somehow unique.

This myth sometimes comes in conflict with another uniquely American identity construction: the idea that within natural or unspoiled lands one can find a type of spiritual rebirth. This concept was espoused by naturalists like Henry David Thoreau (1993) and John Muir (1992), and would later be adopted by conservation organizations like the Sierra Club. While some lucky adventurers would be able to visit the lands and worship firsthand in these environmental temples, most Americans would only be able to see these places of worship secondhand, via photographs.

But what happens when the pristine is, in fact, scarred by human hands? For contemporary landscaper photographers, this seeming conflict offers a form of transformation. Far from being the type of hell envisioned by Rachel Carson (2007) in *Silent Spring*, the photographers instead look at spaces of environmental destruction and find a strange, otherworldly beauty.

This paper explores the work of of three female landscape photographers in this context. One of Nina Berman’s projects explores the devastation fracking in the Marcellus Shale formation has on Pennsylvania. Camille Seaman photographs icebergs in the Arctic and Antarctica which are melting because of climate change. Tanya Marcuse looks at a more intimate type of destruction: the detritus left in an orchard after the harvest. The paper argues that these photographers demonstrate how even within the death of a landscape, a beauty can be found. This results in a type of rebirth, not of the environment but of how we consider it. By pointing out the artificiality of the conceits of what is “natural,” the photographers force the audience to recognize that our concept of nature is, borrowing from William Cronon (1995), “a profoundly human construction” (25).

The Pastoral Tradition

The color photograph by Nina Berman is of a nighttime landscape. A clump of trees at roughly the center of the image is in sharp focus. It's early spring. The trees are missing most of their leaves, but grass on the ground below is a bright cerulean green. Part of the ground is in shadow; it may be a road or just a darkened hillock. This sky is a deep purple, but in the lower third of the image there is a pinkish glow. It may be the beginnings of the sunrise over the horizon. The light catches the trees making the branches appear almost white. The photograph is strange

and otherworldly (largely due to how unexpected it is to see a landscape shot at night and in color), but at the same time it is also beautiful. The land in it appears unspoiled, pastoral.

Leo Marx (1964/2000) says the pastoral tradition is embedded in the American myth. The young nation, he says, was founded on this idea that it was a “pastoral utopia” (73), a veritable Garden of Eden that offered its European settlers “a new paradise of abundance” (78). For Henry Nash Smith (1950), the new world of the Americas was a type of creation myth, where the first European immigrants were re-creating the narrative from biblical texts, with settlers fleeing a wrecked and devastated garden (Europe) in favor of new and pristine lands. These lands offered religious freedom (specifically the Puritans in New England) and/or settlement opportunities for the sons of large, and often wealthy, families (specifically in the mid-Atlantic and southern regions). Meanwhile, the vast North American interior was imagined in this myth as a fertile space where the individual could create his personal Garden of Eden.

It's important to point out that the pastoral utopia myth ignored the peoples who already lived in the continent prior to its European conquest. Marx (1964/2000) says that for some of the early settlers, the Native American population was seen as a logical part of this Garden of Eden. Virginia, he says, was named because the land held a type of virgin purity, unspoiled and populated by people who had not been tainted by the corrupting influences of European society. The New World was a “primitive utopia” where “the Europeans, as a result of the removal to this version land, quickly will be redeemed” (80).

Marx is largely drawing from the writings of the early American settler Richard Beverley in his descriptions of the new world. And he admits that Beverly is in many ways constructing a myth of the land. For Beverley, he says:

The garden stands for the original unity, the all-sufficing beauty and the abundance of the creation. Virginia is an Edenic land of primitive splendor inhabited by noble savages. The garden, in this usage, joins Beverly's own feelings with that “yearning for paradise” which makes itself felt in virtually all mythology (85).

At the same time, Beverley is longing for the structure of the traditional English garden. This tension, between exultation of the natural land and the desire to tame it, is inherent in the nascent American myth-making.

It's a tension that continued during the country's westward expansion. Even as new states were being established and Americans were pushing west in a move to “tame” the land, others were questioning if the land needed to be tamed at all. Henry David Thoreau spent two years in relative solitude at his Walden Pond cottage in the forest near Concord, Massachusetts. Thoreau, writes theologian Malcolm Clemens Young (2009), was a transcendentalist, who:

believed, along with the English Romantic poets, that nature could be revelatory in the same way that their forebears believed the Bible was. They read Coleridge's interpretation of Kant as a refutation of the Lockean philosophy upon which so much Unitarian theology was based. They tried to make sense of German historical and biblical criticism that approached the Bible as the work of fallible human authors. Transcendentalists believed that artistic expression could be a form of

piety. Their primary point, though, seems to be that the thrush of faith lies in a spiritual experience of transcendence and that God is immanent rather than above the world (226).

Thoreau (1993) himself said, “I cannot come nearer to God and heaven” (309) than when in the woods of a place like Walden Pond. According to Young, Thoreau found value in the wildness that is nature and the contrast that wildness has with all things civilized. This value for the untamed would be echoed by John Muir and his explorations in the mountain “temples” of the Sierra Nevadas.

The tension is also evident in Berman’s photograph. For as a viewer, I am aware that the image comes from a 2011 series called “Fractured: The Shale Play.” The other worldly light in the lower third of the photograph is not from the beams of the rising sun, but rather, as the caption reminds us, from the burning methane flares coming off of the fracking wells. The image is the opposite of bucolic. Berman (n.d.) says of the series:

Industrial activity is visually dramatic. The spectacle attracts by proving man’s power to tame the earth and provide for consumptive needs. Yet the activity is fraught with toxic impacts, presenting a visual paradox. Acknowledging this paradox, I focus on the strange beckoning and discomfiting allure felt when landscapes shift from natural to industrial (online).

Rather than a pastoral utopia, the image upon deeper reflection shows a pastoral dystopia: a land devastated by human intervention.

The Machine in the Garden

The romantic pastoralism that characterized Thoreau’s (and to a degree Muir’s) writings couldn’t escape the reality of the modernizing world. The mid- to late-1800s was not only a time of Westward expansion by the United States: it was also an era of industrial innovations. Or, as Marx (1964/2000) would later observe, the machine (technology) was entering the American garden. “The sudden appearance of the machine in the garden is an arresting, endlessly evocative image. It causes the instantaneous clash of opposed states of mind: a strong urge to believe in the rural myth along with an awareness of industrialization as counterforce to the myth,” he writes (229). For Thoreau, that machine would be the railroad, which skirted the forest he called home and intruded through whistles the noises of the engine as it passed by.

Photographers like Berman offer a way to visually understand the machine in the garden. The machine in her case is twofold. The photographs in her series demonstrate the impact the machine (hydraulic fracturing equipment) has had on the land (methane flares). Though the spaces appear unspoiled, the otherworldly light that is a result of fracking tells us otherwise. But she is also capturing the images using a technological device: a camera, specifically a DSLR that records the images on a memory card and is powered by a battery. Without the machine her photographs would be impossible. The photographs demonstrate and record the intrusion that modern society can have even on so-called natural spaces.

Muir (1992) feared a similar incursion in the Sierras, and was instrumental in the establishment of the conservation organization the Sierra Club as well as the state and later federal

protection of “nature” in places like Yosemite National Park (National Park Service 2014). With this protection came a shift in how the garden was understood. Far from being a place that was part and parcel of our everyday life, protected wilderness became a sanctuary where one could find renewal from the increasing conformity of society (Dunaway 2005, 126-127). The land itself was an anecdote for the modern world, which its consumerism, pollution, and development. Its value, in an increasingly secular society, became akin to the value of religion itself (Dunaway 2005), and, in some cases, would replace religion altogether (Turner 1994).

This conflation of nature and religion would be apparent in the books published by The Sierra Club. The organization published a series of “Exhibit Format” books, beginning with *This is the American Earth* in 1960. The monograph featured photographs by Ansel Adams and text by Nancy Newhall, using almost biblical language to describe the ethereal landscapes Adams photographed. Other books in the series included photographs by Elliot Porter (1962) combined with text from Thoreau. Finis Dunaway (2010) says these books serve a specific purpose:

The books used the idea of natural beauty as a citizenship right to galvanize support for wilderness legislation. The series depicted wild places as sanctuaries for the spirit, landscapes of therapy that offer physic renewal to postwar Americans, providing them with a temporary escape from the pressures of modernity and the snares of conformity (17).

This advocacy/worship approach would become known as the “Sierra Club Religion,” a term used to describe this canonization of the natural as a sanctuary for spiritual rebirth.

A similar aesthetic can be found in the large color photographs by Camille Seaman. Her images feature the polar regions and Antarctica. In one (“The Shape of Things to Come, Antarctic Sound, Antarctica, February, 2010” from “The Dark Ice” series), an iceberg is adrift in the open sea. The left side of the ice, calved from a glacier, is a rich turquoise blue. It rises in an almost straight-line toward the sky; the top half of the iceberg is a pristine white coming down in a forty-five-degree angle toward the base. A second, smaller, triangle shape shadows the larger blue and white peak; it is a grayish blue in color. The ocean surrounding the floating ice is almost an inky black and far off on the horizon a rectangular shaped white iceberg floats. The sky is a pale blue and takes up nearly three-quarters of the image. Fluffy white clouds dot the top. The image is serene and worshipful. The land (or in this case the floating ice) is indeed a “sanctuary for the spirit.”

Marx (1964/2000) argues that when looking at the incursion of the machine into the garden writers have struggled to find a satisfactory resolution. “The power of these fables to move us derives from the magnitude of the protean conflict figured by the machine’s increasing domination of the visible world ... The resolution of our pastoral fables are unsatisfactory because the old symbol of reconciliation is obsolete,” he writes (364). The narrative constraints of pastoral writing demanded some sort of resolution; normally the hero is alienated from society even if living in an ideal landscape. But photographers don’t face this same problem. The photographic monographs argued that the value of unspoiled nature outweighed commercial/industrial demands, and offered people a way to worship these sacred natural spaces without having to visit them themselves. Rebecca Solnit (2007) notes that “the mere sight of such images and reminder of such places became a powerful motivating force” (251) to advocate for environmental conservation.

Toby Jurovics (2010) argues similar argument for environmentalism would come from a very different aesthetic: that of the movement known as the New Topographics. Originally drawn from the title of a small 1975 exhibition at the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, the movement refers to photographic work that comments on human intrusions into the natural landscape. Well it's not clear if all of the artists in the exhibition were advocating for conservation, as Deborah Bright (1989) notes, the New Topographics offered a stark contrast to "...the kitschy Kodachrome versions of wilderness immortalized [set] on postcards and calendars and the touchy-feely Nature worship of the Minor White crowd" (131). This was a paradigm shift for landscape photography.

These photographs of man-altered landscapes forestalled nostalgia and prevented an escape into the past—instead they forced viewers to remain in the present and think about the future. New Topographics had redemptive aspects in its renovation of landscape photography, attention to cultural landscape, and depiction of heedless land use. Its key message was not revelation but responsibility (Salvesen 2010, 55).

Seaman's photographs in many ways fall more in the New Topographics tradition than that of nature worship. Her images show the very real results of climate change. The icebergs she chronicles aren't floating because of natural occurrences, but rather because polar and antarctic sea ice is melting at an unprecedented rate.

She describes her images as portraits of the ice:

When I was standing in front of these icebergs, I wasn't seeing them as just chunks of ice. To me, because of the way that I was raised as a Shinnecock, I was looking at life – not water frozen as ice. I wouldn't go so far as to say I see icebergs as sentient beings, but each one was arranged in such a unique, individual way. I couldn't help but see that each iceberg has its own personality, and each one reacts differently to its circumstances ... I think somehow that sense of aliveness is communicated through the images (Eng 2012).

But she also describes her act of photography in a way that is almost spiritual. She talks of feeling a connection to the space she's photographing and trying to communicate that connection to viewers. Like the work of the New Topographics, Seaman's photographs raise the question if the machine in the garden can offer the potential for reconciliation between man and nature.

Woman and the Machine

The use of the word "man" is intentional; environmental photography both before and within the New Topographics exhibition was conceived as a distinctly male space. Estelle Jussim and Elizabeth Lindquist-Cock (1985) observe, "Powerful ideological factors in America demarcated landscape photography, as well as landscape painting, as *man's* work. Nature as wilderness was considered to have a restorative effect on men who were becoming overly civilized, the equivalent of being *feminized*" (16). The approach "presupposed a definition of landscape photography limited to images that capture sublime grandeur" (Rosenblum 2000, 286). None of the Sierra Club Exhibit Format books featured a female photographer. Only one of the 10 New Topographics photographers was a woman (Hilla Becher), and she worked in partnership with her

husband. Similarly, United States government survey projects in the mid- to late-1800s photographing the Western landscape rarely employed women (Rosenblum 2000, 286).

Naomi Rosenblum (2000) ties this lack of women in landscape photographic history to the gender divide found in Manifest Destiny:

Historically, this genre had been considered a male domain and its outstanding images the accomplishment of those who accompanied exploratory and colonizing expeditions all parts the world; such individuals were almost without exception men (286).

But it also goes back to the American creation myth: the idea that the North American continent is a return to the Garden of Eden.

As Carolyn Merchant (1995) notes, even as man desires to be at one with nature, he still wants to tame it:

The narrative of frontier expansion is a story of male energy subduing female nature, taming the wild, plowing the land, re-creating the garden lost by Eve. American males lived the frontier myth in their everyday lives, making the land safe for capitalism and commodity production...To civilize was to bring the land out of a state of savagery and barbarism into a state of refinement and enlightenment” (146-147).

In other words, conquest is gendered, and complicated. On the one hand, the untamed nature of wilderness was considered just too much for a woman and was solely the domain of men who found a type of religious purification there (Jussim and Lindquist-Cock 1985). On the other, men are using the North American continent as a type of tabula rasa, where they can come to a type of salvation from the “original sin” of woman through the taming the land (Merchant 1995).

This isn't to say that women weren't making photographs of the natural environment. Instead, women in the early years of photography turned their eyes to the gardens and landscapes which surrounded their homes. As Rosenblum (2000) observes, “By 1890 thousands of women in the United States were involved in amateur photography” (95). This number included women who adopted a Pictorialist approach to landscape photography, such as Eva Watson-Schütze, Louise Dehong Woodbridge, and Lily White. Their images paid close attention to things like lighting, subject, and the aesthetic composition of the scene, and “aimed to produce images as artful as paintings” (Rosenblum 2000, 94).

Photographer Tanya Marcuse offers a contemporary spin on photographing the garden. She has done several series of images looking at the apple orchards surrounding her upstate New York home. The images are complex and detailed. They also challenge the idea that women can't handle the “untamed nature of wilderness.”

Her “Woven” series is a case in point. The large (62 by 124 inch) color photographs focus on detritus from the garden. “Woven 16, 2015” is a riot of color. Bright green leaves and tendrils of ferns are scattered through the image. Purple flowers and tiny bright orange berries seem to jump out at the viewer from the dark brown go decomposing leaves and dirt. Apples, plums, and

pomegranates in various stages of rot brush alongside white flowers and brown twigs. A splash of orange fruit (a persimmon?) peeks out occasionally. It appears as if she has perched herself in a tree or atop a ladder to look down at the rotting remains of the summer's growing season.

But the photographs are more complex than that. Marcuse harvests the orchards and woods surrounding her house looking for flora.

The 5 x 10 foot photographs sometimes take weeks to compose, and during this process of composition, of collecting, arranging, burning, painting, and transplanting, there is change. Flowers wither, spiders build webs, new shoots emerge, and corpses decay ... I intend the photographs to be experienced as exquisitely detailed still lives when viewed from up close, but to hold together as a immersive, more abstract composition from further away (2015)

The decomposing flora and occasional fauna (she's used the bodies of dead mice in some images) are placed within a 10 foot wooden frame to be photographed. She cites medieval hunting and falconry tapestries as well as the paintings of Jackson Pollock as inspiration.

This garden is a wild and dangerous place where the unexpected happens frequently. But it is also a place where the machine and (wo)man intrude. The seemingly natural decomposition is, in fact, unnatural, staged for the camera, and designed by the photographer. The images are lush and beautiful, hinting at an over-bountiful nature, while at the same time tinged with the disturbing reminder of the banality of the cycle of life and death. But they would not exist were it not for the presents of machine. This is a constructed unexpected, which only happens for the photographic lens.

Rebirthing the Environment

Of course, post-New Topographics, women would become more visible in landscape work. This is due in part to historians like Rosenblum inserting women into the photographic canon, but also because women photographers are increasingly claiming the space for themselves. These claims range from the spiritual (with books like *Mother Nature*, exhorting a "natural" connection between women in land) to political (the philosophical linkage between environmentalism and feminism). Nonetheless, Rosenblum (2000) cautions,

Whether women have looked at landscape photography as a means of countering the aggressive approach to nature embraced by the historical concept of manifest destiny ... or as a means to change attitudes about the protection of the land, such endeavors are not gender specific. Women's images that address questions of ecological destruction land misuse do not differ significantly from those by male photographers with similar ideologies (291).

Jennifer Price (1995) notes that we "graft meanings onto nature" as a way to not just understand it but also understand our own modern lives (190). Similarly, we may have a tendency to graft meanings on to work by female photographers. The fact that Seaman, Berman, and Marcuse are female is of less importance than the fact that they are all looking at environmental devastation in some form. Their work lays bare the role of the machine in the garden, and suggests that it may offer a road to redemption.

As Solnit (2007) observes, that redemption doesn't come through our preconceptions of the garden "ideal":

Eden is the problem, of course. Eden stands as the idea of nature as it should be rather than as it is, and in attempting to make a garden resemble Eden, the gardener wrestles the garden away from resembling nature—nature, that is, as the uncultivated expands around it, the patterns that would insert themselves without interference (254).

Instead, it can be found in "the evocative—rather than representational—language of lyricism" (Jussim and Lindquist-Cock 1985, 76): aesthetics.

In looking at the work of another environmental photographer, David Maisel, I've argued that the tension between the horrors the photographs represent (in Maisel's case, environmental pollution) and the beauty of the photographs offer provides a reconfiguration of the environmental Edens seen in the Sierra Club religion model: "They offer a transformation of aesthetic to one which recognizes the tension between the sacred and profane, the artificiality of the act of photographing and the construct of nature, and the potential for redemption found within the images of a flawed Eden" (Ryan in press). These three female photographers demonstrate that nature—and the pleasure we derive from images of it—is a constantly evolving and negotiable process. Nature, to borrow from William Cronon (1995), "is a product of that civilization and could hardly be contaminated by the very stuff of which it is made" (69).

Berman, Seaman, and Marcuse, in radically different ways, each show how nature, humans, and the machine are inextricably intertwined. To argue that nature is good and pure, and that the man-made is perverted and bad misses the point: humans are as much a part of nature as trees or mountains. Human impacts on the land may not always be positive. But to dismiss them as something that is separate from the "natural" world does us a disservice; in the words of Marx (1964/2000), "There is nothing inorganic" (221). The harm that we do to the land is as much a part of nature as the harm it does to itself.

The three photographers invite us to consider our role with in the natural world. The otherworldly beauty of fracking, the stark dignity of melting icebergs, and the lush decomposition constructed from apple trees all remind us that we humans are a vital part of nature. Our actions matter. "The great attraction of nature for those who wish to ground their moral vision in external reality is precisely its capacity to take disputed values and make them seem innate, essential, eternal, nonnegotiable," Cronon writes (1995, 36). Berman, Seaman, and Marcuse remind us that beauty itself is constantly negotiable, and through that negotiation we can reconsider and understand our role as part of the world.

Works Cited

- Adams, Ansel, and Nancy Newhall. *This Is the American Earth*. Sierra Club. 1960
- Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*, translated by Annette Lavers, Paladin, 1972.
- Nina Berman, "Fractured, the Shale Play." *Nina Berman*. www.ninaberman.com/fractured-the-shale-play. Accessed 29 Apr. 2017.
- Bright, Deborah. "Of Mother Nature and Marlboro Men: An Inquiry in the Cultural Meanings of Landscape Photography." *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, edited by Richard Bolton, MIT Press, 1989, pp. 125-142.
- Cronon, William, editor. *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature*. Norton, 1995.
- Dunaway, Finis. *Natural Visions: The Power of Images in American Environmental Reform*. University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Dunaway, Finis. "Beyond Wilderness: Robert Adams, New Topographics, and the Aesthetics of Ecological Citizenship." In Foster-Rice and Rohrbackh, pp. 13-43.
- Eng, Karen. "Touching the Directions: Fellows Friday with Camille Seaman." *TED Blog*. TED Talks, 2012. www.blog.ted.com/touching-the-directions-fellows-friday-with-camille-seaman/. Accessed 29 Apr. 2017.
- Foster-Rice, Greg, and John Rohrbackh editors. *Reframing the New Topographics*. University of Chicago Press, 2010.
- Jurovics, Toby. 2010. "Same as It Never Was." In Foster-Rice and Rohrbackh, pp. 1-12.
- Estelle Jussim and Elizabeth Lindquist-Cock, *Landscape as Photograph* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985
- Marcuse, Tanya. "Artist Statement: Woven." *Tanya Marcuse*. www.tanyamarcuse.com/0svd4o579n590yl3zjy19xe1gwsdpt. Accessed 29 Apr. 2017.
- Marx, Leo. *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America*. 1964. Oxford University Press. 2000.
- Merchant, Carolyn. "Reinventing Eden: Western Culture as a Recovery Narrative." In Cronon, pp. 132-159.
- Muir, John. *My First Summer in the Sierra* in *John Muir: The Eight Wilderness Discovery Books*. Mountaineers. 1992
- National Park Service. "John Muir." *Yosemite National Park, California*. U.S. Department of the Interior, 2014. www.nps.gov/yose/historyculture/muir.htm. Accessed 27 Feb. 2017.
- Porter, Eliot. *Wildness is the Preservation of the World*. Sierra Club. 1962.

Price, Jennifer. "Looking for Nature in the Mall: A Field Guide to the Nature Company. In Cronon, pp. 186-203.

Ryan, Kathleen. "Silencing the Tongues of Angels? The Aesthetics of Destruction in Environmental Edens." *Media and Religion: The Global View*, edited by Nabil Echchaibi and Stewart Hoovers. In press.

Salvesen, Britt, editor. *New Topographics*. Steidl. 2010

Smith, Henry Nash. *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth*. Harvard University Press. 1950

Solnit, Rebecca. *Storming the Gates of Paradise: Landscapes for Politics*. University of California Press. 2007.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Three Complete Books: The Main Woods, Walden, Cape Cod*. Gramercy Books. 1993.

Turner, Frederick. "The Invented Landscape." *Beyond Preservation: Restoring and Inventing Landscapes*, edited by A. Dwight Baldwin, Jr, Judith De Luce, and Carl Pletsch, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994, pp. 35-66.

Young, Malcolm Clemens. *The Spiritual Journal of Henry David Thoreau*. Mercer University Press, 2009.

Beautiful Deaths and Heard Gazes

David Staton
University of Northern Colorado

The photographed unhealthy or terminally ill body evokes tensions in viewers. It elicits a push-pull of sympathetic and empathetic seeing and the discomfort of a slow-motion death watch, a medical gaze and a perverse voyeurism, an evidence, and, potentially, an indictment. Consider W. Eugene Smith's "Tomoko Uemera in Her Bath," the searing image of a young woman's body, severely deformed by mercury poisoning, being cradled by her mother. It is, more often than not, a sort of mirror from which eyes are averted then re-engaged and drawn toward. Gilman (1988) asks what becomes of viewers when taking in such an image: "What happens, however, when our sense of ourselves as 'the patient,' of ourselves as existing on the wrong side of the margin between the healthy and the diseased, becomes salient to our definition of self?" (p. 4). A corollary to this, a kindred experience, is that of viewing suffering. What creates this impulse to see, this compulsion to bear witness to misery? That question is in part answered by Sontag (2003) *Regarding the Pain of Others*—"we are spectators of calamities" (p. 18)—and is evident in the indefinite pronoun that hangs at the end of the slim volume's title. Because it is in those *others*, that we see ourselves. Reinhardt, Edwards and Duggan (2007) offer additional insight with *Beautiful Suffering: Photography and the traffic in pain*, a richly illustrated exhibition catalogue exploring this idea: photographs can mobilize political sentiment and social movements, but also produce suffering through the act of representing it (p. 15).

Nor are these indelible images easy to avoid. they often come to us unbidden and unanticipated, with the turn of a page, a glance at a screen—a brief look and the contours of consciousness are changed. Receptivity to such photographs is partly a matter of individual temperament and conviction but also a matter of social location, at once singular and shared, intimate and public. (p. 14)

The same words describe the foci of this study the embodied or pragmatic aesthetic that is borne of looking with the "heard gaze" at Death With Dignity photographs. This paper interrogates how still images used in the Death With Dignity (DWD) storytelling inform a particular cultural logic. This logic is a reasoning, "a space in which reality is constructed beneath the viewer's gaze" (Tanner 2006, 45), or, as Fyfe and Law describe it, "the site for the construction and depiction of social difference" (1987, 1). And, as I contend, this reality is co-constituted by expressions of power that emanate from image and viewer; it is this embodied or pragmatist aesthetic, which results in a new gaze that is at the core of this relationship.

These are not comfortable situations to consider or to view. Such images have the power to disrupt and construct knowledge; the body may be marked, flattened out, transformed from flesh and blood to sign and symbol. For the person inhabiting that body, perhaps the manifestation of bearing that gaze is like feeling as "neither subject nor object but a subject who feels he is becoming an object" (Barthes, 1981, 14). In defiance then, of objectification, to deny the untidiness of death, to assert their dignity, autonomy, and privilege a person with a terminal illness might make a conscious decision to die of their own accord. If such corporeal decay be damned, this final act of agency can make possible something metaphorically called a "beautiful death."

A “Beautiful Death”

This may be a choice of autonomy or aesthetics, a pain-free goodbye or something else entirely. Those assertions require some preliminary definitions; what denotes a beautiful death? I can only rely on literatures suggesting what a beautiful death does *not* look like. It is not messy nor undignified (Jones, 2007). It likely does not render the experience disturbingly knowable (Tanner 2006). It is not witnessed by horrified observers (Battin, 1994). Nor is it “ancient, bed ridden, incontinent and confused” (Downing, 1970).

As to defining beauty, that is folly, and the definitions run from poster card pithy Stendhal (1822) “Beauty is the promise of happiness,” to the poetic:

I feel we understand too little about the psychology of loss to understand why the creation of beauty is so fitting as a way of marking it - why we bring flowers to the graveside, or to the funeral, or why music of a certain sort defines the mood of mourners. It is as though beauty were a kind of catalyst, transforming raw grief into tranquil sadness, almost, one might say, by putting the loss into a certain philosophical perspective. (Danto, 2003, p. 111).

As to the philosophical, and the profound, Dewey offers this on beauty:

Beauty is the response to that which to reflection is the consummated movement of matter integrated through its inner relations into a single qualitative whole Demonstrations in mathematics, operations in surgery, are thus said to be beautiful—even a case of disease, too, may be so typical in its exhibition of characteristic relations as to be called beautiful. Both meanings, that of sensuous charm and of manifestation of a harmonious proportion of parts, mark the human forms in its best exemplars (Dewey, 2005, p. 135).

I find a strong base in my exploration of photographs of DWD narratives using pragmatist aesthetics, primarily Dewey and his views articulated in *Art as Experience* (1933). This belief is borne of the idea that both interpretative (textual analysis) and empirical (neurobiological) avenues can be pursued using this lens. The two pursuits, as I hope to demonstrate, are hand and glove, though the literature of their linkage is extraordinarily scarce. For instance, a 2014 book review of an edited collection on the topic of pairing the two notes: “there have not been many attempts to create a bridge between pragmatism and neuroscience” (Keeley, p. 254). It is evident there are as many takes on the definition of the word “beauty” as there are objects, animate or otherwise, that contain that quality or experience. It is curious, though, that Danto and Dewey mention death and beauty together. And though I am seeking the visual existence of the metaphor of a beautiful death—the “what? is it?” and “to whom is it accorded?” questions—the “how?” may prove more revelatory. How is a beautiful death made evident? From the inside (those who are ill) it may be a choice for less suffering, more dignity, less anguish, more control, but not just control of the planned death, a self-regulation of the inhabited body.

In an extension of the aesthetic discourse, those who successfully accessed requested death were deemed to have achieved a “beautiful” death, as the halting of the visible processes of the bodily decay and their associated intolerable social situation discursively transformed them into representations of beauty (McInerney, 2007).

There may exist a discernible or metaphoric aesthetic in how beautiful death subjects are presented. This project looks to the construction of such appeal (Foss, 1993) in such images and how this idea cognitively disrupts normative perceptions of how images of death or the dying should look. By this, I mean there are varying fundamental views or cultural myths surrounding death and dying, how it is envisioned, how it is, literally, pictured. There is an abiding account of the process of a life lived, which follows a typical narrative structure of beginning (childhood), middle (adulthood), and end (death). Some cognitive dissonance, then, may occur when that process does not unfold in such orderly manner. Those who choose a beautiful death circumvent that visual narrative. Goodnow asserts that “photos have a power to shock a society into challenging its cultural myths” (2005, p. 351) and Foss (2001) holds that the visual is capable of allowing insight into non-linear, multi-dimensional, and dynamic human experience that language or written discourse cannot. Conversely, others say we suffer from image ennui, we are desensitized by the deluge of images, of looking at suffering and a resultant empathy or compassion fatigue. But if it is true, as many contend (Mitchell, 1994; Boehm, 1995; Baudrillard, 2000), that contemporary culture is defined by looking at images, then particular attention needs to be given those images which challenge conventional narrative.

Because I am interested in representation and the ways in which images have social effects, I find a kinship with the view of Rose (2013), which, distilled from her oft-cited book on visual methodologies, is the idea that images are not simple depictions but rather the site for social constructions. In this regard, she echoes concerns of Fyfe and Law (1988) “To understand a visualisation is thus to enquire into its provenance and into the social work that it does ... and to decode the hierarchies and differences that it naturalises” (1988:1). As such, Rose establishes a critical cultural framework that incorporates the agency or creator of the image, the social practices and effects that come as a result of it being seen, and the varying audiences that view the image. She views visual material through the lens of three sites and clearly distinguishes them as the site of production, the site of the image, and the site of audiencing. It is the second of these sites that will occupy my analysis, the site of the image itself. Rose asserts that the most important aspect of the site of the image is its compositionality. While admitting there exists debate about how to theorize an object’s effects, she contends, “Such discussions of the compositional modality of the site of the image can produce persuasive accounts of a *photograph’s effects on its viewers* [emphasis added]” (p. 28). She also nods to the visual and sensory effects that are subjective (or may make one reconsider their subjectivity) and may be affective. This site is where the textual analysis of the DWD corpus will unfold.

Textual analysis

McKee (2001) notes some academic methodologies are extraordinarily rigorous in the particularities of the ways methods are applied, but media studies and cultural studies allow for varied interpretations of text.

Rigorous methodologies can limit research to a great extent: if you only ever ask the same questions in the same way, you will continue to get very similar answers. By contrast, by asking new questions, and coming up with new ways of thinking about things, you can get different kinds of knowledge (p. 141).

This resembles Rose's way of thinking regarding approaching visual methodologies; take images seriously, she urges, but consider your own ways of looking at them (p. 17). Hartley (2002) adds: "(Textual analysis) involves examining the formal internal features and contextual location of a text to ascertain what readings or meanings can be obtained from it. It is not a tool to find the correct interpretation, rather it is used to understand what interpretations are possible" (p. 227).

There are numerous methods and plentiful contexts by which textual analysis can locate these interpretations. In this instance, the way I will analyze the photographs will be instructive in understanding how an image constructs the social (perhaps informing social movements) including social difference and constructs the gaze—what is present and what is absent that draws me in. With a critical and informed background, one can develop what Rose calls "a good eye" which might be thought of as a visual connoisseurship in which the color, content, spatial organization (or perspective), light, expressive content (mood or environment), and focalizers, or how the image works to catch our gaze, are analyzed. Here I think of Goffman's noted "Ritualization of Subordination" (1979) from his study *Gender Advertisements*; I will look *through and to* the photographs' internal and external narrative. Banks and Zeitlyn (2015) define these as the content of the image and the external forces which may have shaped it: "Information about the nature of the world beyond the photograph are always involved in readings of the internal narrative" (p. 11). In sum, these components of a textual analysis will more fully inform my understanding the dynamics of these visual representations.

My process for close and surface reading is formalized to the extent grounded theory is formal, it is by nature iterative as the process unfolds. Defined simply by Denzin and Lincoln it is a theory "grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed" (1994, p. 204). I examined the corpus of images and verbalized my impressions capturing them using an audio recorder as I looked for the aforementioned qualities, contents and contexts. Next, I edited the transcribed recording and placed them into categories, grouping by pattern, repetition, frequency. Researchers (Glasser, B & Strauss, A., 1965; Charmaz, 2006, et al.) use this type of open coding—chunking together "like and like"—in identifying categories of meaning in a data set that are exhaustive, exclusive, and enlightening (Rose, 2012).

Brittany Maynard

In 2014, Maynard, a 29-year old newlywed diagnosed with terminal brain cancer, moved from her Alamo, California home to Portland, Oregon to end her life. The Death With Dignity Act made physician assisted aid in dying legal in the state in 1997. A particular lexicon is of note here: Death With Dignity, aid in dying, end-of-life options, or self-determined death are the proponent's preferred terms, rather than invoking the words suicide, mercy killing, or euthanasia. This lexicon and lobbying nationally is largely the work of Denver, Colorado-based Compassion and Choices, a contemporary iteration of the former aid in dying advocacy group, the Hemlock Society. Maynard teamed with Compassion and Choice to create video presentations to share her story,

though *People* magazine was the most significant publication in sharing her tale. The ensuing media coverage sparked renewed interest globally on the subject of aid in dying. Her appearance largely defied conventional representations of illness.

To clarify the notion of “representation” to which I will refer throughout this paper, I, in part, embrace the definition by Hall (2003): “Representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture. It does involve the use of language, of signs and images which stand for or represent things” (p. 15). I would further enrich that definition by suggesting the embodied cognition Damasio (1999) uses. The neuroscientist, in his investigations of consciousness, considers representation a synonym for mental images or neural patterns (p. 320). The use of the term, he notes, simply means “pattern that is consistently related to something, whether with respect to a mental image or to a coherent set of neural activities within a specific brain region” (p. 320). Images, then, can create a widely understood meaning within specific cultures. And too, images like those interrogated in this paper may present a counter-narrative to those consistent or coherent meanings.

Text was, and is, critical in the telling of Maynard’s story; discourse(s) employ very particular language and, often, very deliberate use of images. Though her story was covered by countless media, *People* magazine, by Maynard’s choice, served as the exclusive print and Web outlet for relaying her pro-DWD message. That strategy manifested in viral proportions with all manner of organizations worldwide taking note of the media coverage and voicing opinions, from the Vatican’s top bioethicist calling her actions “reprehensible” (Associated Press, *New York Daily News*, Nov. 4, 2014) to those championing the “ideal, but unlikely spokesman” (Daum, *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 8, 2014) for the DWD movement. The suggestion here is that she was “unlikely” because she was young, because she was attractive, appeared healthy, had so much to live for, and because in most every *People* published photograph she appeared in full blossom of life, the radiant newlywed. My analysis of Maynard images, as well as other DWD photographs, trains its theoretical frameworks on the site of the image itself to locate, define, and discuss a pragmatist aesthetic that inform a new gaze.

The site of the image—its visual rhetorics—are theorized using the aforementioned embodied or pragmatist, read Deweyian, aesthetic approach which is informed by visual rhetoric. Visual rhetoric is succinctly defined by Foss (2005): “the term used to describe the study of visual imagery within the discipline of rhetoric ... and is concerned with the use of symbols to communicate” (p. 141). For Foss, three conditions must be met for a visual object to have visual rhetoric: the image must be symbolic, involve human intervention, and be presented to an audience for the purpose of communicating with that audience (p. 144). Visual storytelling of DWD narratives certainly meet these conditions as it presents to its readers/viewers information about life itself. This textual analysis will demonstrate how representation and meaning unfold at the site of the image and constitute a disruption in the gaze. This shift in power—from the viewer to the looked upon—is ignited within the image.

The Heard Gaze

In one well-travelled image of Maynard she blows a kiss at a camera. This is loaded with the symbolic. It also points to another component of what I’m calling the heard gaze; a Dickensian moment in which, having been transformed into subject by the image, the viewer sees past, present,

and future. In this photograph, Maynard is seated at what might be a cafe table, the round sort, made for two and designed for compactness and intimacy. Her back is against a wall of a sun yellow tone, scrolled ironwork forms a decorative design on the wall ablaze behind her. She seems to have absorbed some of the tone; she is glowing. Lips pursed, head cocked at a slight angle and leaning in toward the camera, she lifts her left palm, holding it parallel and atop the cafe table and blows the kiss towards the companion taking the photograph. Her eyes fairly sparkle not just from the shared moment, but from the camera's flash. At her left elbow is a long-stemmed glass of white wine.

This is a picture of a past in the present (as is all photography) and, knowing Maynard's outcome, we also see the future. Those pursed lips form a cupid's bow that might well be blowing out birthday candles, but the viewer knows she has few of those remaining. That wine glass may contain a few more sips or remains that won't be swallowed and off goes Brittany, exiting the frame, exiting the restaurant and entering a different realm. What of the person on the receiving end of the kiss? Does the companion that evening, a lover, a friend, a partner to be, hold onto that picture? What do they hear when they look at the image? The silence of a blown kiss? The song that was playing during their meal? The sound of Maynard's smile? Yes. That is the heard gaze. The experience of looking on images of what is in effect a willful death creates this heard gaze, which is co-constituted by photograph and human; a self-reflexive mirroring in which the observer becomes the viewed, or subject becomes object, by hearing an inner voice.

"Listen" to other photos of Maynard: Here is the furry yelp of a two-month old Weimaraner snuggling in Maynard's arms as they laze in a chaise lounge; Here are the distant echoes of burros and backpackers as a foursome stand above a deep canyon, the shuffle and grit of gravel from their shoes and boots make tiny ripples in the atmosphere; Hear squeals and peels of delight as Maynard dons a graduation gown. These are the stuff of memories, past, present, and future.

Snapshots can remind us of what is or once was. They can overwhelm memory and even logic. Snapshots ... briefly excuse us from the present and allow us to talk back to time and mortality. Snapshots fascinate us because they are incomplete; they demand our interaction. We search them for clues, trying to remember or confirm what we've cared about, where we've been and what we've become (Heiferman, 2012).

Those four words by Heiferman are significant: "talk back to time." DWD visual narratives depict bodies talking back to time, asserting autonomy and viewers hear that chatter. Dewey, too, noted the sound of images. In what initially begins as a discussion of sound from external stimuli, Dewey turns inward:

Sound is the conveyor of what impends, of what is happening as an indication of what is likely to happen. It is fraught much more than vision with the sense of issues; about the impending there is always an aura of indeterminateness and uncertainty—all conditions favorable to intense emotional stir. Vision arouses emotion in the form of interest—curiosity solicits further examination, but it attracts; or it institutes a balance between withdrawal and forward

exploring action. It is sounds that make us jump. Generically speaking, what is seen stores emotion indirectly ... Sound agitates directly, as a commotion of the organism itself” (p. 246-247).

Sound is present in photos of Lavelle Svart, a former newspaper librarian who shared her DWD story with readers of the *Oregonian* newspaper. The Svart photograph notable to me is one of her on her death bed, a wristwatch the only decoration on her body. What springs forth is what I hear in this photograph: the tick, tick, tick of her watch adorning her left wrist. Why is she wearing a watch on the day of her death? The inner voice tells me that seconds are seeping and sweeping from her body and it may be quiet enough in the room for her to hear the ticking of the watch, her heart, her pulse and, too, those present may be counting down her moments, her breaths. On the day that she was born 62 years prior, was someone else eyeing a watch, counting the tick, tick, ticks until Lovelle came into being? I hear the metronomic plea of Svart’s wristwatch. Time is passing.

And, too, this is how and why I hear photographs, or the heard gaze. When Barthes is describing a photograph of his mother “caught in a history of tastes,” what he recalls is “an ivory powder box (I loved the sound of its lid)” (p. 64). And what I hear in that photograph of Svart in her death bed is the whoooooshhh of a passing of time, of millions upon millions of clicks and ticks of her watch.

Dewey also notes that the intellectual range of hearing is acquired and in itself the ear is the emotional sense. If art is truly the exploitation of the medium, then, such is its transformative power, that it is a short move to suggest the heard gaze. What stirs that voice? Something particularly within DWD photographs: A recognition of death foretold, the subject of the image and viewer create a mirror in which the viewer becomes object and the photograph, having created the inner voice, stares back—the heard gaze tells us, sometimes whispering, sometimes shouting, of our mortality.

Reflections, of course, suggest Lacan’s mirror stage theories and in a photo of Fred Nelligan, shared with readers of the *Oregonian*, mirrors and reflection are front and center. I am the third figure viewing the spectacle and there is something vaguely troubling to me about this sense of voyeurism. But can I be a voyeur if I was “invited” to view this intimate scene? Nelligan was once a well-known avid outdoorsman, but in this photograph—all mirrors, reverberations, echoes and angles—he is frail, his body succumbing to ALS and he is being observed by a nursing assistant as he shaves. Dewey would note that the photograph invites the act of vision, which, in turn, invites experience—the viewer’s experience. Fred is watching himself being watched; he is on display and asks us to look. And when viewers look deeply they also hear an echo of their own fragile humanity within the seeing.

Every Picture Has a Voice

As the photographer Walker Evans noted “Stare. It is the way to educate your eye, and more. Stare, pry, listen eavesdrop. Die knowing something. You are not here long” (2015, n.p.). Inner speech works differently. That inner voice, or “auditory vision,” occurs all the time absent visual stimuli; it’s different than a casual glance, which might reveal distance, color, height, etc. For instance words, or word images, such as the word “death,” conjures all kinds of inner voice

responses heard by autonomic neural auditory processing before moving to cognitive functions about how things might appear. The same may be said of the word beauty; hearing it brings a picture to mind, as does the phrase “beautiful death.”

In short, a voice is heard or intuited before a decision is made about the image being viewed; psychologists and linguists alike build theory on the premise that an infant can hear a voice before it sees that voice’s face. In this very particular instance I’m studying, the photographs of those who chose willful death and I suggest those images emit “sounds” that resonate deeply inward.

Every picture has a voice. Some have volume switches you can adjust, like the images that parade across your television screen day in and day out. Some scream at you with the hurricane force of multiple speakers and digital sound at the multiplex movie theater ... But still photographs talk, too. They grab our attention and challenge us by saying “Look at me. Buy me. Remember me. *Be like me* [emphasis added]” If every photograph has a job, it is to say something. (Heiferman & Kismaric, 1994, p. 9).

And when we listen to this inner voice or inner speech, within milliseconds, it corresponds to the visual; the visual triggers the voice. When that visual appears to us a healthy body and we learn it is not, cognitive dissonance develops. If seeing is believing, hearing is understanding. So, sounds can be seen, as Bulkin and Groh describe in their 2006 study: “Objects and events can often be detected by more than one sensory system. Interactions between sensory systems can offer numerous benefits for the accuracy and completeness of the perception” (p. 415). Mental images are only that, however what we commonly call the “minds’ eye,” I suggest, we call speech—internally verbalized (or inner speech), just-just-just before we visualize that circumstance, image or idea an inner voice calls forth. This inner voice, or inner speech that we hear within our minds, e.g. “That’s me!,” tells us we are looking at our own mortality in DWD photographs through that of the other, the impaired one, the sick one, the different one, the one with cancer being depicted. I also observe other things, minutiae to big picture, *studium* to *punctum*. While the *studium* is purely a description of what the photo depicts, the *punctum* leaps from the photograph; it is the thing that punctures me, that informs my heart rather than my head, that is memorable, distinctive, out of place (Barthes, 1980).

A few photographs I’ve encountered that function in this way spring to mind. The time I spent with them was brief but lasting in their impressions. They spoke to me. Here’s Jane Trotter, who famously penned and published her own obituary before using DWD laws in the state of Washington. She sits with her husband in a photo booth. This *is* an intimate photograph in several ways not the least of which is the limitation—or possibility—accorded by the physical space of a photo booth. Additionally, photo booths afford a sense of privacy that often encourages people to open up, revealing a side not seen in public. It is a controlled space where self-control may be effaced. The lighting is flattened from an artificial source however it does appear evenly distributed and the depth of field is compressed because they are in a photo booth which is a very small, compact area. There are no props or materials in the photo and overall the picture is slightly soft focused. However, my eyes are immediately drawn to the badge on her jacket. If I zoom in tightly to the photograph I can make out the writing on the picture and it has her name on it as though it’s a pass or a badge of some sort so that she can access restricted area. The badge is for the Pacific Northwest restaurant Convention and Exposition and it also says Julia’s 14 Carrot, Cafe Seattle WA. For me, it is curious and touching at once. It endures through the temporality of the

photograph. The Montanan Erwin Byrnes is as pale as his snowy beard, but behind him a bouquet of majestic purple irises scream upward. But they've been picked for display and shall soon wither and perish—an echo of Byrnes himself. In other images shadows crossing faces don't indicate time of day so much as passage of time and some of those pictured are half in/half out of the light. Time is passing and so hugs and hands become central to many of the images.

None of the images, save a handful (Svart in particular), are in profile, rather the subject confronts the lens dead on and straightforward, here I think of the similarity in poses to August Sanders' 1929 work on "types" in the *Face of Our Time*. Nature is awesome to behold and be held by as is a connection to the Earth's soil. All of the covers, with one exception, for the advocacy group Compassion & Choices's quarterly magazine feature white people, almost all of whom are celebrities. Editing plays a role in which photographs I'm viewing but most subjects appear happy or to be enjoying themselves. It's important to present your best self; our best self is how we want to be remembered. Peaks of lush nature are offered as are grim countenances; planes vertical and horizontal are easily identified; tonal values create sentiment or emotion from bright to bleak; composition is significant in the body of work analyzed—it tells us how to read the pictures; bodies are at rest or in motion (Cartier-Bresson's "decisive moment" or a sliver of that motion is offered) in time and space. And these components in total activate the heard gaze, turning me into an object of reflection, a space of inquiry concerning my own mortality. The accompanying text may be complicit in framing the story in a particular way, but the photographs selected are equally, if not more, effective in evoking a visceral response, in evoking the heard gaze. A large portion of our nation saw Maynard's photos and had an experience of them, which made them hear their inner voice. Her images are both affective and effective.

Works Cited

- Banks, M. & Zeitlyn, D. (2015). *Visual Methods in Social Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE
- Barthes, R. (1981). *Camera Lucida*. New York, NY: Hill and Wang.
- Battin, M. (1994). *The Least Worst Death* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Baudrillard, J. (2006). *Simulacra and Simulation*. Trans. S. Glaser. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.
- Boehm, G. (1995). "Ikonische Wendung", in G. Boehm (ed.) *Was is ein Bild*; Munich, DEU: Wilhelm Fink.
- Brummett, B. (2010). *Techniques of Close Reading*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Bulkin, D & Groh, J. (2006). Seeing sounds; visual and auditory interactions in the brain. *Current Opinion in Neurobiology* Vol. 16, pp. 415-519.
- Damasio, T. (1999) *The Feeling of What Happens; Body and emotion in the making of consciousness*. New York, NY: Mariner

- Danto, A. (2003) *The Abuse of Beauty: Aesthetics and the Concept of Art (The Paul Carus Lectures Series 21)*. Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company
- Daum, M. "Brittany Maynard's Date with Death" *Los Angeles Times* (Oct. 8, 2014). rtrvd. 9/20/15 <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-daum-maynard-oregon-assisted-suicide-20141009-column.html>
- Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. Eds. (1994). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research, 3rd edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Dewey, J. (1994). "Art as Experience" in Ed. S. Ross, *Art and Its Significance; An anthology of aesthetic theory*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. pp. 204-220.
- Downing, A.B. Ed. (1970). *Euthanasia and the Right to Death; The Case for Voluntary Euthanasia*. New York, NY: Humanities Press.
- Foss, S. (2005). "Theory of Visual Rhetoric." Eds. K. Smith, S. Moriarty, G. Barbatsis, K. Kenny, *Handbook of Visual Communication*. New York, NY: Routledge pp. 141-152
- Foss, S. (1993). "The Construction of Appeal in Visual Images: A Hypothesis." in Ed. D. Zarefsky. *Rhetorical Movement: Studies in Honor of Leland M. Griffin*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1993, pp. 211-25.
- Fyfe, G and Law. J. (1988). "Introduction; On the invisibility of the visible" in Eds. G. Fyfe and J. Law *Picturing Power; Visual depiction and social relations*. London: Routledge, pp. 1-14.
- Gillman, S. (1988). *Disease and Representation; Images of illness from madness to AIDS*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Goffman, E. (1979) *Gender Advertisements*. London, UK: Palgrave.
- Goodnow, T. (2005). "Using Narrative Theory to Understand the Power of News Photographs." Eds. K. Smith, S. Moriarty, G. Barbatsis, K. Kenny, *Handbook of Visual Communication*. New York, NY: Routledge pp. 351-361.
- Hartley, J. (2002). *Communication, Culture and Media Studies; The key concepts, 3rd edition*. New York, NY: Rutledge
- Hayles, K. (2012) *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press
- Heiferman, M. & Kismaric, C. (1994) *Talking Pictures: People speak about the photographs that speak to them*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books
- Jones, R. (2007). *Liberalism's Troubled Search for Equality; Religion and Cultural Bias in the Oregon Physician-Assisted Suicide Debates* South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

- Keeley, B. (2014). Review *Pragmatist Neurophilosophy: American Philosophy and the Brain*, London, UK: Bloomsbury.
- Lacan J. (1949). "The mirror stage" in *Identity: a reader*, Eds. P. du Gay, J. Evans and P. Redman London, UK: SAGE, 2000, pp 44-50.
- McKee, A. "A Beginners Guide to Textual Analysis" (2001). *Metro Magazine*, Australian Teachers of Media, pp. 138-149.
- Mitchell, W.J.T. (2005). *What do Pictures Want? The lives and loves of images*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Reinhardt, M. H. Edwards, H, Duganne, E. Eds, (2013). *Beautiful Suffering; Photography and the traffic in pain*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Rose, G. (2011). *Visual Methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials*, 3rd Edition. London, UK: SAGE.
- Sontag, S. (2003). *Regarding the Pain of Others*, New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Tanner, L. (2006). *Lost Bodies; Inhabiting the borders of life and death*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

The Rebirth of the Female Superhero: Kamala Khan's *Ms. Marvel*

Jacob L. Thomas
Idaho State University

From 1967 to 2006, Ms. Marvel was Carol Danvers, a leotard-wearing blonde with no qualms about going into battle with bare thighs. But after a reality-altering mental breakdown by the Scarlet Witch which shook the Marvel Universe to its core,¹ Carol permanently assumed her identity as “Captain Marvel,” a post formerly occupied by an extraterrestrial male (“Ms. Marvel”). And with Carol now operating as the new Captain, there was a vacancy for the role of Ms. Marvel; the person who filled *that* role was a sixteen-year-old Pakistani-American Muslim girl named Kamala Khan, who first debuted in the new series in 2014.

Kamala lives in Jersey City, across the Hudson River from Manhattan (where *most* of the action in the Marvel Universe takes place). She's a normal kid. She goes to a public school. She has both Muslim and non-Muslim friends, a quirky older brother, a strict father, and an overprotective mother. She's also a nerd. She wears a hoodie with the characteristic Ms. Marvel lightning bolt on it. She gloats over the fact that a fanfiction story she posted on “freakingcool.com” has over a thousand likes — an adventure that involves Captain Marvel, Captain America, and Iron Man defeating a space monster that invaded a *My Little Pony*-like “unicorn planet.”² The series also begins with a typical teenage dilemma: Kamala wants to go to a Friday-night party, which her parents — concerned about the likely presence of boys and alcohol — refuse to let her attend (1.1).

This denial for permission is the last straw for Kamala on that particular day. That morning, after talking with Zoe, a blonde and blue-eyed high school acquaintance whom Kamala thinks is “adorable and happy,” her best friend — a hijab-wearing ethnic Turkish girl named Nakia — tells Kamala that her admiration of Zoe is more irritating even than her “sad nerd obsession with the Avengers.” Kamala scoffs at this, and replies, “Okay, yeah, but let's face it . . . my chances of becoming an intergalactic superhero are even slimmer than my chances of becoming blonde and popular” (1.1). This reveals yet another typical teenager perspective in Kamala: she is dissatisfied with her appearance. Instead of being rather short, dark-haired, and not-so popular at school, she'd rather look more like Zoe.

Her anxieties about her appearance and her social life are further compounded with her ethnic and religious identities. When Zoe and her attractive, jockish boyfriend Josh invite Kamala and Nakia to the waterfront party, Josh immediately throws in a caveat to their religion: “You guys should come, too. If, uh, you're allowed to do that kind of stuff.” Nakia turns the offer down because she knows there will be booze, something forbidden not only by her age but also by her religious practice; Kamala, on the other hand, sulks, and with her face tightened and her fists clenched, she responds simply, “I'm *not* allowed” (1.1, italics added). This gets worse when she brings up the subject with her parents at the dinner table and her request is flatly, even angrily, refused. Kamal mumbles to herself: “If I were a *boy* you'd let me go to the party,” to which she is sent immediately to her room (1.1, italics added).

As she stewes in her room, all of her social anxieties and disappointments hit hard. She's not blonde, pretty, or popular; she's a plain-looking, stereotypical Muslim girl with strict parents

and no social life. She stares into her mirror and wonders why she always has to be the one excused from health class (ostensibly so that she doesn't have to be exposed to sex education, etc.), the one who shows up in the lunchroom with ethnic Pakistani food in her lunchbox, and the one who celebrates unusual holidays. *Everyone else gets to be normal*, she muses. *Why can't I?* At this point, her resistance breaks, and she escapes out her window to attend the unregulated party at the Jersey City waterfront (1.1).

As expected, alcohol has flowed rather freely — apparently put together in a concoction of orange juice and vodka — and several teens have passed out on the grass. Zoe is there in a halter-top and white platform boots, surrounded by boys: the consummate popular flirt. She welcomes Kamala excitedly, but then backs away because Kamala smells like curry, which her family had eaten for dinner. This awkward moment gets worse when Josh offers Kamala a plastic cup to drink, and after one swallow, she realizes what's in that particular mix, spits it out, throws her cup to the ground, and leaves in a huff. As she walks away, arms folded in disgust and embarrassment, a thick, bluish mist descends on the area, enveloping all of the partygoers and the departing Kamala. Most think nothing of it, as they're near the Upper Bay of the Hudson, but as the eerie mist gathers, Kamala's vision starts to blur and she passes-out on the sidewalk, wondering if one spit-out sip of booze was enough to make her dead-drunk (1.1).

When she awakes, she sees, standing before her in the air, her holy trinity of superheroes: Captain Marvel flanked by Iron Man and Captain America, chanting Urdu poetry about the blooming of flowers and fruit. The figures reprove her for disobeying her parents, culture, and religion for the sake of becoming popular — something Kamala admits obviously backfired. But the real reason she snuck out, she explains, is that even though she has a Pakistani heritage, she's an American, and wants to be able to fit in with the other kids. She sighs, and utters the words American teenagers have been saying for decades: "I just don't know who I'm supposed to be" (1.1).

Captain Marvel (who seems to preside over this visionary trio), with her long blonde hair blowing in the wind and her characteristic red sash hanging loosely on her hips, then asks Kamala, "Who do you want to be?" Kamala answers: "I want to be beautiful and awesome and butt-kicking and less complicated. I want to be *you*." She then refers to Captain Marvel's former black leotard costume, when Carol Danvers was Ms. Marvel, and adds: "Except I would wear the classic, politically incorrect costume and kick butt in giant wedge-heels!" Captain Marvel — or at least her vision-appearing manifestation — tells Kamala that her wish will be granted, but with the caveat that her experience will "not turn out the way [she] think[s]" (1.1).

The vision closes (or interactive subconscious reverie, or whatever it is), and Kamala comes back to reality just as the strange mist dissipates. Without warning, she suddenly experiences an intense transformation, and becomes a tall blonde in a black leotard, with a red sash, bare thighs, and very high boots (1.1). Kamala has become Ms. Marvel. But instead of feeling "strong and confident and beautiful," like she thought she would, she feels "freaked out and underdressed" (1.2).

Kamala stumbles back to the party in time to see a drunken Josh — making moves on his likewise inebriated girlfriend — accidentally knock Zoe into the water. Kamala uses a verse from the Quran to inspire her to action: "Whoever kills one person, it is as if he has killed all mankind

— and whoever *saves* one person, it is as if he has saved all mankind” (1.2, italics added). In full Ms. Marvel regalia, she uses her newfound superpowers to lengthen her arm and dramatically increase the size of her hand, and reaches down and pulls Zoe (and some of the trash-riddled bottom of the Upper Bay with her) to safety. As admiring partygoers snap pictures on their phones and revel in the notion that Ms. Marvel (thinking of Carol Danvers) has returned, Kamala makes a quick escape, heading back home, still in Danvers Ms. Marvel form (1.2).

She broods on these developments as the last of blue mist over Jersey City and Manhattan rolls away. She then confesses to herself:

When I daydream about the Avengers, this is not how I picture it. . . . Being someone else isn't liberating. It's exhausting. I almost thought that if I had amazing hair, if I could pull off great boots, if I could fly, that would make me feel strong. That would make me feel happy. But the hair gets in my face, the boots pinch, and the leotard is giving me an epic wedgie.³ Putting on a costume doesn't make you brave. Maybe it's something else. (1.2).

Over time Kamala learns more about her powers, and more about the old Uncle Ben Parker adage given to a young Peter Parker, Spider-Man: “with great power, comes great responsibility.” She also decides to shed any resemblance to the Carol Danvers-style Ms. Marvel, and opts for a much simpler costume consisting of a modest purple burkini, red pants, red scarf instead of a sash, a golden bracelet (a family heirloom from Pakistan), and her own free-flowing dark hair. She also feels no need to change the color of her skin (1.4).

Physical Rebirth of Ms. Marvel

There's a striking difference between the “leggy blonde” Carol Danvers and the dark and skinny Kamala Khan. “Everyone's expecting Ms. Marvel,” Kamala once muses to herself, “with the hair and the spandex and the Avengers swag. Not a sixteen-year-old brown girl with a 9pm curfew” (1.3). After first receiving her powers from the biology-altering mist (later identified as “terrigen” mist, a mutagen), Kamala feels that in order to be truly Ms. Marvel, she has to look like Carol. She soon realizes, however, that “Ms. Marvel” is a role to fill, not a personage, and that “maybe the name belongs to whoever has the courage to fight” (1.4), whoever “offer[s] themselves as the right vessels” (Clements and Gauvain 51).

Two considerations of identity are at play here: body image and race. The fact that Kamala is a normally proportioned teenager *and* a dark-skinned Pakistani-American is essential to understanding her character. Many scholars and comic book historians have noted the presence of anatomically enhanced women depicted by the industry and the impossibility and sexualization of many of their postures (Cocca 411); *Ms. Marvel's* emphasis on physical “normality” helps drive the series' narrative and its critical acclaim (Kent 524). Kamala is authentic, and there's nothing fake, forced, or unusual about her, including her teenage desire to look differently. Her eventual comment about the necessity of “learning how to work with [her] new body, instead of against it” is profound, and allows her to explore how to be the “best version of Kamala” (1.5), not a version according to someone else's expectations or body type.

Carolyn Cocca's groundbreaking qualitative analysis of female superheroes depictions gives us a little more insight into just how progressive Kamala Khan's Ms. Marvel is in the comic book industry. She writes that even though "[f]emale superhero bodies in action may show strength" quite often — Danvers's Ms. Marvel is certainly not a weakling nor an airhead — but the depictions of their bodies in highly unnatural and sexualized poses reduces them to "object status," which "undercut[s] their power" (411). Tellingly, Cocca adds that male superheroes, though they have similar "idealized . . . musculature" and wear "form-fitting clothing" like their female counterparts, are not objectified in the same way "through posture and focus on certain (non-muscle and yet perfectly shaped) body parts" (415).

This gendered depiction of female superheroes begs the question once asked by journalist Emily Prager: what is so sacred about the male form that makes it more "worthy" of "dignity" and "concealment" than the female body in popular media? (146). I'm not equipped to answer that here, or even to address all of the associated ramifications of these depictions. But what I can say with confidence is that Kamala's grappling with her identity as not only a superhero, but a *female* one, sets a higher bar for the depiction of women (and men) of the Marvel Universe — one based less on idealization and fantasy and more on reality. Indeed, Cocca notes that there are fewer objectified depictions of female superheroes in the comics of "the 2010s than . . . in the 2000s and 1990s" (412), a pattern that helped facilitate the creation of Kamala's Ms. Marvel.⁴

Cocca's 2014 analysis surmises that one of the reasons for the traditional objectification of women in superhero comic books is that the comics were primarily being written and drawn by men, causing an obvious gender gap in the industry (412). The new *Ms. Marvel* series, however, was created by Sana Amanat and written by G. Willow Wilson, both women and both Muslims (Wilson is a white American convert to Islam, and chronicled her spiritual journey in her 2010 memoir, *The Butterfly Mosque*). These creators and comic book enthusiasts in their own right explore the female superhero identity through the lens of third-wave feminism, which "encourag[es] analysis, critique, and production of pop culture through humor and irony," manifest in *Ms. Marvel* through Kamala's funny and awkward transition to her new powers. This kind of approach is useful for reaching the average comic book audience, Cocca writes, those who would not normally explore female objectification on an academic level. Parody, however, will help them see the silliness and unrealism of typical depictions, and therefore begin to critique them on their own (421).⁵

That's not to say that Kamala Khan's series is nothing but a parody. It has a strong narrative in its own right coupled with a compelling storyline. Kamala's idealization of Carol Danvers, now Captain Marvel, is further shaken when they take opposing sides of the ideological contest featured in the universal story arc *Civil War II*, at which point Carol tells her successor that "her trust has been misplaced" in Kamala, and the pair go their separate ways. Kamala notes that this severance between the two Marvels is "worse than getting punched in the gut. Worse than having my heart broken. Worse than pretty much anything" (1.11). Whether their relationship will heal has yet to be seen.

The Rebirth of Islam in Comic Books

Perhaps the most notable part of Kamala Khan's identity is the fact that she is a Muslim, a Pakistani immigrant. The first time she appears in the first issue of 2014-2015 series, Kamala has

her face pressed to the glass of a deli food display as she sniffs the smell of non-halal bacon on a BLT hoagie and whispers, “Delicious, delicious, infidel meat” (1.1) — *infidel*, of course, meaning something more like “Gentile” than “blasphemer.” Immediately, Kamala’s religion and her relationship with it is apparent. She adheres to its teachings (and in this instance, doesn’t eat the bacon-loaded sandwich), but also has some honest, simple questions about Islam’s dietary code and her place in New Jersey Muslim society. Why can’t she attend a party of her peers? Why does she have to get signed-out of sex ed? Why does she feel so different from everyone else? Again, these are normal feelings coming from a normal teenager.

There are several references to Islam throughout the series, and each provides a different angle of Islam in American society. For instance, after the infamous invitation to the party, Zoe — Kamala’s popular blonde peer — turns to Nakia and comments on her headscarf: “Your headscarf is *so pretty*, Kiki. I love the color.” She then backtracks a little, her own expectations of the culture clashing with her admiration of the garment: “But I mean,” she continues, “no one *pressured* you to start wearing it, right? Your father or somebody? Nobody’s going to, like, *honor kill* you? I’m just concerned” (Wilson et al. 1.3). Nakia reacts coolly to this, and doesn’t deign to give much of a response to Zoe’s blabbering.⁶ But the remark is significant, as it represents Zoe’s cultural bias towards not only Islam, but also stereotypical expectations of “disempowered” Muslim women.

Kamala’s older brother Aamir is much more conservative in his worship than the rest of the Khan family, wearing a traditional *jalabiya*, a long white shirt that goes to his knees; a *taqiyah*, or skullcap; and a beard. His family teases him for being so piously devout. During one mealtime, Mr. Khan, Aamir and Kamala’s father, berates his son for using his strict devotion to the Islamic prayer schedule as an excuse for not finding a job, and cheekily refers to Aamir as “his holiness” (1.1). The mother, too, is not fond of Aamir’s religious pretenses, and at one point castigates him for being a “penniless mullah” (1.2). (It’s interesting to note that neither Mr. or Mrs. Khan wears traditional Islamic dress). Aamir later marries an African-American convert to Islam, Tyesha Hillman, who wears a full-length *niqab* but is also interested in nerdy things like *Dune* (2.2). This kind of Islamic dress can cast conservative Muslims such as Aamir and Tyesha as “fundamentalists” or representatives of “radical Islam,” at least according to some cultural stereotypes. These two, however, are young adults interested in things other Americans their age are, but with a more rigorous or obvious Islamic adherence. These characters also provide a counterpoint to Kamala’s more “liberal” observance of Islam, and suggest ideas of Islamic diversity: Muslims in the series are not all cast from the same mold.

This tone towards Islam is typical of the series as a whole. The depictions of Muslims aren’t disrespectful or “orientalized,” but cast in a familiar light — these people are normal Muslims who live normal American lives (Wilson, “So About”). The “everyday” light in which the creators cast Islam is also not “preachy” tirade against Islamophobia, though it does reference it; nor does it focus inordinately on their struggles of dark-skinned Americans. The point of the series is not to *pity* the plight of persecuted or stereotyped Muslims in America, but to depict an ordinary Muslim and American girl who receives extraordinary powers, and to explore how that affects her personal teenage identity. This exploration *includes* religion and ethnicity, of course, but does not focus solely on them. As stated, Kamala deals as much with her body image and teenage romance as she does with Islamic stereotypes.

This is part of the creators' goal with *Ms. Marvel*. The company's editor-in-chief, Axel Alonso, is quoted as saying that "[t]he fact that [Kamala is] female and a first-generation American . . . [and] continuously struggling with the values and authority of her parents, gives the story extra nuance, but it's [still] a universal human story." That's why the series succeeds, Sabaa Tahir, a female Pakistani-American commentator, writes: not because Kamala is Muslim, female, or even teenager, but because she's "someone you care about and can relate to" ("Why Muslim").

Kamala Khan is not the first prominent Marvel Muslim character, though she *is* the first of this community to receive her own series. She was preceded by Sooraya Qadir, a mutant from Afghanistan, who uses her ability to turn into "a living sandstorm able to blind opponents or strip away flesh." She goes by the alias of "Turaab," or *Dust* in Arabic. Sooraya had been a slave, but was eventually set free by Wolverine and the X-Men, a group she later joined. She wears the uniform of a stereotypical Afghan woman: a black burqa, and all but her hands and eyes covered. And like Kamala, Sooraya is a high school-age teenager ("Dust").

Dust is a product of the post-9/11 world, and Marvel creators specifically developed her character in response to increased Islamic exposure following the 9/11 attacks and the ensuing War on Terror. Although the thought is nice, Sooraya is a Muslim first and a person second, and her character development suffers as a result. The first problem, notes Miriam Kent, is that "Dust's representation is fraught with Orientalist sentiments and a Western male gaze" (523) — her burqa, though offering near-total coverage, is rather form-fitting, and her proportions are accordingly exaggerated and emphasized (Davis and Westerfelhaus 803). "Overall," Kent adds, "Sooraya's portrayal remains firmly within a Western tradition utilizing the image of the oppressed Muslim woman to support a forced dichotomy of East vs. West." *Ms. Marvel* succeeds where Dust doesn't, she continues, offering "more than shock value . . . [and] instead seeking to elaborate a genuine contemporary female subjectivity" (523). Julie Davis and Robert Westerfelhaus agree, and believe that Marvel, instead of creating a true Muslim *person* as a character with Dust, instead created an "exotic other," and gave her far too small a place in their comic book universe, "far removed from [the] narrative center" of any story arc.

History can help frame the differences between Sooraya and Kamala. While Sooraya serves a "post-9/11" discourse, Kamala is a child of the Arab Spring, which among other things, "introduced women who defied Orientalist stereotypes . . . [and] exposed the diversity and complexity of women in the Middle East . . . [who] cannot be lumped into one monolithic group" (Eltantawy 765). Where Dust plays to that monolith, Kamala and her fellow characters shatter it (Kent 524)— fitting, given that no group of more than 1.5 billion people can claim to be completely homogenous.

In this *Ms. Marvel* participates in what Irfan Omar refers to as a dialogue of pluralism, of "faiths, denominations, cultures, and nations" intersect and find "common ground" (711). Though Kamala, her family, and a few of her friends are Muslim, they are not isolated in an Islamic community, but interact with an array of people. Kamala's second-best friend Bruno is a long-haired, skinny white kid with no apparent religion, who yet offers support to Kamala and her family — in fact, he's the only one at first who knows her secret identity, knowledge which he guards carefully.

Ms. Marvel also isn't the first comic series to represent Islam in a non-stereotypical light. Naif al-Mutawa's *The 99*, published by Teshkeel Comics in Kuwait, involves young Muslims from around the world who, like Kamala, become endowed with superpowers. The comic is entirely Islam-centric, and is cast as a celebration of Islamic heritage through narrative motifs and storylines (Clements and Gauvain 37). While this is far more meritorious than, say, Marvel's *Dust*, there is some element of plot and characterization being subordinated in favor of a political agenda. That's not to say that *The 99* lacks ingenuity or entertainment value or exists only to send messages against Islamophobia and Islamic fundamentalism; however, socio-political messaging does seem to be its driving force. In *Ms. Marvel*, this consuming politicization is just not the case (Gustines); and this lack of overt social "messaging" about Islam (or even feminism), in my opinion, makes for a much more compelling core narrative. And while certain elements of *Ms. Marvel* can certainly be used to address cultural "misunderstandings" and "negative stereotypes" (Baer and Glasgow 23), the series has far more inherent literary value.

Ms. Marvel and the Rebirth of the Comic Book Industry

"Reboots" are regular occurrences in comic books: heroes get new suits, origin stories are retold, the space-time continuum alters, and sometimes a new hero takes up a mantle in place of someone else. The comic book industry is first and foremost an *industry*, and editors, writers, and artists are constantly coming up with new and sometimes controversial material to increase sales. And while Kamala *has* had a profound impact on Marvel consumership, the series reflects the society that produces it. For like any media, as Kelli E. Stanley writes, comics serve as "cultural revelations" (143).

What cultural shifts or attitudes does *Ms. Marvel* then mirror? For one, it indicates a wider comic book readership, more diverse than the stereotypical preteen boy reading in his basement lair. For a few years now, under Axel Alonso's leadership, Marvel has specifically geared its comics towards women and minorities as new audiences, and have changed some twenty titles to reflect a more diverse cast of characters: Thor, for instance, is now female, and one version of Spider-Man is an Afro-Puerto Rican lad named Miles Morales (Dockterman). This change is probably most profound along gender lines, which accordingly, as stated, has facilitated the general change of female superheroes from eye-candy to more diverse depictions, not only in body but also in social roles. (One issue of *She-Hulk*, for instance, shows several images of Jennifer Walters putting on mascara, shaving her legs, presenting a legal brief in court — she's a lawyer by occupation — and also taking-out a bad guy).

Marvel and other publishers will no doubt continue this trend in some of its titles, and will hopefully bring about a more prominent feminist perspective that has for decades been sorely missing in the comic book industry. *Ms. Marvel*, perhaps more than any other series, has done precisely that.

Endnotes

¹ This cataclysmic event occurs in the *House of M* comics series published in 2005.

² In-text citations for the comic books are in volume and issue number format, so “1.1” means volume 1, issue 1, and so forth. They are found under the entries for “Wilson, et al.” in my works cited below.

³ Earlier, Kamala remarks on the “horrifying realization that superhero costumes don’t include underwear” (1.2).

⁴ Part of the reason why the women of Kamala’s world are less ridiculously depicted is because of the artwork of Adrian Alphona, who draws in a much more muted style than other comic book artists. The characters in the background are often missing features, including noses, etc., to emphasize the people and action in the foreground. This nontraditional and more minimalist approach bleeds over into Alphona’s depiction of people (and women) in general.

⁵ D’Amore analyzes comic books in the context of second-wave feminism, which influenced the industry to include empowered and authoritative female superheroes committed to traditional female roles and out-of-the-home employment (including the duties of a superhero). Or in her terms, “a gendered body of contradiction” (1228).

⁶ Zoe’s character becomes much less two-dimensional in future issues when her peers learn (not intentionally on her part) that she is sexually attracted to other females. Some of the teens at school taunt her for this, but Nakia and others continue to show their friendship to her despite the reaction of the other students (2.17).

Works Cited

Baer, Allison L, and Jacqueline N. Glasgow. “Negotiating Understanding through the Young Adult Literature of Muslim Cultures.” *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, vol. 54, no. 1, 2010, pp. 23-32. *Literature Resource Center*, edsgcl.237733148.

Clements, James, and Richard Gauvain. “The Marvel of Islam: Reconciling Muslim Epistemologies through a New Islamic Origin Saga in Naif Al-Mutawa’s *The 99*.” *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*, vol. 26, no. 1, 2014, pp. 36-70. *Project Muse*, edspmu.S1703289 X14100023.

Cocca, Carolyn. “The ‘Broke Back’ Test: A Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis of Portrayals of Women in Mainstream Superhero Comics.” *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, vol. 5, no. 4, 2014, pp. 411-28, doi: 10.1080/21504857.2014.916327.

D’Amore, Laura Mattoon. “The Accidental Supermom: Superheroines and Maternal Performativity, 1963-1980.” *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 45, no. 6, Dec. 2012, pp. 1226-48. *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*, doi: 10.1111/jpcu.12006.

- Davis, Julie, and Robert Westerfelhaus. "Finding a Place for a Muslim Heroine in the Post-9/11 Marvel Universe: *New X-Men's* Dust." *Feminist Media Studies*, vol. 13, no. 5, 2013, pp. 800-9. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1080/14680777.2013.838370.
- "Dust." *Marvel Universe*, marvel.com/universe/Dust. Accessed 14 Mar. 2017.
- Eltantawy, Nahed. "From Veiling to Blogging: Women and Media in the Middle East." *Feminist Media Studies*, vol. 13, no. 5, Nov. 2013, pp. 765-9. *Communication and Mass Media Complete*, doi: 10.1080/14680777.2013.838356.
- Gustines, George Gene. "Mighty, Muslim, and Leaping off the Page." *The New York Times*, 5 Nov. 2013, nytimes.com/2013/11/06/books/marvel-comics-introducing-a-muslim-girl-superhero. html.
- Kent, Miriam. "Unveiling Marvels: *Ms. Marvel* and the Reception of the New Muslim Superheroine." *Feminist Media Studies*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2015, pp. 522-7, doi: 10.1080/14680777.2015/ 1031964.
- "Ms. Marvel (Carol Danvers)." *Marvel Universe*, marvel.com/universe/Ms._Marvel_(Carol_Danvers). Accessed 7 Mar. 2017.
- Omar, Irfan A. "Keeping Shari'a and Reclaiming Jihad." *Political Theology*, vol. 12, no. 5, Nov. 2011, pp. 706-12. *EBSCOHost*, doi: 10.1558/poth.v12i5.706.
- Prager, Emily. "Our Barbies, Ourselves." *The Sundance Writer: A Rhetoric, Reader, Research Guide, and Handbook*, by Mark Connelly, 5th ed., Wadsworth, 2013, pp. 145-147.
- Stanley, Kelli E. "'Suffering Sappho!': Wonder Woman and the (Re)Invention of the Feminine Ideal." *Helios*, vol. 32, no. 3, Fall 2005, pp. 143-172. *Literature Resource Center*, edsgcl. 143527256.
- Tahir, Sabaa. "Ms. Marvel Reboot Spotlights Women's Initiative at Marvel. " *Washington Post*, 4 Feb. 2014, washingtonpost.com/blogs/comic-riffs/post/ms-marvel-marvel-comics-new-focus-on- women-characters-and-creators-aims-to-defy-the-scantily-clad-cliche/2014/02/04. Accessed 13 Mar. 2017.
- . "Why Muslim Ms. Marvel Succeeds in Her in Her Debut." *Washington Post*, 4 Feb. 2014, washingtonpost.com/blogs/comic-riffs/post/ms-marvel-why-does-marvels-new-reboot-succeed-because-its-muslim-teen-superhero-is-sweet-conflicted-and-utterly-relatable/2014/02/04/429. Accessed 13 Mar. 2017.
- Wilson, G. Willow. *The Butterfly Mosque: A Young American Woman's Journey to Love and Islam*. Kindle ed., Atlantic Monthly, 2010.
- . "So about That Whole Thing." *GWillowWilson.com*, gwillowwilson.com/post/159094504658/ so-about-that-whole-thing. Accessed 21 Apr. 2017.

- Wilson, G. Willow, et al. "All Mankind." *Ms. Marvel*, Comixology ed., vol. 1, no. 2, 19 Mar. 2014.
- . "Game Over." *Ms. Marvel*, Comixology ed., vol. 2, no. 17, 27 Mar. 2017.
- . "Meta Morphosis." *Ms. Marvel*, Comixology ed., vol. 1, no. 1, 5 Feb. 2014.
- . "Ms. Marvel: Civil War II." *Ms. Marvel*, Comixology ed., vol. 2, no. 11, 28 Sep. 2016.
- . "Past Curfew." *Ms. Marvel*, Comixology ed., vol. 1, no. 4, 28 May 2014.
- . "Side-Entrance." *Ms. Marvel*, Comixology ed., vol. 1, no. 3, 16 Apr. 2014.
- . "Super Famous: Part 2 of 3." *Ms. Marvel*, Comixology ed., vol. 2, no. 2, 16 Dec. 2015.
- . "Urban Legend." *Ms. Marvel*, Comixology ed., vol. 1, no. 5, 25 Jun. 2014.

From Sinner to Martyr: The Rebirths of Malcolm X

Frederick D. Watson
Metropolitan State University

This paper primarily focuses on how Malcolm X used education and rigorous self-examination to bring about several critical rebirths in his life. I explore the question Why did Malcolm eventually come to believe that it was imperative that he become literate?

Malcolm's father, Earl Little, was born in Butler, Georgia in the 1880's. African-American historian Rayford Logan called this period the nadir in his book *The Betrayal of The Negro*. The 1880's through the 1930's was a period of resurgent racism and violence against African-Americans. They would lose most of the legal and political rights they had gained during Reconstruction, and by the late nineteenth century the Fourteenth Amendment was giving more protection to the rights of corporations than former slaves.

The post World War I Klan was widespread in America and had more political power than the post Civil War Ku Klux Klan. John Hope Franklin reports in his book, *From Slavery to Freedom*, that in 1918 some fifty-eight blacks lost their lives to lynching parties. In the 1920's in Tennessee 3,000 whites came out to watch the burning of a live black man (307). The white hostility Malcolm's family would be faced with during the early 20th century is well documented.

Earl Little was a travelling Baptist preacher. He met Malcolm's mother, Louise, in Montreal, Canada where they were married. Malcolm was born in 1925 in Omaha, Nebraska. Earl Preached at different local Baptist churches most Sunday's. The rest of the week, he would spend as an organizer for Marcus Garvey's black nationalist organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Louise Little, an educated mulatto from Grenada, wrote articles for the Garvey Newspaper, *The Negro World*. According to Nigerian scholar, E.U. Essien Udom, most nationalists like Garvey (and later Elijah Muhammad) believe that black people have a common culture and heritage, and that they should be allowed to control their own social, economic and political institutions, as well as their own destiny. Most extreme nationalists demand their own land or country (20).

John Bracey states that in America, black nationalism goes back to the 1780's When wealthy black sail-maker Paul Cuffe started a movement to take African-Americans to Sierra Leone after the American Revolution when he realized that the founding fathers didn't mean for the principles of freedom and equality to apply to blacks. On modern black nationalism, I found William Van Deburg's *New Day in Babylon* and Joseph Peniel's *Waiting 'Till the Midnight Hour* to be most useful.

Most scholars, E. David Cronon, Theodore Vincent, and Tony Martin believe that Marcus Garvey was the first black leader to establish a mass movement with his million plus member Universal Negro Improvement Association that had chapters in several U.S. cities, throughout the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa.

Garvey was born in 1887 in Saint Anne's Bay, Jamaica. His parents were relatively well off. His father was a stone mason, and Garvey's mother owned several properties. According to Cronon, she made handsome profits from the crops she produced (13). Garvey was able to stay in

school longer than most of his peers. He acquired trades as a printer and journalist. Cronon states that Garvey was black listed by the British because of the leading role he played in the 1907 printer's strike in Jamaica (13). Because he couldn't find work as a printer, Garvey left the island when thousands of Jamaicans left to help build the Panama Canal. Garvey wrote several blistering newspaper articles denouncing the poor treatment of the Jamaican workers. Garvey was convinced that the black Jamaicans were treated worse than any of the other foreign workers because of the color of their skin, and unlike the Japanese and Chinese workers, they had no homeland or government (Jamaica was still a British colony) that could protect them. Garvey decided that he was going to be the leader to give black people a homeland or government in Africa.

Garvey moved to Harlem in 1916 during the middle of the great the great migration. In spellbinding speeches Garvey told blacks that they should be proud of their race and their glorious African past. He also stressed that blacks should never play a secondary or inferior role to the white man. According to Garvey scholar, Tony Martin, he vehemently believed that the black man would forever be the victim of white exploitation, if he didn't become self-reliant, and establish a homeland in a powerful united Africa that could protect black people wherever they lived (15-16). Cronon asserts that Garvey actually purchased land for an initial colony in Liberia in 1922. However, the Firestone Rubber Company found out that the land Garvey bought was good land for growing rubber. They bribed the Liberian government for a ninety-nine-year lease, and Garvey's payment was returned (64-66). Garvey established a newspaper, *The Negro World*, and a shipping company called *The Black Star Line*, and many small businesses in the inner cities. Lawrence Levine believes that Garvey's message about race pride and redemption of Africa started a revitalization movement among the lower classes, that the middle-class NAACP could never reach during this depressing period of the nadir (105-108).

In his *Autobiography* Malcolm recalled that as a small boy he accompanied his father to UNIA meetings held in private black homes: "I remember seeing big shiny photographs of Marcus Garvey that were passed from hand to hand...I remember how the meetings always closed with my father saying, "Up you mighty race, you can accomplish what you will (9)!" Malcolm also recollects in *The Autobiography*, a local Klan group that called itself the Black Legion vandalized their home in Omaha and forced his family to flee to Lansing, Michigan. The Black Legion was angry that Earl Little wanted to own a store and his own land, and they accused him of "stirring up the bad niggers" with his preaching that they should strive to become independent of the white man (5).

In Lansing Malcolm's family's first home on the outskirts of the town was burned to the ground by another local Klan group, while firemen stood around and watched (6). Bruce Perry points out that before the fire, the Little family's white neighbors had been granted a court order reversing the sale of the property, because the deed contained a restrictive covenant excluding blacks from purchasing it (8-9).

What happened to Malcolm's family was quite common throughout the North during this time. In Detroit in 1925, Dr. Ossian Sweet, (a black medical doctor) who bought a house in a white neighborhood was jailed for shooting and killing a member of a white mob that was attacking his home. It took the skills of esteemed defense attorney Clarence Darrow to win Dr. Sweet's acquittal in the case. William Tuttle, Arnold Hirsh, and Thomas Sugrue are excellent studies of the hostility of Northern whites toward black migrants over housing and jobs.

Earl Little was also harassed by the Klan in Lansing. One night when Malcolm was six, Earl went out to collect money for the Garvey movement and never came back. Later that night he was found on the streetcar tracks with a hole bashed in his head. Malcolm told Alex Haley his family believed that his father had been killed and was laid on the tracks. Earl Little had seen four of his six brothers die by violence, three of them killed by white men, including one who was murdered by a lynch mob (4). Later (after the split with the Nation of Islam) when Elijah Muhammad's assassins were hunting Malcolm, he would draw a parallel between his father's death and his pending death. Both father and son were fighting for the human dignity of their people. Malcolm took up his father's struggle even though he well understood that societies often kill those who try to bring about revolutionary changes.

Louise Little tried to hold the family of eight children together the best she could during the middle of the Great Depression. She did odd jobs for the neighbors like sewing, house cleaning, and laundry. She was a proud woman and hated when she had to go on public assistance to feed and clothe her children. In 1938 Louise had a mental breakdown and was committed to the state mental hospital at Kalamazoo, where she remained until 1963. Malcolm and his brothers and sisters were divided up and sent to live with different foster families. Malcolm resented the way the social workers treated his mother. He told Alex Haley, that some of them called his mother crazy to her face. According to Malcolm, "I think they felt that getting children into foster homes was a legitimate part of their function, and the result would be less troublesome (21-22)." Malcolm's family didn't have to be destroyed. They were struggling to stay together, like so many other black families since slavery. This obviously was not the only case of its kind. Malcolm believed that his mother was a statistic "that didn't have to be, that existed because of a society's failure...Hence I have no mercy or compassion in me for a society that will crush people, and then penalize them for not being able to stand up under the weight (26-27)."

Malcolm was a gifted student. He was elected class president in the 8th grade in a mostly white school in Mason, Michigan. He was also at the top of his class before he lost interest in school and dropped out. The incident that killed Malcolm's ambition is described in his *The Autobiography*. Malcolm's English teacher, Mr. Ostrowski, was asking members of the class what they planned on doing after graduation. Malcolm said that he wanted to be a lawyer. Mr. Ostrowski responded, "...You've got to be realistic about being a nigger. A lawyer—that's no realistic goal for a nigger...You're good with your hands—making things. Everybody admires your carpentry shop work. Why don't you plan on carpentry (43)?" Malcolm's academic achievement as one of the best students in the class had not prepared him for Mr. Ostrowski's reaction to his achievement. His high grades did not neutralize his being black was a shock to Malcolm. "I was smarter than nearly all of those kids. But apparently I was not intelligent enough to become whatever I wanted (44)." Unfortunately, memories of interactions with white teachers who had limited expectations for them are a part of the collective memory of most African-Americans. In *Black Boy* Richard Wright describes similar experiences with teachers and white employers. If Malcolm's father had Garveyite father had lived, the outcome of this encounter with Mr. Ostrowski probably would have been different. His identity as an African-American and as a member of a historically oppressed group who used literacy as a weapon in their fight for freedom might have sustained his desire to achieve in spite of white racism.

A few years ago, I was teaching U.S. history and American Ethnic Studies at a major mid-Western university that was in the Big-12 Athletic Conference. A future NFL running back begged

me not to reveal to the class that he scored a perfect paper on the mid-term exam, because his “homeboys” would ridicule him unmercifully. At the end of class as the students filed out, I wondered what Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells, and W.E.B. DuBois would think about African-American youngsters who thought it was not “cool” or important for an oppressed people to be intelligent.

After this encounter with Mr. Ostrowski, Malcolm turned away from whites. He became detached from them at school, at the restaurant where he worked, and from the Swerlins, a white couple who ran the group home where Malcolm lived. This was the end of the first phase of Malcolm’s life.

Malcolm decided that if he could not become a lawyer, he would become a criminal. He moved to Boston and Harlem and found his way into the criminal underworld, where the fiercest survive by fleecing the weak. Malcolm became a master manipulator as a pimp, drug dealer, cocaine addict, strong arm robber, and burglar. During Malcolm’s days as a hustler, he was called “Detroit Red” because of his red processed hair style. In the *Autobiography* Malcolm described getting his first “conk” (a mixture of lye and some other ingredients that were used to straighten black men’s hair) as the first step in his degradation. Malcolm wrote, “I had joined that multitude of Negro men and women in America who are brainwashed into believing that the black people are ‘inferior’—and white people ‘superior’—that they will even violate and mutilate their God-created bodies to look ‘pretty’ by white standards (64).

Malcolm and his buddy, “Shorty” and three white women created a burglary ring in Boston. The white women would case the homes of wealthy white people. Malcolm and “Shorty” would break in at night and steal their valuables. Malcolm got caught with a watch he stole from one of the homes he burglarized. Malcolm and “Shorty” were sentenced to seven to ten years in Charlestown State Prison. Malcolm bought drugs from corrupt prison guards. Fellow inmates nicknamed Malcolm Satan, because he was so angry and violent and cursing God and the *Bible*. Psycho historian, Victor Wolfenstein termed Malcolm’s pathologies during this criminal phase of his life “false consciousness.” Wolfenstein’s study is an excellent account of the struggle of the oppressed from the falsification of their consciousness (1-2).

The first step in Malcolm’s rise from the underworld came when an older respected prisoner, he called “Bimbi,” challenged him intellectually, and encouraged him to take advantage of correspondence courses offered through the prison. Bimbi could see (unlike Mr. Ostrowski) that Malcolm was intelligent and had potential. The second step in Malcolm’s recovery came when his sister, Ella, had him transferred to Norfolk State, a prison that emphasized rehabilitation. Wealthy donors and Ivy league universities donated books to the prison library. Malcolm started out by copying words from the dictionary that he did not know. In *The Autobiography* he described his painstaking journey from A to Z through the dictionary (199).

Malcolm started reading books in history, great literature, and philosophy (Eastern and Western). The goal of his studies was to find out how the white man was able to dominate people of color around the world. He read about ancient African empires, Nat Turner and John Brown. He even read Chinese history. He was particularly interested in the 1848 Opium War, when the British conquered Hong Kong as reparations when the Chinese rose up and destroyed British

opium that was destroying Chinese society. Malcolm told Alex Haley, "Imagine! Declaring war upon someone who objects to being narcotized (205)."

To further improve his mind, Malcolm joined the prison debate team, and started a letter writing campaign. He wrote to everyone he could think of, including President Harry S Truman. Malcolm's prison letters reminds me of how Antonio Gramsci used his writing's collected in *The Prison Notebooks*. He refused to let Benito Mussolini and his fascist judges kill his mind and spirit by sending him to prison.

Malcolm's younger brother Reginald wrote him a letter telling him about his conversion to Islam under a black leader, Elijah Muhammad, who was called the Messenger of Allah by his followers. Elijah Muhammad was born Elijah Poole in Sanderson, Georgia. When he moved to Detroit in the 1930's, he joined a group of black muslims that, according to Eric Lincoln, had been established Wallace D. Fard (an Arab from Arabia) who claimed to be a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (14-15). When Fard disappeared in 1935 Elijah Muhammad established the Nation of Islam and created his version of Islam. Eric Lincoln asserts that Elijah Muhammad attracted converts with a creation story that held that in the beginning Blacks were living in a Garden of Eden-like Paradise until a vain black scientist named Yacub was thrown out of Paradise by Allah for thinking that he was greater than Allah. Yacub got revenge by creating a race of blue-eyed, blond, white devils that conquered and enslaved the black people. If the black people live by a strict moral and dietary code, and remain separate from the white devils and their immoral society, Allah would remove the white devils from power (78-80). Years later Malcolm would learn that Elijah Muhammad's tales, like Yacub's history, orthodox muslims. Reginald told Malcolm that Elijah Muhammad was teaching his followers that the white man was the devil and that the black man's rightful place was at the top of society, a place that was usurped by the treachery of the white devils.

Malcolm started writing Elijah Muhammad daily letters. Elijah wrote him back and told him that black men were imprisoned only because of oppression by white devils who made them criminals by refusing them remunerative work. Malcolm was impressed. He immersed himself in books from the prison library. Everything Malcolm read seemed to document what Elijah Muhammad told him about the white devils, wrote Malcolm in the *Autobiography* (192-193). Louis DeCaro states that Malcolm genuinely embraced the teachings of Elijah Muhammad. In prison Malcolm was searching for a new meaning system to explain his condition (84-85).

Malcolm gives the best account of his conversion to Islam in chapter ten of the *Autobiography*. Malcolm tells us that new knowledge hit him like a blinding light (like what happened to Paul on the road to Damascus). Malcolm stated that, "the very enormity of my previous life's guilt prepared me to accept the truth (189)." Malcolm told Haley that the truth can only be quickly received by the sinner who knows and admits he is guilty of having sinned much (189). Stated another way, only guilt admitted accepts truth. After Reginald left, Malcolm sat in his cell and stared at the bars like a blind man. At the dinner table he didn't eat for several days and nearly starved. Malcolm wrote, "I was going through the hardest thing, also the greatest thing...to accept what is already within you and around you (189)."

When Malcolm was released from prison in 1952, Elijah Muhammad trained him as a Nation of Islam (NOI) muslim minister. Malcolm's first assignment was to Detroit's Temple

Number One. In just a few months Malcolm's fiery sermons and aggressive recruitment doubled the membership of the temple. Malcolm was a true believer and a real dynamo. He organized temples in Boston, Philadelphia, Atlanta, and Los Angeles. In 1954 Elijah Muhammad assigned him to the Nation's most important temple, Harlem's Temple Number Seven. There was already talk behind Malcolm's back at the NOI Chicago Headquarters that Malcolm was "moving too fast," according to Manning Marable (235-236). In 1959 Malcolm established Nation of Islam's newspaper, *Muhammad Speaks* that helped the organization to become nationally known. In 1959 Malcolm also became national spokesman for the NOI. Malcolm started to overshadow Elijah Muhammad.

For recruitment Malcolm actively sought hard case convicts, junkies, and drunks. Peter Goldman contends, "Malcolm having been there himself, developed an authentic gift for reaching these men and women and resurrecting them from their particular graves (84-85). His work with addicts, asserts Goldman, "became the envy of Harlem's social service community (84-85)."

Malcolm's charisma and personal magnitude aside, The NOI message also helped to attract large numbers of converts in the late fifties and early sixties. Malcolm constantly stressed that whites since slavery attacked blacks both physically and psychologically. Whites wanted to maintain a social and economic order in which blacks were in an inferior economic position, and they often did this by making blacks fearful of white violence. The reaction of the Black Legion or Klan to Earl Little's desire to own a store and land where he could produce his own food was a threat to whites who wanted to maintain their financial advantage over blacks by keeping them dependent on whites for their income. A constant theme in Malcolm's speeches and sermons was that whites wanted to keep blacks ignorant of their own history and past glories so that they would develop a self-hatred.

The NOI counter strategy called for them maintain family stability, avoid the vices of white society (pork, drugs, fornication, and materialism) and above all to educate themselves. Self-knowledge of African life or culture, would prevent blacks from having feelings of inferiority, and knowledge of the world would allow them to fulfill their potential. Theologian, James Cone, points out that lack of self-knowledge leads inevitably to self-destruction, as shown in the hipster life style of the lower class blacks, and of the pretentious behavior of those in the black middle class (51). This is why Malcolm believed it was important to become literate and for black people to know their history. Pathfinder Press has collected Malcolm's speeches on black history in a volume titled *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*.

Basic to the NOI and Malcolm's philosophy was the right to self-defense. In chapter nineteen of the *Autobiography* Malcolm asserts, "They call me a teacher, a fomenter of violence...that's a lie. I'm not for wanton violence, I'm for justice (421)." Malcolm did not believe in being aggressive toward anyone, but he insisted that no one should be allowed to attack a black man, woman, or child without suffering the same kind of hostility. He said that he supported violence when it leads to justice, and that violence is necessary when people are not protected by the laws (e.g. Emmett Till, Medgar Evers, the four little girls blown up in Birmingham's 16th Avenue Baptist Church). In *Stride toward Freedom* Dr. King held the opposite view. King said that he focused on "the forces of evil" rather than on people who happen to be doing evil. According to King, "We are out to defeat injustice and not white people who may be unjust (103)."

Malcolm X and Elijah Muhammad taught their followers that the white man was the enemy (“the devil”) and that they had to remain separate from whites. When Malcolm was with the NOI he defined himself as a black nationalist separatist who did not believe that integration would take place in America because racism was so deeply ingrained. Elijah Muhammad did not allow NOI members to participate in the civil rights movement. They were waiting on Allah to take care of the white devils. The NOI did not even allow their members to vote.

Dr. King’s Birmingham forced John F. Kennedy to act on civil rights before he wanted to. He had planned to wait until his second term to introduce major civil rights legislation. “Bull” Connor’s attacking peaceful demonstrators with police dogs, cattle prods, and fire hoses made it difficult for America to say that it was the greatest democracy in the world. On June 11, 1963 Kennedy delivered a compassionate nationally televised speech supporting the moral issue of black equality. A week later, Kennedy asked Congress to pass the broadest civil rights bill ever. In 1964 President Johnson signed Kennedy’s bill into law. The 1964 Civil Rights Bill and the pending voting rights bill were game changers for Malcolm, but Elijah Muhammad refused to let the NOI become part of any broad-based coalition of civil rights groups.

Elijah Muhammad used Malcolm’s comment about the Kennedy assassination as an excuse to suspend and eventually expel Malcolm from the NOI. In March and April of 1964 Malcolm formed two rival organizations to the Nation of Islam, the Muslim Mosque Incorporated and the Organization of Afro-American Unity. Malcolm’s final rebirth came when he made his *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca). Malcolm was hosted by President Nasser of Egypt, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, and various African heads of state on his trip. He met muslims of all races on the *Hajj*. He adopted an orthodox form of Sunni Islam after receiving instruction from Islamic scholars. Malcolm came to the conclusion that racism was not natural to white men, but was the result of a nation that fostered racism. In the *Autobiography* Malcolm said, “The true Islam has shown me that a blanket indictment of all white people is as wrong as when whites make blanket indictments against blacks (416).” He was going to start judging people on a case by case basis and on their actions.

Before being gunned down by three of Elijah Muhammad’s followers on February 21, 1965 at Harlem’s Audubon Ballroom, Malcolm’s last major speeches (collected in George Breitman’s, *Malcolm X Speaks*), such as *The Ballot or the Bullet*, and the founding documents of ywas looking at the civil rights problem as a human rights problem and was close to taking the U.S. before the United Nations as a violator of African-American human rights, and he wanted to establish broad based grass-roots coalitions with other civil rights groups.

Clayborne Carson came across an FBI memorandum, dated March 4, 1968 that showed what kind of threat Malcolm posed. The objective of the FBI was to, “Prevent the rise of a ‘messiah’ who could unify, and electrify, the militant black nationalist movement. Malcolm X might have been such a ‘messiah’; he is the martyr of the movement today. Martin Luther King, Stokely Carmichael, Elijah Muhammad all aspire to this position (17).”

Malcolm’s crusade for black self-respect, self-reliance, and economic empowerment have been taken up by others. Ilyasah Shabazz, Malcolm’s daughter, wrote in a February 20, 2015 *New York Times*, “*What Would Malcolm Think?*” that some of Malcolm’s young posthumous disciples misunderstood his message. She said that some young blacks are inspired by “pieces” of Malcolm

instead of the entire man. They think that “by any means necessary means with a gun, as opposed to with a book or getting ‘A’s in school. Malcolm advocated a range of options in the black freedom struggle.

Works Cited

Bracey, John, H., August Meier, and Elliot Rudwick, eds. *Black Nationalism*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970.

Breitman, George, ed. *Malcolm X Speaks*. New York: Press, 1965.

Carson, Clayborne. *Malcolm X: The FBI File*. New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2012.

Cone, James H. *Martin and Malcolm*. New York: Orbis Books, 1991.

Cronon, E. David. *Black Moses: The Story of Marcus Garvey*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981.

DeCaro, Louis A. *On the Side of My People: A Religious of Malcolm X*. New York: New York University Press, 1996.

Franklin, John Hope. *From Slavery to Freedom*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988.

Goldman, Peter. *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979.

Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections From The Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers, 1975.

Hirsch, Arnold. “Massive Resistance in the Urban North: Trumbal Park, Chicago 1953-1966.” *The Journal of American History*. Vol. 82 (September 1995):522-550.

King, Martin Luther. *Stride Toward Freedom*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986.

Levine, Lawrence W. “Marcus Garvey and the Politics of Revitalization.” In *Black Leaders of the Twentieth Century*. Edited by John Hope Franklin and August Meier. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982.

Malcolm X and Alex Haley. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Random House, 1992.

_____. *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1990.

Marable, Manning. *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention*. New York: Viking Penguin, 2011.

- Martin, Tony. *Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Strategies of Marcus Garvey and The Universal Negro Improvement Association*. New York: Dover, 1976.
- Peniel, Joseph. *Waiting 'Till The Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America*. New York: Henry Holt, 2006.
- Perry, Bruce. *Malcolm: The Life of A Man Who Changed Black America*. Barrytown, New York: Station Hill, 1991.
- Shabazz, Ilyasah. "What Would Malcolm Do?" *New York Times* (February 20, 2015): 19.
- Sugrue, Thomas J. "Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and The Reaction Against Liberalism In The Urban North, 1940-1964." *Journal of American History* vol. 82 (September, 1995): 551-578.
- Udom-Essien, E.U. *Black Nationalism*. New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1964.
- Vandeburg, William L. *New Day in Babylon*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Vincent, Theodore. *Black Power and the Garvey Movement*. San Francisco: Ramparts Press, 1976.
- Wolfenstein, Eugene. *The Victims of Democracy: Malcolm X and the Black Revolution*. London: Free Association Press, 1989.