REDEMPTION AND REVENGE:

THE LEGACIES OF

MARY ROWLANDSON AND HANNAH DUSTON

By

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Abstract: Mary Rowlandson's *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* and the various accounts written about Hannah Duston's captivity have become notable as a result of how these two women reacted while taken captive by Native peoples. Both Duston and Rowlandson's narratives differ in some ways, but ultimately the agency they take while captive has led to their texts' continuous popularity in American literature. In my essay titled "Redemption and Revenge: The Legacies of Mary Rowlandson and Hannah Duston", I examine how Duston's agency when seeking revenge is described as heroic, a characteristic not normally associated with women. I do this through focusing on two male writers in particular, Cotton Mather and John Greenleaf Whittier, whose accounts of the captivity helped propel the narrative's popularity. I also explore whether Rowlandson's text, when read through a religious lens, is notable because of her ability to write about her experiences, all while seeking restoration instead of revenge, a choice more appropriate with the female gender and her religious beliefs. Through this exploration, I compare and contrast the Mary Rowlandson and Hannah Duston narratives, and illustrate that although they had individual experiences, the narratives are successful in perpetuating the marginalization of the Natives.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

While in Dr. Richard Frohock's Fall 2018 *Crime in the Early Atlantic World* course I began working with the topic of my main portfolio piece titled, "Redemption and Revenge: The Legacies of Mary Rowlandson and Hannah Duston.". Among the assigned readings were the various accounts of the Hannah Duston captivity. I remember that as I was reading these accounts previous to class, it reminded me of Mary Rowlandson's *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*, a text which I first read as an undergraduate. I was immediately excited thinking about how I could discuss these two captivity narratives together. The first version of this assignment was a conference style presentation on how both Rowlandson and Duston are depicted in their narratives. Later, I took my desire to compare and contrast these two narratives further and wrote a seminar paper which discussed how these narratives are working to perpetuate the marginalization of the native peoples. At the end of the semester I decided that I wanted to make this the main piece of my portfolio.

At the start of the Fall 2019, I met with Dr. Frohock approximately every two weeks to discuss my paper. The main revisions for my piece revolved around two aspects: first, I needed an overarching focus which would allow me to compare and contrast Duston and Rowlandson; second, the organization of my ideas. With regards to the focus, Dr. Frohock suggested a "less is more" approach so I simplified my focus by just comparing and contrasting the two narratives. This allowed me to reach my overarching focus currently found in my thesis statements. At the start of the Fall 2019 semester I had difficulties focusing on one or two things because there are many things to discuss with this topic. Once I accepted the "less is more" approach and my path became clearer.

The second concern for my essay was the organization which is where I believe I have made the most revisions. Dr. Frohock asked me to create an outline and suggested I place subheadings on top of each paragraphs to ensure I remained focused. In one of our most recent meetings, Dr. Frohock suggested I doublecheck my topic sentences to ensure that I was starting general and moving toward greater specificity. As I have always struggled with organization but Dr. Frohock's feedback helped me with this throughout my writing process.

With this, the area in which I have seen the most growth is my ability to revise. As a first-year composition instructor, I encourage revision, but as I have been working on this piece for my portfolio, I am noticing that revision without sufficient guidance can be unproductive. I am tremendously grateful for Dr. Frohock's feedback throughout this process because I have learned to question all aspects of my writing which has improved my understanding of revision. Not only do I know how to question where my writing can improve, but my work has made me question how I approach the revision process in my classroom.

With regards to the theme of my portfolio, I found myself gravitating towards gender and how it was working within the texts I chose. During my time here at Oklahoma State I took courses ranging from Dr. Edward Jones' course on Milton, Nightmares in Modernity with Dr. Martin Wallen to New Voices in Native American Literature with Dr. Lindsey Smith. Even with this variety of course topics, I addressed how gender was working within the texts I chose. For example, in Dr. Wallen's course I wrote my seminar paper over Pat Barker's *Blow Your House Down*. The majority of the characters in this text are women so I focused on how they were treated due to the nature of their jobs. In Dr. Smith's course I worked with ethnic ambiguity and how gender worked within the relationships of the Native male characters from Tommy Orange's *There There*. These are only a few examples of how I discussed gender in my past seminar essays.

If I were to pursue publishing the main piece of my portfolio, I would attempt to place it in the journal of *Early American Literature*, which focuses on American literature through the early national period up to 1830. I believe my piece would be appropriate for this journal because the captivity narratives are from the late 1600s, Even more importantly, they have published articles on both Rowlandson and Duston as well as pertaining to subjects like Puritanism and Cotton Mather. Further, many of the sources I consulted for this essay were published in *Early American Literature*. Thus, I believe that my piece would be well-suited to this publication.

As I continue reflecting on the work I have done towards my master's portfolio, I can see how everything I have learned during my time here at OSU has culminated in this project. I remember taking Dr. Jones' Milton course in Fall 2017 without any real understanding of how to do research at the graduate level. I struggled at first, and I would be lying if I said that I did not continue struggle in my subsequent literature courses. However, slowly, learning from each of my professors on how they approach research, I have been able to take pieces from here and there and apply them to my work today. I saw the culmination of my work in the Spring 2019 when my research process became much easier and more enjoyable, and I felt that my ability to use that research was better than anything had done before. I set goals for myself and prayed that I could accomplish providing a substantial understanding of the texts I was using and the sources to support my argument. I completed the semester feeling great about my potential for the future.

After working with on my portfolio, I can honestly say that I have grown as a writer and a researcher and am looking forward to seeing more growth.

CHAPTER II

REDEMPTION AND REVENGE:

THE LEGACIES OF MARY ROWLANDSON AND HANNAH DUSTON

In the cases of Mary Rowlandson and Hannah Duston, both women were taken captive from their homes and witnessed the death of one of their children, but the experiences, popularity, and their behaviors differed. Duston's narrative(s) leave behind a legacy which portrays a victim turned heroine who sought revenge towards her Abenaki captors, whereas Rowlandson's legacy as a survivor resulted in a more puritanical view of what happens when someone gives their sufferings to God. While Rowlandson wrote her own narrative six months after her release, Duston did not have the same opportunity. Instead, Duston's narrative was written multiple times, two of which were by Cotton Mather and John Greenleaf Whittier, thus lending the opportunity to question how she was written into these fundamentally similar, but differing narratives. This essay will compare and contrast the Mary Rowlandson and Hannah Duston narratives, and illustrate that although they had individual experiences, the narratives are successful in perpetuating the marginalization of the Natives.

It is necessary to provide some context behind the captivity narrative genre in order to see how these characteristics are informing the Rowlandson and Duston narratives. Captivity narratives, or Indian captivity narratives, tend to have similar fundamental characteristics, regardless of the location and time periods in which they were written. For one, a person of a majority group is taken captive by indigenous peoples. Then, the narrative describes the captive's experiences as a captive, and finally, how the person has survived captivity (Brieger 128). One of the most well-known captivity narratives, Mary Rowlandson's *Sovereignty and Goodness of God*, encompasses the majority of the characteristics found in captivity narratives. Andreas Brieger's article on Mary Rowlandson argues that Rowlandson's narrative was not only the most well-known but one of the most influential. Because of this, Rowlandson's narrative essentially set expectations of how captivity narratives were to be written (Brieger 130). The influence that Rowlandson's narrative has had on the captivity narrative genre, can even be seen in present-day horror and thriller films. More detailed characteristics of captivity narratives also found within horror and thriller films were, as Ma Carmen Gomez Galisteo puts it, "isolation from society, captivity at the hands of evil beings, [and] helplessness" (460). Galisteo also mentions how gruesome details found within captivity narratives also carry to present-day films. Many of the Duston captivity narratives also had gruesome characteristics, specifically when looking at the John Greenleaf Whittier account. These characteristics are worth noting in the Rowlandson

and Duston narratives when comparing and contrasting their experiences, especially since this emphasizes how the narratives work towards the marginalization of the Natives.

To further understand how Rowlandson and Duston are being written into these narratives, first one must address the reasons why people were taken captive, especially when looking at the early seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when these narratives are set. Katherine Z. Derounian-Stodola and James A. Levernier's text *The Indian Captivity Narrative* lay out three reasons why. One, the indigenous peoples wanted revenge on European settlers who took their lands and killed their people. Two, people were taken ransom, like Rowlandson was, because they knew that they could get a large sum of money from friends and family of the person taken captive. And lastly, taking people captive was done in order to "replace tribal numbers diminished by war and disease brought on by white colonization" (Derounian-Stodola and Levernier 2-5). Ultimately, Native peoples took captives as a result of a system created by colonization. This colonization was achieved through one group, the European settlers having power, and the other having none. Power, and lack thereof, is the driving factor behind why indigenous peoples committed crimes of captivity. Not only do captivity narratives revolve around this idea, they were also used to continue to marginalize the Natives peoples.

As mentioned earlier, there were various reasons why people were taken captive, but Laurel Thatcher Ulrich identifies the factors that determined the outcome of a

person's captivity. She states that age was a key factor in the outcome of a captivity; however, more important than age was gender (Ulrich 204). From 1680 to 1730 there were about 270 recorded people who were taken captive from the New England area, and of those 270 people, there were an equal amount of men and women (Ulrich 203). Males were more likely to escape, resist, and/or die, whereas females were more likely to stay with their captors and adapt (Ulrich 204-5). Despite the common characteristics found within captivity narratives, June Namias suggests that the details within captivity narratives were different according to gender (22-3). She states that, "by comparing accounts and representations by and about men with those about women, but by both men and women, we notice some major differences not only in tone and style but in experience and response" (Namias 22-3). It is important to look at how staying and adapting is seen or not seen in the Rowlandson and Duston narratives especially when considering how they are read and celebrated as a result of it.

It was not uncommon for people to be taken captive; however, it is important to note the reasons why Rowlandson and Duston were taken captive. In Rowlandson's case, Derounian-Stodola and Levernier argue that she was most likely taken captive in hopes of bringing in a large ransom to her captors (96). She was the wife of Joseph Rowlandson who was a minister held in high regard, and through his status or social standing, her captors would have expected a large sum of money for returning her. Duston, on the other hand, did not have a similar status or social standing like the Rowlandsons. This can be inferred from Derounian-Stodola and Levernier's discussion over the popularity

that resulted from Duston's experience as a captive. When Duston returned with the ten Abenaki scalps, she was said to have gained so much support that Duston would have been a wealthy woman as a result. Derounian-Stodola and Levernier state that "any money deemed appropriate would help the Dustans recover from their financial losses" (96). This insight establishes Duston's social and financial status, thus not the strongest reason behind her captivity. Instead, as mentioned earlier, one of the reasons why Natives took people captive was because of their anger towards Europeans, this could have been the most reasonable for taking Duston captive.

Rowlandson's passivity, as opposed to Duston's revenge, was more than likely a product of the time period's expectations for women. As mentioned earlier, Namias states that the experiences and outcomes of a person's captivity differed based on gender. Derounian-Stodola adds to this by stating that women were "socially constructed as passive objects, with a predominantly domestic and private role, and the inability, often, to choose for themselves"; all of which influenced the outcomes of a female captive's experience, like in the Duston and Rowlandson narratives (xx-xxi). Because of this, the captors targeted a "women's physical frailty and emotional nature" (Derounian-Stodola xx-xxi). Rowlandson, when compared to Duston, could be considered more fragile and emotional, but most importantly, she is more passive than Duston was. One example of this is seen through Rowlandson's choice to remain passive and cooperate with her captors while living with them. Her choice to do this could be a product of her Puritan beliefs and her husband's social status, among society's expectations about how she

should conduct herself. From the beginning of her narrative, Rowlandson depicts herself as cooperative by stating that she had to obey her captors. She says, "I told them they would kill me: they answered, *If I were willing to go along with them, they would not hurt me*." (Rowlandson 70). Her cooperation from the beginning of her captivity constructs a passive image throughout her narrative and even after, but it was also not uncommon for female captivity narratives.

Society's expectations of gender roles also impacted Duston's narrative, despite the outcomes of the narrative being different than Rowlandson's. Duston's vengefulness and heroic qualities were even more heightened due to the fact that she acted against what was expected of her. Readers can see similar gender expectations through John Greenleaf Whittier's and Cotton Mather's accounts of her captivity. In fact, the first lines of Whittier's "A Mother's Revenge" begins with listing society's gender roles and stereotypes. It states, "Woman's attributes are generally considered of a milder and purer character than those of man. The virtues of meek affection, of fervent piety, or winning sympathy, and of that 'charity which forgiveth often,' are more peculiarly her own" (Whittier 348). Although he is writing about her captivity 130 years after Duston's escape, his male voice informs readers that society's expectations of women are similar to Rowlandson's, except for the fact that the narratives have different outcomes, while Rowlandson's experience is more typical of a female captivity narrative and Duston's narrative is not.

Sentimentality works alongside gender in order to inform these captivity narratives. Sarah Humphreys discusses sentimentality in captivity narratives as a whole by addressing the "sentimental tropes of the afflicted family and the suffering, marginalized captive" (151). For Rowlandson and Duston, family, specifically motherhood, were elements that heightened their narratives' sentimental reception. Derounian-Stodola and Levernier argue that sentimentality was used to promote the victimization of Duston and Rowlandson in their narratives. They state that, "victimization is the most common image of women in captivity. As victims, women remained passive and reinforced age-old stereotypes; (Derounian-Stodola and Levernier 132-3). The victimization of these women differs, but they share a sentimentality which begins with the image of a helpless, fragile woman taken from her home. This then causes women to be perceived as passive, especially when the situation is that they were taken captive. Rowlandson's narrative plays on this type of victimization, but another way that gender informs their narratives is that they were mothers which helps generate sympathy. Both Rowlandson and Duston were each taken with a child; therefore, motherhood did not end when they were forced to leave their domestic spaces. As a result, sentimentality and victimhood truly work within these narratives and ultimately continue towards depicting the natives through a monstrous lens.

Rowlandson's prominence as a victim and Duston's prominence as a heroine were strengthened by their roles as mothers. This was a striking element in their narratives, although they worked in different ways. First, it is important to note that

Rowlandson's role as mother did not overpower her narrative like her religious beliefs did, whereas for Duston, her actions were influenced by the gruesome death of her child. Like Duston, Rowlandson also witnessed the death of her youngest child, Sarah, who died while they were in captivity. Their reactions towards the death of their children provide a chilling element to these captivity narratives. For example, Sarah Rowlandson was in Mary Rowlandson's arms since the beginning of their captivity. After her death, Rowlandson reflects on what could be considered an emotional moment; however, it does lack sentiment. Despite this, it did allow Rowlandson to realize her strength. Reflecting on her traumatic experience, she says, "I cannot but take notice, how at another time I could not bear to be in the room where any dead person was, but now the case is changed; I must and could ly down by my dead Babe" (Rowlandson 75). She was in disbelief but acknowledges God's ability to help her contain herself in this moment. Rowlandson states, "I had thought since the wonderfull goodness of God to me, in preserving me in the use of my reason and senses, in that distressed time…that I did not use wicked and violent means to end my own miserable life…" (76). This reflection reveals that suicide could have been an option; however, her realization and strength through God allowed her to grow. Denise MacNeil discusses this moment and describes Rowlandson as a "hero transformed" (626-53). MacNeil states, "Already [Rowlandson] has demonstrated courage and level-headedness by negotiating with the attackers during the assault on her household, something that she had always felt she could not even withstand" (640). Her take on this moment in Rowlandson's narrative is interesting since

her legacy began through the narrative's strong religious influence instead of her being considered as a hero.

In Duston's case, similar reasons for targeting her narrative work well with the context surrounding her condition at the time of her captivity. Regardless of who was writing the Duston narratives, her identity as a mother heavily drove the accounts. Like Rowlandson, Duston also had a child with her when she was taken captive, but her motherhood role is emphasized more than Rowlandson's. In the account found in *Magnalia Christi Americana*, Mather provides context behind when she was taken captive. She had given birth a week prior and was under the care of a nurse, and this was used to stress the situation or conditions she was in before taken captive. Mather specifically plays on this and says, "However, Duston (with her nurse) notwithstanding her present condition, traveled that night about a dozen miles, and then kept up with their new masters in a long travel of an hundred and fifty miles" (345). Like Humphreys suggested earlier, sentimentality in these narratives works to emphasize the victimhood of these women. Therefore, by Mather adding details such as how many miles Duston had to travel in her condition, it adds to her victimization. Although taking someone captive is a crime, these narratives work to justify the choices Rowlandson and Duston made while captive. This justification ultimately deepens the divide between the whites and the Natives.

The descriptions based around Duston's actions (or reactions) vary by narrative, but are all tied to the death of her child. Both Cotton Mather and John Greenleaf Whittier approach this moment of her captivity in different ways, but ultimately, they deemed her actions appropriate. In Mather's account, he supports her choice to seek revenge by establishing the "lawlessness" of the Natives. He states, "being where she had not her own *life* secured by any *law* unto her, she thought she was not forbidden by any *law* to take away the *life* of the *murders* by whom her child had been butchered" (Mather 346). Because they were said to be "lawless," she could take their lives like they took her child's. In Whittier's account, his justification for her actions is supported through the gruesome details he uses to describe the death of her child. The dramatized build of the moment when her child was thrown at a tree was accompanied by horrific images such as the "sprinkled with brains and blood" (Whittier 349). These details ultimately led into an interesting description of Duston's reaction to her child's murder. He describes Duston as experiencing a "darkness and horror—that her very heart seemed to cease beating, and to lie cold and dead in her bosom, and that her limbs move only as involuntary machinery," as if she underwent some transformation (Whittier 349). Duston transitioned from being a passive character to full of vengeance which led her to kill and scalp her captors. Following this, Whittier suggests yet another transformation when he states that, "the angel had become a demon" (349). The comparison to an angel could be yet another "womanly attribute". Here Carroll would argue that this is another example of "gender transgression" (55). Carroll also argues that this could be another reason why people were

interested in Duston's experience (55). The celebration of Duston's escape and revenge stems from this very moment. Duston's victim turned heroine transformation is the reason for the narrative's popularity, regardless of those who wrote about her captivity.

Agency is an element that the Duston and Rowlandson captivity narratives both have, but is a similarity and a difference. Although the popularity behind their narratives beg to differ, they each have their own agency. The more obvious example of this comes from Hannah Duston, seeing that the popularity behind her narrative revolves around her choice to kill and scalp her captors. Even within this example, however, it is important to address the accounted thought process behind this choice. As mentioned previously, Duston was unable to write her own narrative, and since her choice to kill and scalp her captors is a climactic moment, identifying how this is written will be easier for comparison when addressing Rowlandson's agency. Duston is motivated to kill her captors due to the fact that one of them killed her infant child; this is already a bold, but justifiable move according to Mather and Whitter. Whittier describes this moment as "involuntary machinery," as if the death of her child put her in a state of shock and she unconsciously decided to kill her captors (349). However, Duston did wait until her captors were asleep that she made the decision to kill them. Once she had killed them and thus was free, according to the Whittier account she was said to have "returned and deliberately scalped her ten victims" (349). His justification for her choice to scalp her captors was done because she believed that she would not receive credit for what had just happened; therefore returning with the scalps would be proof of her decision (349). The

scalping was not guided by the darkness in her heart nor the involuntary machinery, but her need to prove her actions. Despite the accounts of Duston's captivity lacking her voice, she did in fact decide to kill and scalp her captors, which was the decisive moment that sets her experience aside from the rest.

Conversations surrounding Rowlandson's agency are minimal as opposed to literary scholarship discussing the narrative's strong religious theme. This could be due to the fact that much of Rowlandson's legacy portray her as a victim; however, this does not mean she did not exhibit moments of agency. Although her agency maybe not have been as striking (or violent) as Duston's, she does provide detailed moments showing how she navigated within her captivity. Her desire to do this came for many reasons. For example, in her fifth remove Rowlandson states that she was feeling faint because during the first week of being captive she was hardly fed. Her hunger motivates her to ask Weetamo, one of the women amongst her captors, if she could share her meal, which Weetamo refused (80). Hunger motivates her to ask for food quite frequently throughout her narrative, but there were always different reasons for doing so. Each time she asks or begs for something, she does it for justifiable reasons. For example, in the final remove she states she "intreated, begged and perswaded" her captors to allow her to see one of her daughters who was near (Rowlandson 102). With this it is important to acknowledge that she does know her boundaries. As previously mentioned, female captives survived because of their adaptability, therefore Rowlandson's means of adapting were so that she could survive; however, she does not entirely adapt and at times refuses to listen to her

captors or denies giving them what they ask of her. In her thirteenth remove, the maid asked Rowlandson to give her a piece of her apron which she refuses. The maid then threatened to take a piece, and Rowlandson responded by saying, "I told her I would tear her Coat then" (89). As a result, the "Mistriss" begins to hit Rowlandson with a stick, and thus she gives the Maid the apron. Although there is already a stark contrast in agency between both narratives, the fact that Rowlandson was able to write her narrative played a strong role in how she portrays her agency as a captive.

Mary Rowlandson's *Sovereignty and Goodness of God* was one of the first narratives to capture in detail what it was like to be taken captive and live amongst Natives. By given the opportunity to write, Rowlandson takes authority of her voice and writes about her experience and the ways in which she navigates through her captivity. Pauline Turner Strong states that she had personal voice and authority over her experience, unlike Duston (96). Rowlandson provides readers with a unique approach in that she experienced captivity, had time to reflect on it, and then finally wrote it all down to be published. Derounian-Stodola and Levernier describe this as a "dual point of view" in which she was a "participant and commentator" (106). This allowed her to determine how it was that her narrative should be written and what it should contain. Rowlandson writes about her three-month experience as a captive in what she calls "removes" and each of these removes tracks days and moments which she determined were necessary when sharing her experience. Bryce Traister describes her text as a collection of "glimpses, fragments, traces, and echoes" in order to "organize, frame, and manage into a

coherent historical and spiritual text" (121). She also interweaves or references scripture and ties them to various moments in her captivity. Her agency is a key factor in how she portrays herself and her narrative's thus, one can question how much of her narrative truthfully captured what happened when she was a captive. In Duston's case, through the various accounts of her experience, readers can clearly see that there are some moments that are manipulated or emphasized for a range of reasons, thus altering what it is that actually happened. Since Rowlandson has only one narrative and it has not been rewritten, there is not an opportunity for comparison.

Rowlandson's agency has been questioned for various reasons. One of these reasons takes into account the time frame between her release from captivity and the publishing of her narrative. There is a continuous acknowledgement behind the fact that Duston's account was not written first-hand, but even though Rowlandson's narrative was, her captivity as it is written may not be as first-hand as one may think due to the length of time between her release and the publishing of the narrative. It took about six months, and because of this six-month window, various speculations have arisen since this time frame gave her time to process her captivity. One of those speculations surrounds the question of whether there were outside influences that could have manipulated Rowlandson's experience as a captive in the narrative. Derounian-Stodola and Levernier discuss this suspicion regarding her narrative and Increase Mather's possible influence on it. Mather was associated with the Boston press which published her narrative's first edition and he had a role as the narrative's editorialist (98). Increase

Mather was also a Puritan clergyman which leads into the next speculation, the immense amount of biblical references in Rowlandson's narrative. Derounian-Stodola and Levernier also approach this by saying that, "Puritans were steeped in the Bible" and it is not surprising that a woman who was a minister's wife could so heavily reference and associate moments of her captivity with the Bible (99). It is evident that gender has had a large role in the analysis of her narrative, but these speculations show that it also had a role in the writing of the narrative. With these speculations in mind, what is ultimately being questioned is not just Rowlandson's agency, but her faith too, which is one of the most important characteristics that led to her popularity regarding her as a holy woman.

Rowlandson's narrative is one of the first texts ever written by a puritan woman, let alone one which provides in detail the experiences of a captive, but her narrative is most commonly known for its strong religious theme. Literary scholarship written about her captivity primarily revolves around this theme and how it is that her Puritan beliefs are working within her narrative. As seen through the title, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God,* from the beginning she acknowledges God's power and goodness by giving God the utmost credit for her survival. In the narrative itself, religion is incorporated in various ways. One common method of her doing so is when she references or quotes bible verses verbatim in attempts to make connections to her experience. The narrative's heavy amount of biblical references attempts to prove that she is very knowledgeable in her faith. But the most intriguing ways she incorporates her beliefs are when she acknowledges God's providence, accepts God's will or plan, and

finally, when she questions God working during her captivity. All three of these ways work to prove how it is that Rowlandson understands or reflects on her captivity through a puritan lens.

Rowlandson's narrative gives insight into Puritanism, but more specifically, it provides an understanding of how she viewed her experience through this lens. As mentioned earlier, she had an opportunity to reflect on her captivity, and in order to understand what she had experienced, she uses her faith. One of the ways she does this is through acknowledging God's providence. One example of this can be found in her last (twentieth) remove. Rowlandson and Mr. Hoar, the lawyer sent to redeem her, were the only two white Christians amongst the Natives. Rowlandson then questions how it is that they could have easily been knocked on the head by the Natives, but they were not (103). Instead of acknowledging the Natives' choice not to do so, she believes that God was protecting both of them. Rowlandson's frequent references, however, show this the most. It is as if she believed her experience was unlike any other and she was chosen to experience this and be saved. Pamela Lougheed discusses Rowlandson in regard to this by suggesting that if it was her intent to present her narrative alongside her frequent Bible references that the text could be understood as a "prophecy and her own situation as its fulfillment" (295). Her narrative tends to read as if she is like a character of a Bible story who must go through tribulations, but she knows she will prevail. In the beginning, she establishes this by saying, "yet the Lord by his Almighty power preserved a number of us from death, for there were twenty-four of us taken alive and carried captive"

(Rowlandson 70). The word "preserved" is used again in the sixth remove when she is traveling with her captors and realizes that she is the only Christian. Rowlandson says, "and yet how hath the Lord preserved me in safety! Oh the experience that I have had the goodness of God, to me and mine!" (80). It is through the acknowledgement of her experience like that of a prophecy or bible story that she questions how God was working during her captivity and then her acceptance of God's will.

Rowlandson uses her agency for survival but acknowledges that overall, God is all powerful; however, as she attempts to understand her captivity, she does question God quite often. This happens even more so in her last remove. The last remove shows Rowlandson questioning why God gave her captors the upper hand and did not submit them through trial like she experienced. She even applies providence to her questioning by stating, "*the strange providence of God in turning things about when the* Indians *were at the highest, and the* English *at the lowest*" (Rowlandson 106). It is clear that Rowlandson believes God's providence is working even for her captors and at times, may be working in their favor. In one instance she suggests that the Natives could have died of starvation if all of their corn was destroyed. With this Rowlandson was almost in awe that God would "preserve them" as opposed to the English who experienced death and destruction (105). Since Rowlandson was taken captive, it is reasonable for her to be upset and want revenge on her captors; however, she is not the one who wants to be vengeful since her puritan outlook would not make this an option. This is where Rowlandson ultimately puts her trust in God. At one point she states, "but the Lord

requited many of their ill doings, for that *Indian* her master, was hanged afterward in *Boston*" suggesting that God did punish them at times (Rowlandson 102). In the end Rowlandson does truthfully accept God's plan for her redemption, although at times she did want revenge. An example of this comes from one of the captors asking if she was willing to run away to which she replies, "*No*: I was not willing to run away, but desired to wait Gods time, that I might go home quietly, and without fear. And now God hath granted me my desire" (107). Rowlandson's strong faith in God is the ultimate thing she depends on despite her observation and questioning on how God might have been working during her captivity.

Rowlandson's captivity narrative is simultaneously a narrative of redemption and survival. In her narrative, to be redeemed implies that a person was saved from sin or evil. This also suggests that the one needing the redemption caused the sin. This is not the case in Rowlandson's narrative seeing that throughout she states that the sinners are her captors. But the word "redeem" is used in two different contexts. For one, a lawyer by the name of John Hoar was sent to "redeem" Rowlandson, but even then, this is only a part of her redemption since God will fulfill the rest. Near the end of her narrative, Rowlandson makes a statement which implies she could have had a role in her redemption. She states, "though some are ready to say, I speak it for my own credit; *But I speak it in the presence of God, and to His glory*" (Rowlandson 107). It is interesting, but not surprising, that she puts forth God's actions and not hers. As previously mentioned, a captive's ability to adapt (or not) often determined their fate. Because of this, one would

assume that agency had a role in a captive's adaptation. Although Rowlandson may not have had the agency that Duston did, Rowlandson adapts for survival and allows God to be the one to fulfill the promise of redemption. An example of promise is found in the thirteenth remove. She states, "Now that comfortable Scripture presented itself to me, *Isa*. 54. 7. *For a small moment have I forsaken three, but with great mercies will I gather thee*. Thus the Lord carried me along from one time to another, and made good to me this precious promise" (Rowlandson 90). She acknowledges that she had to go through trials, but in a way, she refuses to take credit for her survival, and instead the role of the redeemer is given to God which is Rowlandson's version of a hero.

Conversations surrounding the Duston and Rowlandson's narratives differ quite heavily since scholarship on Rowlandson has primarily focused on her puritan beliefs. Because Duston did not write her narrative, something like religious beliefs could not have been naturally written without Duston writing them herself. At the time of Duston's captivity she was about forty years old, but her conversion to Puritanism did not come till decades afterwards. Though limited, Humphreys does discuss Duston in relation to her religious beliefs, and she explains that Duston did not convert to Puritanism until 1724, about twenty years after her captivity (155). It was not until after Duston's escape from captivity that there is a recorded statement which gives insight into her religious beliefs. She also reflects upon her captivity with this new perspective. She stated, "I am thankful for my captivity, 'twas the comfortablest time that I ever had; in my affliction God made his word comfortable to me" (Derounian-Stodola and Levernier 135). Although this

statement gives readers insight into her religious beliefs, it is still outside of her narrative and years after her captivity, and therefore, only a small element that did not influence Duston's popularity.

Mary Rowlandson's narrative set the expectations for the captivity narrative genre, but Lorrayne Carroll argues that Duston's narrative "transformed the possibilities of the experience in captivity" due to the fact that Duston's violent agency was not seen in female captivity narratives prior to hers (55). It is easy to compare both Duston's and Rowlandson's actions since they differed severely, especially since Duston's legacy is based around her heroic qualities. She rescues herself when she challenges her captors in their weakest moment and comes out victorious. Barbara Cutter states that Duston's heroic acts "did not seem to fit into what we know about the ideals of womanhood in that period," which helped heighten the narrative's popularity (11). Duston did the opposite of what female captivity narratives had done before and Derounian-Stodola and Levernier argue that Duston was a victor (or victrix) because of it. They describe other victrices as those who "took matters into their own hands, made certain choices, and thus exerted some control over their fate" as opposed to the victims who "believed their lives were out of control during, and even after, captivity" (Derounian-Stodola Levernier 132-3). As mentioned earlier, gender is a strong similarity between Duston and Rowlandson, but it worked best in Duston's favor. Her heroic qualities and the reception towards her actions were heightened because she was female. With this, it is important to note that the majority of the Duston narrative accounts were written by males. Mather, Whittier, and

Hawthorne were amongst that group, and many of them used the fact that Duston was a woman in her construction as a hero. Although Duston did exhibit heroic qualities, what accounts like Mather's and Whittier's do is use her gender and her motherhood as a tool to emphasize how these attributes did not prevent her being victorious. Even Duston was said to acknowledge that these womanly attributes would not allow her to receive credit for her bravery. As a result, Duston's actions essentially transformed the captivity narrative genre.

The experiences of Rowlandson and Duston resulted in various forms of celebration. One of the reasons why they are celebrated, especially on the literary level, is that they impacted the captivity narrative genre. Derounian-Stodola and Levernier argue that "physical, intellectual, and spiritual means" are the ways in which female captivity narratives have been transformed over time (Derounian-Stodola and Levernier 133). Rowlandson made a spiritual impact whereas Duston's impact was done on a more physical level. But the transformation of the genre ultimately comes from both women's attempts to outwit their mostly male oppressors. As a result, these risky decisions also broke gender expectations. Both women transgressed what is considered "fit for their gender" and survived because of it. Duston especially does this which intrigued various authors so much so that this then led her narrative to be written over four different times throughout many years. Later, Duston was memorialized through six different statues, many of which still stand today. Rowlandson was also historically memorialized via a commemorative marker in the state of Massachusetts. It is clear that these narratives have

been considered a fundamental not only literature, but historically as well. Their experiences transcended a textual level thus allowing their legacies to live on.

Mary Rowlandson and Hannah Duston leave behind a legacy which can be seen through their continuous popularity in literature. They have also been memorialized through statues and historical markers, but the cause for celebration ignores the fact that these narratives continue perpetuating the marginalization of the natives. Recent literary scholarship discusses how the Rowlandson and Duston narratives do this. Specifically, two prominent native voices and authors, Sherman Alexie and Louise Erdrich, wrote two poems in response to Rowlandson's narrative in which they address how it is that she writes about the relationship between whites and native peoples. An analysis of how native voices have responded to Rowlandson's narrative, or captivity narratives for that matter, could be a project in itself. Although there are reasons to recognize these women like Duston's ability to defend herself or Rowlandson's strong faith, at the core of these narratives, there is a triumph of the white captives over non-white captors which maintained this ethnic divide.

CHAPTER III

THE CRAFTING OF A MASKE

John Milton wrote *A Maske Presented at Ludlow Castle* in 1634 in honor of John Egerton being commissioned by the King to serve as president of the Grand Council (Demaray 98) and it was celebrated in the Great Hall at Ludlow. Samuel Johnson criticizes the content of Milton's masque which was said to "set the tone for much of the critical commentary on *Comus* that has followed. That criticism is characterized by a heightened desire to prove *Comus* either deficient or commendable; a confusion concerning the genre of *Comus*…" (Demaray 2). Despite the criticism Milton received on *A Maske*, while the masque's genre is important, it was more significant for Milton to successfully not bring up the scandal that had plagued the family a few years earlier than it was for him to create a masque that was entirely true to form. Although the Bridgewater family made a few changes to its content, there were a couple of features they had to keep in order to maintain the masque form. Because of this, some of the content may include subtle hints of the scandal within it, specifically through the woods scene which contains the interaction between Comus, the villain of the story, and the Lady. Since the family did not recognize it within the masque, then *A Maske* was successful in completing its purpose.

First, readers need to understand how Milton came about writing the masque. An important element which led to the creation of a masque was that the person who was going to be writing the piece had to be commissioned upon the family's request. There are various ways Milton could have possibly been approached to write *A Maske*. At this point in his life, he was not very well known as a writer, let alone as a masque writer, but his association with the upper class was one of the few ways that led Milton to write for the Bridgewater family. In 1634, what is known about Milton was his association with King Charles. King Charles was in charge of both the Church and the body politic (Hunter, Jr. 12) where the Derbys and the Bridgewater family were major names. Milton was frequently associated with prominent people, but he may have been brought to their attention through a poem he wrote in commemoration of the Marchioness of Winchester (Hunter, Jr. 12). The most reasonable connection, however, which led Milton to be chosen for the task was through Henry Lawes. Hunter Jr. states it was Lawes who considerably "provided the liaison between the Egerton family and Milton" (4). Lawes was involved with the Bridgewaters through teaching their children music; the same children who later participated in *A Maske*. Milton and Lawes previously worked on *Arcades* together and being that a feature of a masque is to include music, Milton was asked to collaborate with Lawes in order to create *A Maske* in honor John Egerton, the Earl of Bridgewater.

Previous to *A Maske,* Milton wrote *Arcades* in 1632, a piece that was significantly smaller and was his first experience with the masque genre. The piece was easily linked

with the scandal because of the close time frame in which one proceeded the other. The Bridgewater family's request for *A Maske* was said to be solely for the celebration and not a reaction towards hiding the scandal whereas *Arcades* was but it also served another purpose. The purpose of *Arcades* was to celebrate the Countess Dowager of Derby who was the mother of both Lady Anne and Egerton's wife. It honored the elderly woman who "apparently felt the brunt of shame" (Mundhenk 143) because the scandal plagued the family name. While Egerton's wife and other family members planned the masque in the Countess' honor (Mundhenk 143), there is an unmissable purpose to this piece that could mirror the speculated purpose of *A Maske*. Both pieces were written for the same extended family but one purpose was more directly meant to be a distraction from the scandal and the other more indirect. Regardless of how further removed *A Maske* was to the scandal, *Arcades* is sometimes considered its precursor. Being that *Arcades* was Milton's first masque, Lewalski believes it was his "first opportunity to present a reformed genre to the public audience (28). Milton was not ill-equipped to write the masque, comparing *Arcades* to *A Maske*, *Arcades*' form received more of a positive reception. "Critics have cited no entertainment as having been written precisely as was "Arcades"" (Demaray 50). *A Maske* is a significantly larger text than *Arcades* which gave Milton the opportunity to experiment. "*Comus* took many more risks than *Arcades*. That a censor, rightly or wrongly, through the decorum defective in parts, that Milton himself may have wished himself freer of the constraints of actual occasion…" (Brown 156).

Arcades' concerns were said to be much more minor, although it was in closer proximity to the scandal.

The scandal took place in 1631, about three years before *A Maske* with the trial of Mervin Touchet. Touchet's relationship with the Egerton's was that "Egerton's sister-in-law, his wife's sister, Lady Anne married Touchet, the Second Earl of Castlehaven" (Mundhenk 142). Touchet was charged with two crimes. "Castlehaven committed sodomy with several of his servants, he helped one of them to rape his wife the Countess and another to sleep with his adolescent daughter-in-law" (Herrup 1). Brown argues the possibility of there being no *Arcades* if the scandal had not taken place (20) which shows the significant role it had in its creation. This then would have caused *A Maske* to not be written either. Castlehaven's actions caused a great deal of recoil even after his trial was over. Castlehaven represented his household therefore any sort of immoral decision lingered and damaged the family name. For the early modern English, "the family and its head could be conflated to a single entity: Castlehaven was his household…" (Herrup 17). Unfortunately, Egerton's celebration was delayed because of the trial, allowing the inevitable connection between celebration and its possible purpose of covering the scandal.

John Egerton was supposed to be commissioned in 1631 but was postponed due to the attention the scandal regarding Touchet. Most scandals, especially those in the aristocracy, are difficult to ignore. Therefore, Milton was bound to be restricted in terms

of the content since the Bridgewater family did not need anyone bringing up the scandal while they celebrated their occasion. With such high stakes, the hosts of the masque took it upon themselves to monitor its content. On the surface, *A Maske* is solely considered Milton's piece, there are multiple manuscripts showing signs of alterations made either by Milton or the family. There is the Trinity manuscript which has received the most attention and is considered of higher authority (Steven 315). Less authentic than the Trinity manuscript was the Bridgewater version which was said to have been written by an unknown hand, though there is evidence which suggests the "zealousness and stringency of Milton's texts were modified by the organisers in the interests of more conventional social decorum in a celebratory situation" (Brown 2). Knowing the significance of the event, in order to maintain the interest of having orderliness in honor of Egerton, the Bridgewater family did not hesitate to make changes to Milton's text.

Historically, a masque was known to have an emphasis on orderliness and exclusivity. It was an aristocratic form of court drama entertainment for the upper class. The audience of the event had to have been given an invitation in order to attend. "The masque genre more than any other depended for its perpetuation upon the existence of a hierarchically structured society governed by a king under theories of divine right" (Demaray 7). Since the form no longer exists, current scholars have had a difficult time critiquing *A Maske* fairly because of the masque's dependence on the upper class. During the relevancy of the masque form, Milton's attention to detail was prevalent in satisfying the Bridgewater family's social status. There are various examples of the language used

to separate social class such as thou/thine/thee for addressing lower social class and you/yours for addressing equals or superiors (Hunter, Jr. 7). Not only does this pertain to the social status of the event, but they are also proper features of a masque. Milton successfully incorporated the social ranks of the masque form and the Bridgewater family. While he is deserving of acclaim on achieving these conventions, the family's decision to take it upon themselves to make alterations to the text and possibly risk making changes to the form, is worthy to keep in mind.

In attempts to avoid possible traces that could revert to the scandal, there were some changes to its content which had included sexual themes. It is possible that through these alterations, the family intended the masque for multiple purposes. A scholar by the name of Cedric Brown speculates about the idea of censorship within the Bridgewater manuscript because of the concerns towards the Lady involved in a conversation of her sexual fears (175). Even Brown cannot help but mention a possible purpose of the masque in regards to the scandal, however, he does emphasize in his belief that it is only speculation. Milton and the family were aware of the possibility that the passages of sexual explicitness (177) stated by the Lady could have hinted towards the scandal, therefore decided to remove them. Although the Bridgewater family did not shy away from the possibility of censorship in attempts to prevent the scandal from surfacing in the masque, there were aspects they needed to keep regardless if some remembrance could occur.

Within a masque, there are certain characteristics it must entail in order to maintain its form as close as possible. *A Maske* was divided into three scene changes, the middle being the crucial moment of the piece where Comus and the Lady have their interaction. As much of a hand Milton allowed the Bridgewater family to have while writing this piece, the anti-masque had to be kept close to its conventions. The main action happens in this portion of the masque where the Lady is lost and is seeking for an opportunity back on the path to her brothers and her father's castle. The signs of an anti-masque begin with the description of "carnivalesque figures" (Shellenberger 54) which are shown through Comus' entrance into the piece as he is followed by his rowdy crew. The Lady, in all her naivety, faces the challenges of going through Comus' disruption. In order to please the family but also satisfy the masque form, it is in this scene where the family had to step back without worrying about the scandal surfacing and thus could have led to the inclusion of subtle hints of the scandal while being concealed under the necessary anti-masque.

In Milton's efforts to present the masque form, *A Maske* successfully included the simplest characteristics as far as its context. John Creaser indicates masques are "essentially an occasional form which integrates fiction and reality by imitating the current life of the specific community…" (122). Since masques were particular to each event, they were rarely ever performed more than once. Therefore, the aspects within the masque that mirrored the real-life event and its family were integrated and could be specifically pinpointed. The integration of the occasion within *A Maske* begins with the

introduction of the Attendant Spirit. The Attendant Spirit is the first character introduced overall. He is dressed as a shepherd and serves as a guardian angel sent to guide the lost children towards their father's castle where there is a celebration being held in his honor. The introduction shows the reflection between the celebration of Egerton while also presenting the purpose of the Attendant Spirit. Having good intentions, he forewarns the audience that there are children that need to be steered away from trouble. The connection between fiction and reality is expanded by the use of the audience where the "leading performers are drawn" (Creaser 122) which is the use of the Bridgewater children in the piece.

The Attendant Spirit has the important task of describing the dangers that lie in the woods. He gives extensive detail of Comus and his background while warning about the anti-masque. The Lady and her brothers were on their way to their father's celebration but the brothers went off to find sustenance. The woods' "perplex't paths" (27) caused the brothers to become lost and thus the Lady was left alone to wander. According to the Attendant Spirit, the children are too young to recognize the ominousness of the woods because their "tender age might suffer perill" (40) thus making them the perfect target. The children are not aware of these signs of evil due to their lack of experience which causes them to make the unreasonable choice of deeming the Lady capable of being left alone. The additional details of the woods such as the "thick shelter of black shades" (62) is continuing to hint at the danger the Lady is going to run into. The

"shelter of black shades" will not protect the children but instead creates shelter for Comus' sins and villainous things to occur and allows the evil to go unnoticed.

The anti-masque begins when the Lady becomes desperate for help after she is unable to reunite with her brothers. As she is attempting to find her way, she is enticed by the noises in the forest and follows them in hopes of finding help. She describes the noises as being her "best guide" (171) while describing them as "sound of riot, and ill-manag'd Merriment" (172). The Lady is not enticed because she desires to be associated with them but because she is desperate for help. Despite her description of the noises, she is unable to understand or recognize them as signs of possible danger. What she is hearing came from Comus and his rowdy group of "monsters headed like sundry sorts of wilde Beasts". The stage directions describe Comus' entrance with him holding a charming rod in one hand and his glass in the other and his crew is wearing glistering apparel and making the "riotus and unruly noise". Comus himself is enticed through the senses by feeling "som chast footing neer about his ground" (146) which is reference to the Lady's footsteps. He describes his ability to sense she is "chast" through her footsteps as an "art". This suggests that he has used his senses for the same purpose multiple times. The various senses between the Lady and Comus are part of the disruption of order, allowing the audience to be allured themselves and observe the most disorderly portion of the piece. Similar to the attention scandals receive, one cannot help but want to see it unfold.

Although a young Milton had little experience in writing a performance piece, he effectively used all the other components of the masque to move away from any possible connections to the scandal. The woods scene, however, has the opportunity to have themes relating to the scandal but being able to justify them as conventions of an anti-masque. The woods scene is the most impactful to the plot but also gave Milton the opportunity to relinquish the content like Comus has the ability to attempt whatever he can in order to entice the Lady. According to Comus, sin is only sin when it happens in light where everything is visible but if done at night, it is easier to not be responsible for the actions that take place. His belief of sin's visibility displays enticing elements of nighttime in order to present that it is a less controlled setting. There are many forms of the word 'darkness' used to describe the woods such as "drear" (37), "shady" (37), and "dusky" (99). These adjectives allow emphasis on Comus' use of the night and his relationship with sin. "Midnight shout, and revelry, Tipsie dance and Jollity" (103-4) describe the festivities they are enjoying and even "rigor now is gone to bed, and advice with scrupulous head" (107-8), suggesting that there is nothing stopping what can ensue at night. Later, Comus questions "What hath night to do with sleep?" (122) and responds with "night hath better sweets to prove" (123). These sweets are the sins that night hides unlike in daylight where "onely day-light that makes Sin" (126). Milton believed himself to be a poet-prophet rather than a dramatist, but like Comus boasts about his own art, Milton showed he was a master of his own craft through language used to describe the woods. The dialogue suggests "vividly just how Milton was able to visualize in advance

an actual performance and to control it to text" (Hunter, Jr. 52) which is deserving of some praise.

The language that Milton uses while the Lady is reacting to the different events in the woods illustrates the Bridgewater family's use of the masque. In both instances, the Lady and the family are tricking themselves into thinking they have complete control over distinguishing or preventing bad from happening. Comus uses his own language in order to deceive the Lady which refers back to him being a master of his craft. The Lady hears the riotous sounds but continues to follow her "unacquainted feet in the blind mazes of this tang'd wood" (180-1) and fantasies began to throng into her "memory of calling shapes and beckning shadows dire" (206-7), expressing that only in her thoughts it is possible she could imagine horrible things. The Lady is naïve enough to believe there is nothing in the woods that could harm her and even describes them as hospitable (187). She believes that she has the ability to distinguish moral good and this will be enough comfort in her time of need. She talks herself through the dark fantasies by believing that although they are startling, the virtuous mind "that ever walks attended by a strong siding champion Conscience" (210-2). Before she encountered Comus, her despair began to subside through her words leading her to temporary comfort. He can only achieve this, however, through the use of a disguise.

Comus disguised himself as a shepherd creating the illusion that he is able to guide any lost traveler. When the Lady encounters him, she immediately refers to him as

"shepherd" (271) falling for his physical deception. She openly expressed her vulnerability by answering all of his questions during their conversation. Comus questions why she was left alone by asking "by falshood, or discourtesie, or why?" (281) to which the Lady responds that her brothers went off to find a spring of water so the reason behind leaving her is justified. Comus continues to question and point out the fact that her brothers left her "unguarded" (283), but she defends her brothers by responding with "they were but twain, and purpos'd quick return" (284). Now she has come to the conclusion through Comus' conversation that her brothers may not return as fast as she believed. She finally recognizes her misfortune. Prior to this conversation, she had talked herself into not letting the dark thoughts consume her mind but since she has finally found someone in the woods that could help her, she is able to see the situation she is in. Comus then proceeds to tempt her with the knowledge he says he has about her brothers. "Two such I saw…I saw them under a green mantling vine…" (291, 294). This entices the Lady and describes his feet as "well-practiz'd" (310). Comus then asserts that he knows "each lane, and every alley green, dingle or bushy dell of this wilde Wood…" (311-2) which leads her to fall under his temptation by taking his word and trusting him.

Comus, similar to Milton and the creation of the masque, uses the woods as a stage for his own version of performance. Comus is a kind of court masquer enacting "dazling Spells" and marvelous spectacles, but they only "cheat the eye with blear illusion" (A Mask, 154-5) (Lewalski 29) which results in the anti-masque. Milton had the scene changes necessary to create a successful presentation but its effectiveness comes

through in this scene. Comus' intentions were for the darkness and sin of the woods and the spectacle of his rowdy crew and their glistering apparel to tempt the Lady, however, these things worked in a different way. What fundamentally causes the Lady to fall under his temptation was him enticing her with the knowledge and assistance she was looking for. He had a particular intention with the tactics he used but her being tempted happened through seeking a way to her father's castle, not because she was allured to the sinful things within the darkness of the woods. Likewise, in order to meet the needs of the Bridgewater family, they sought out the masque for the event but it managed to accomplish diverting attention from the scandal as well. The poetic language of the masque surpassed the need of meeting the conventions of the genre because it ultimately accomplished what the Bridgewater family wanted.

Performance relies on stage design, effects, or costume changes to work with the language of the piece in order to be successful. The language is a crucial part in appealing to emotion or creating an effect on the audience. Milton's inexperience in working the techniques of a masque did not overpower his ability to design a vivid image of Comus' woods through his poetic language. Like Comus, Milton used enticing descriptions of the woods to lure in the audience, so ultimately the dialogue of the masque had a great effect. The Lady fell to Comus for different reasons but without the spectacle of the monstrous crew, their riotous noise, and Comus' argument for sin and darkness, she would have not been motivated to find help. Later, she believes that Comus has the information she wants which shows the multiple aspects of the masque working together. Comus had the

guidance she wanted but unlike his bad intentions, Milton gave the family the masque they wanted while using poetic language and following the conventions as close as possible in order to give them a happy ending. By the end of *A Mask,* the Lady realizes Comus is a villain but the Bridgewater family never seemed to recognized the themes that could have possibly reverted to the scandal, therefore, the anti-masque also accomplished its purpose.

Many scholars have studied and searched the possible reasons of the various names the masque has been referred to. Originally, the title of *A Maske* was significantly longer and was more specific to the actual event even including John Earl of Bridgewater's name. Other moments of experimentation are shown through the spelling of the word 'masque' such as "maske" or "mask" instead of the typical spelling. There are many possibilities for Milton's choice in experimenting with the title. By using the two different spellings, it can be said "that Milton probably erred when he called his work *A Maske*…" (Demaray 8). The multiple spellings could have been an attempt to steer away from negative criticism if the piece was said not to achieve the entirety of the masque conventions. It is said that "critics have had difficulty fitting the work into the genre suggests that his familiarity was not profound" (Hunter, Jr. 52). Despite Milton's attempts and the family's supervision of the text, he expected his audience "would approach his text more as poetry on the page than as stage action and so reduced them to the barest minimum when the play appeared in print" (Hunter, Jr. 49). This puts an

emphasis on his language. Milton was able to successfully portray his skill of writing poetry which allowed the attention of the family scandal to be largely diverted.

Out of the many ways the word 'masque' has been spelled, the most frequently used title to refer to the masque is *Comus*. The masque has been preserved through the shortened title which places focus on the villain of the piece instead of its protagonists like the Lady or her rescuer, Sabrina. The lasting effects Comus has had on the piece are represented through the constant use of his name as the title. His actions were the most memorable, most enticing, and were difficult to turn away from. In the opening of the masque, the Attendant Spirit first addresses his knowledge of Comus' notoriety. The connections between the scandal that can be made through the anti-masque allows Comus' legacy to be similar to Castlehaven's choices which left a permanent effect on the Bridgewater family. As much as they wanted to use the masque for the celebration, the lingering effects of the scandal are also represented through the title of *Comus*. As the masque ends, Comus is left uncaptured and leaves the possibility of him continuing to use the forest to lure the wandering traveler. "At the end of the masque evil remains, the dark wood is still dangerous to pass through, and Comus is neither conquered, nor transformed, nor reconciled" (Lewalski 29). The Lady was rescued but it does not change anything about Comus. Unfortunately for the Bridgewater family, though a significant amount of time has gone by, the family's history cannot be erased. Scholars who study *A Maske* will continue to come across the scandal and like the Lady's encounter with Comus, the family is forced to live with this unfortunate past.

CHAPTER IV

PERFORMING GENDERS THROUGH DESCRIPTIVE MALES:

WHITMAN'S "SONG OF MYSELF: SECTION 11" AND SWINBURNE'S "ANACTORIA"

Since the nineteenth century, Walt Whitman and Algernon Charles Swinburne have always been considered counterparts even within their individual literary movements. Their poetic pieces encompass a wide variety of topics such as the descriptions of the bodies of men and women, the fluidity of identity, and homosexuality. In order to take this comparison a step further, Judith Butler's theory of performative acts can be applied to their texts; Whitman's "Song of Myself: Section 11" and Swinburne's "Anactoria". In Butler's essay, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution", she argues that gender is not a stable identity but instead is something that is created over time through a "stylized repetition of acts" (519). Through this repetition, gender begins to form through the stylization of body movements, gestures, and materialization that is allowed to bear meaning. By identifying how both poets form gender in these pieces through the repetition of images, fluidity of speaker's gender, and applying gender distinctions allows the reader to view the text through various perspectives. Within these pieces, both poets write about female subjects and their interaction with other men and women, all while Whitman and Swinburne are male.

Both poets knew of each other's works and popularity, and a few times each wrote about or for each other. Their comparison of poetic works seems unlikely at first especially when imaging each of their characters based off how they wrote about their topics. Some of these comparisons were unique like the one that Harold Bloom mentions in his book *The Pre-Raphaelite Poets*. Bloom identifies an interesting shared characteristic between both men; Swinburne was obsessed with the sea and after making this statement, Bloom in parenthesis mentions that Whitman also had the same obsessions for "psychic reasons" (5). But it is their own identities, which arguably do appear within some of their poetry such as Swinburne's frequent descriptions of the body through a sadomasochist lens, that this comparison becomes seems less evident but just as interesting.

As mentioned previously, there has been a continuous association between both Whitman and Swinburne. Their themes had some similarities although their lives and poetic talent varied. Swinburne wrote poetry during the Victorian era and he was described as having a reputation as a decadent poet. He was a known atheist and sexually obsessed with sadomasochism who struggled with an excessive drinking habit and was said to have lived an unhappy life. Across seas, Walt Whitman wrote during the transcendentalist and realist movement which resulted in him being one of the best American poets for his time and still today. One of his most well-known works was his poetry collection book *Leaves of Grass* which contained the poem "Song of Myself". It is through "Song of Myself" that Whitman gained some criticism for his sexual or erotic

themes, themes of which were also found within Swinburne's own poetry collection book titled *Poems and Ballads*. Both collections encompassed various themes yet were similar in the sense that that they both discussed sexuality, specifically homosexuality. It was within each of their poetry collection books that they contained "Song of Myself" and "Anactoria" both of which they became notable for.

The first section of Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself" sets the tone for the rest of the poem by encompassing various descriptions of the body. The first line of the poem begins with a speaker, which is seemingly Whitman, celebrating himself. Although sounding haughty from the beginning, the poem continues and addresses an unknown "you", giving the reader an opportunity to be a part of the poem. "I celebrate myself, and sing myself, and what I assume you shall assume, For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you" (lines 1-3, 26). Whitman's choice to use "atom" in order to describe and unify himself with the reader is an almost scientific-like approach as he is getting down to the core of what the body is made of. As the first section continues, elements of the body such as the tongue, blood, and even the souls are discussed. It is within the first section that the speaker reveals that they are thirty-seven years old, and since they reveal this and Whitman was also thirty-seven at the time of the first release of poem it is almost unavoidable to attach Whitman to the speaker of the fifty-two sectioned poem. Since the reader has the opportunity to associate the speaker of the poem with Whitman, approaching each section with this in mind can lead to various interpretations.

Section 11 of "Song of Myself" has led Michael Moon to become one of the most frequently referred to scholars when it comes to discussing the interpretation of this section of the poem. His article, "The Twenty-Ninth Bather: Identity, Fluidity, Gender, and Sexuality in Section 11 of "Song of Myself", explores identity, sexuality, and the fluidity of gender in order to question how Whitman portrays bodies in this section. Moon mentions that readers have addressed that the purpose of section 11 was written to be Whitman's opportunity to explore his gender and sexuality through the lens of a woman. Through the popularity of Moon's argument, it is noticeable that there are other scholars who support this claim. One scholar, Robert K. Martin, suggests that Whitman's life was filled pressures of "sexual conformity" and this lead to his need to act out a role or "to hide behind the mask of the "tough" (7). Because of this, Moon clarifies that in this section, readers should move away from applying the possible homosexual themes found in the entire poem, and instead they should understand this section through the "economies of gender, age, general sexual epistemology, and socioeconomic class" (859). With this, Butler's theory of performative acts can be applied in order to understand the layers of the portrayal of the bodies in these two poems.

One thing worth mentioning when reading the entirety of "Song of Myself" is discussing the homosexual themes that have been addressed throughout scholarly work over Whitman's "Song of Myself". Martin makes it a point to understand the use of the word "homosexuality" in regards to Whitman. Martin states "while it is possible (although, I think, unlikely) that Whitman never actually engaged in genital sex with

another man, it is at the same time certain that he was fully and consciously aware of himself as homosexual…" (90). Readers should not entirely discard Whitman's sexual orientation from the text but should acknowledge this possibility when he is describing performative acts in "Song of Myself" especially in section 11. Similar has been said about Swinburne and how it is that readers should approach the homosexual theme found in his poetry. In Debrah Lutz's *Pleasure Bound*, she mentions that Swinburne was a sexual radical (69), a persona not only found in public but also found in his poetry. As Lutz mentions, the truth of the matter was that "Swinburne did enjoy the "vice" of sexual flagellation and definitely expressed homosexual impulses- whether or not he acted on them is unknown" (69). Both poets are performing homosexuality in "Song of Myself" and "Anactoria" despite, based on these statements, not having a performative homosexual experience.

Section 11 is found within the lengthier piece and it primarily focuses on a speaker who is observing a "womanly life" (line 201) peeking through a window at a group of twenty-eight men. This womanly life (who is later defined as a lady) is said to own a house that sits along the shore where these young men are partaking in a communal or a friendly bathing. She is described as a twenty-eight-year-old who is lonesome thus taking a moment to peer at the friendliness amongst the group of men. Through the speaker's observation, the described "womanly life" is performing acts which later leads to the speaker addressing her as the "lady" (line 206). The speaker's gender is not defined since their act of observation is not associated nor distinctive of a

particular gender. It is through this section where Moon argues that many readers assume that Whitman is the speaker, especially since at the beginning of "Song of Myself" the age of the speaker is revealed which coincides with the same age Whitman was when he wrote the poem. Moon argues against this belief and suggest that those who attempt to analyze the poem should identify Whitman's ability to represent identity and fluidity (865) as suggested by the title of his article.

Before the lady is described as a "lady", she is presented as rich, who owns a "fine house" (line 202) and thus her gender is defined by her socioeconomic status. "She hides handsome and richly drest" (line 203); here are two separations made between her and the young men. For one, her actions are limited by her status. Since she hides "handsome", she is set by specific standards of courtesy, adding to her need to hide in possible fear of being disapproved of. There is performativity in the characteristics that make her live a "womanly life" but she is not a woman, instead she is a lady which is preceded by her description of being rich and handsome. When the speaker asks "Where are you off to, lady?" (line 206), he is not actually speaking to her but stressing the separation he has with her especially after the speaker states that he "sees" her. The lady's body does not physically move since the speaker, after stating that he "sees" her, says "You splash in the water there, yet stay stock still in your room" (line 206) sensing that it is more like a desire to be amongst the young men that transcends her still position. Since she was previously described as handsome, her body must continue to perform her gender and socioeconomic identity. It may be important to note that "handsome" is

usually a term used to describe a man who is good-looking or attractive but when it is used to describe a lady, the term is more used to describe her as elegant or dignified. The latter definition is used in section 11 since the men are never described using that word.

Niall Richardson and Adam Lock's *Body Studies* discusses that one of the many distinctions made between the male and female body is that male bodies are "appraised in terms of what it can do rather than how it looks" (41). This distinction follows Butler's theory of performative acts and gender constitution since the actions of the twenty-eight young men are described differently when compared to that of the lady in the poem. This adds another layer in understanding the gender differences in the section, thus separating the lady from the men even further. The imaginary barrier between her and the men is yet again strengthened by her described "handsome" body, one which is expected to act like she does in the poem; observant from afar with an underlying fear of getting caught while peeking. At the start of section 11, the first two lines emphasizes the number of male bodies "Twenty-eight young men" (line 199-200). It is obvious that the number of male bodies is higher than the one womanly body and they are set amongst each other with no boundaries like the window or the walls of the woman's home. "Twenty-eight young men bathe by the shore, Twenty-eight young men and all so friendly" (199-200). The fluidity of the relationship of the men can also be perceived as with smooth elegance or gracefulness, a description that was also used to characterize the woman, except the term used towards her was "handsome" (line 203). The woman's handsomeness is counteracted with her loneliness; thus, her body is unable to flow easily or freely. Her

body cannot move amongst the men thus she is unable to perform their male gender through the speaker's description of her.

The speaker of section 11 seemingly understands or suggests what characteristics or desires the woman, or lady, would find the most appealing within the group of men. The speaker asks "Which of the young men does she like the best? (line 204) and then proceeded to respond with the word "Ah" as if the speaker took a moment themselves to seek which man from the group may suit her desires the best. "Ah the homeliest of them is beautiful to her" (line 205). Up to this point in this section, the men have been contained within their collective group, but the speaker singles out one of the males that may be best suited for the lady. The one chosen male is described as homeliest, a word that can also be understood as humble, ordinary or simple. Then he is also described as beautiful, a term frequently used when describing women. In this instance, women have been most commonly associated with a set of characteristics that includes the word "beautiful". This has been a result of the repetitiveness of the gender performing beautifulness thus this term will continue to be associated with this specific group. Butler would argue that it is what males or females choose to perform repetitively that determines that the choose to perform. Therefore, because males are being described as "beautiful", it does not mean that they are not male.

The lady's age is yet another characteristic that is emphasized through the group of young men. In the first two lines of the section, the poem repeats "twenty-eight" twice

in order to place significance in the number of men in the group. The lady is singular, as seen through her loneliness in the line 201, but she is said to be performing "twenty-eight years of womanly life". When the men are described they are always accompanied by adjective "young" and they perform their youngness through their friendliness and bathing. It is not until the speaker attempts to observe or seek out one of the men for the woman that the "homeliest" or "beautiful" is figuratively removed the from group. The friendliness of the young men is a fluid action and not contained by any restraint like those the women finds herself in. Her loneliness only requires one person and if she were to physically walk towards the bathing men and join them, then she would be the twenty-ninth bather. In line 208 the twenty-ninth bather is said to come along and in the following line, she is not addressed by the young men, but instead continues to watch them.

Swinburne's "Anactoria" is less observant than section 11 of Whitman's "Song of Myself" but instead it is more expressive and descriptive. This is done in order to emphasize the performativity of Swinburne's own beliefs and desires through sexuality and women. According to Debrah Lutz, early in Swinburne's life, he understood that the power or control found in relationships is through sexuality. Swinburne's understanding of this power or authority is seen in his poetry, especially through his descriptions of women. Lutz also states that he believed that men had the majority of the control and thus, women very little. She describes the presentation of this belief through his poetry as "boldly apparent by inverting it: giving the women in his writing an extravagance of

physical, sensual control, knowledge, and at times, anger" (Lutz 93). Swinburne's choice to invert or reverse the power of men to women presented an opportunity for him to perform sexual authority through a female perspective. In order to successfully perform this, he had to have understood this sexual authority. When he wrote about women, they were described as dangerous with much pride, and Lutz argues that these characteristics interconnected with his own characteristics while he also "identified closely with female rebels, especially lesbians" (95). This strengthened Swinburne's opportunity to successfully portray the power relationships through sexuality, all of which is found in his poem "Anactoria" thus he is performing his own gender of male as he defines it and is therefore represented through the poem.

Swinburne's sexual radicalness is written through the female characters of his poems. His understanding of his own desires, sexuality, and experience of sexual acts worked alongside his attempts to best portray his understanding of homosexuality among two female lovers in his poem "Anactoria". Although Swinburne was said to never experience homosexual acts, his sexual acts with women fueled his ability to write this poem. The title of his poem, "Anactoria", originates from a fragment of Sappho's poetry which indicated Anactoria as one of Sappho's lovers. Swinburne took this fragment and wrote a poem portraying Sappho as jealous towards Anactoria, who cheated on Sappho with a man. This poem begins with Swinburne situating himself in the position of Sappho, the speaker of the poem, and says "My life is bitter with they love" (line 1). The reader's association that Swinburne is working as the speaker through Sappho is

understood as the poem continues when the descriptions are considerably fleshy, carnal, and physical.

Anactoria's betrayal has physically hurt Sappho, and as Sappho speaks during the first fifty lines of the poem, her anger concerning Anactoria is described towards both of their bodies. The first three lines state "…thy sharp sighs divide my flesh and spirit with soft sound" (lines 2-3). Although seemingly a non-threatening motion and not an action that is physically acted upon another body, these sharp sighs have passed through Sappho. These actions then escalate in line 4 when she says "my blood strengthens, and my veins abound". From these few lines, Sappho is seemingly expressing her emotions by making them physical like the cheating Anactoria committed with a man. She attempts to do this in order to equate the cheating to a physical pain which is accompanied by an abstract description or image of blood strengthening which makes her veins full.

None of the body parts mentioned or the actions described are associated to a male or female body, but instead their use can indicate a couple of things. For one, since Swinburne is the author of the poem and is standing in the text through the speaker Sappho, he could be expressing his desires because of his sexual experience. Even through this possibility, Swinburne is acknowledging that the body or the actions within the poem used to express Sappho's jealousy, and these sexual descriptions are not particular to one gender but can be enacted or performed by either. The purpose of the

aggressive actions on the body is that they are used to dramatize Sappho's anger. For example, lines 11-12 state "my pain pains thee, and lips bruise lips, and vein sting vein" and they suggest that the pain Sappho is experiencing hopes to be inflicted upon the intended "thee". Robert A. Greenberg offers an explanation for Swinburne's purpose in portraying Sappho as he believes she needs to be represented. He says that Swinburne "strives to express and dramatically represent Sappho at a moment of loss and pain. But the significant difference is that her object, and accordingly her tone, have changed, a changed reflected…in the expressive flow" (80). What Sappho has ultimately lost is not just her lover, but also the ability to control Anactoria. When pain is inflicted upon someone, the person inflicting the pain has power, but when the roles are reversed then the one who had the power has it taken away. Swinburne's sadomasochist lens through Sappho's loss of control after being cheated on by Anactoria. Sappho is inflicted with an emotional pain that also causes her physical pain of which she would like to express onto Anactoria's body.

Swinburne's sadomasochist desires are not directly depicted into the poem. The pain that Sappho is expressing is not one that she asked to receive for pleasure. Instead the descriptions of pain, such as bite, bruise, burn etc., are used to express emotional pain in a physical or visual form. The description of its physicality causes this pain to become visual seeing that it cannot be contained therefore it must appear through the body. Therefore, Sappho's emotions are expressed and performed in the poem through various ways. Lines 25- 26 state "I would my love could kill thee; I am satiated with seeing thee

live, and fain would thee dead". Anactoria's actions leave Sappho hoping in Anactoria's death and she would even be glad if she died. Sappho's response to Anactoria's cheating may seem excessive yet the descriptions continue. In lines 27 to 30, they say "I would find grievous ways to have thee slain, intense device, and superflux of pain; vex thee with amorous agonies, and shake life at thy lips, and leave it there to ache" (lines 27-30). Yet again Sappho states that she has had enough of her and this should result in her death that may be brought upon with "amorous agonies" or a sort of sexual pain. Like in Whitman's "Song of Myself: Section 11", the ability to detach Swinburne from the speaker, or Sappho, in "Anactoria" is something that readers should be wary of but because Swinburne was known as a sadomasochist, the fleshy descriptions throughout the poem help bind his performance through Sappho. Swinburne performs his sexual desires through Sappho in order to invert the control from a man to a woman even though he is ultimately the one writing and expressing his desires through his poem.

The images associated with taste or appetite in the poem represent some of the most sexual elements and it is finally when these images appear that they begin to intertwine with the other physical elements to which Swinburne has been frequently criticized over. Lines 109 to 114 present a series of images of the body and the actions that are done with or onto them. The lines state "That with my tongue I felt them, and could taste the faint flakes from thy bosom to waist! That I could drink thy veins as wine, and eat thy breast like honey! That from face to feet thy body were abolished and consumed and in my flesh thy very flesh entombed" (109-114). Up until this point in the

poem, pain has been expressed more through Sappho's anger then resulting in a physical pain that she wants to cause onto Anactoria. The tongue, bosom, and waist are used to heighten the erotic elements necessary or even expected in a poem within a lesbian poem, despite the majority of it encompassing an expressive Sappho.

When reading Whitman's "Song of Myself" or Swinburne's "Anactoria", it is difficult to disassociate the poet's own personal desires or characteristics from their writings especially at the level of popularity that has surrounded these poems. At times, the poets themselves are performing their own identities through the speakers of their poems but regardless, the poet's understanding of themselves and how it is that they choose to perform their genders determines how they go about presenting or applying these distinctions in their texts. Both Whitman and Swinburne, who have identified themselves as males, homosexual, and poets, had the ability to address the fluidity of gender through the descriptions of their female character counterparts and through this, they were able to blend gender lies and enhance multiple reading interpretations of their poems.

CHAPTER V

SO, YOU BELIEVE YOU'RE BEING WATCHED?

THE LASTING EFFECTS OF SURVEILLANCE

George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* demonstrates that surveillance is successful if those being surveilled do not find it abnormal. For Winston Smith, the novel's main character, surveillance has yet to be normalized as he represents what seems like the only citizen of Oceania suffering to find control within himself while also trying to seek self-expression in a utopia that does not allow either. Winston's challenge is to avoid creating abnormalities that may be considered a crime while attempting to express himself. This essay will recognize the effects surveillance has had on Winston, and how the lack of expression prevents him from rising up and rebelling. His hopes of rebellion lie in the Proles, the outcasted class system of Oceania which he has discovered as having more freedom than those in the Outer Party. This essay will also situate surveillance, expression, and social validation in the present-day seen through FBI memes in order to argue that awareness of surveillance is useless if only attention is brought to it but no action.

Telescreens serve as the visible representation of Big Brother's watch. According to Winston, the telescreens are sensitive to noises and anything above a very low whisper would bring attention to oneself through sound and sight (Orwell, 3). He knows Big Brother's watch never ceases, regardless of the actions or time of day; there is no true moment of privacy (Orwell, 27). Throughout the novel, he shares what he knows about Big Brother thus revealing his awareness and still, their surveillance has yet become normal to him. Normal, in this case, is seen in the rest of Oceania who accepted the surveillance since they have not caused a rebellion, but Winston's recognition is abnormal because he has not accepted it. This is seen through the way he expresses himself both bodily and through his thoughts when he knows he is guilty of a thoughtcrime.

Winston's flat is one of the few spaces which he considers private. He uses this space to express himself as he writes in his diary. There is an instance where Winston writes "DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER" (Orwell, 19), and immediately recognizes that the action of writing down that phrase is equally as dangerous as opening the diary itself (Orwell, 18-9). His body reacts as it acknowledges what he wrongfully has done. He shuts his eyes and attempts to stop a recurring memory he had just written down and experiences an "overwhelming temptation to shout a string of filthy words at the top of his voice" (Orwell, 63). Winston's self-surveillance, or panoptical surveillance, is a result of Big Brother. These bodily reactions are not seen as a threat since he is not immediately punished. Roger Paden's research on Foucault and surveillance states that Winston is not

considered as a threat based off his reactions but rather because these reactions are abnormal. This is later revealed through his punishment at the end of the novel.[i]

Michael Yeo addresses that both panoptical and surreptitious surveillance are working when Winston writes in his diary.[ii] 'Panoptical' comes from Jeremy Bentham's term 'panopticon' which describes surveillance by a single subject, a subject in power, sitting at one point in a building in order to monitor all occupants of the building.[iii] Panoptical surveillance becomes interiorized as a result, and causes those who are or once were being monitored to self-surveil. Surreptitious surveillance, on the other hand, is a moment which a subject believes they are not being surveilled therefore expressing true actions or emotions with the belief there will be no punishment.[iv] These definitions of surveillance lead to a contradictory moment in the novel when Winston states that surveillance in Oceania never ceases. Yeo describes the moment when Winston writes in his diary as a result of being surreptitiously surveilled. Winston writes believing that he is not watched, yet he has addressed that he and the citizens of Oceania are always surveilled. Because of this, it brings the question of why he decided to put himself in a position where he is at risk of getting caught unless he wanted to rebel to satisfy his need to express himself. This then supports that he truly does believe that he was in a place without surveillance. Ultimately near the end, O'Brien admits to surveilling him for the past seven years which shows he had no true moment of privacy.

Whether or not Winston truly believed he was not surveilled when he was writing in the diary, his actions are still worth discussing. In Big Brother's utopia, citizens are unable express themselves without worry or fear of punishment from the Party. Therefore, Winston expresses himself the only way he knows how. Although knowing the dangers, his writing expresses his true emotions as a result of his belief in being surreptitiously surveilled. Writing in the diary is dangerous, yet useful, giving Winston an opportunity to react while living in a society that discourages any form of thinking or expression, especially in public. He knows that in public spaces, there are many behaviors considered abnormal, such as a nervous tic or muttering to oneself (Orwell, 62), but in the diary, for a moment, he can express thoughts and emotions some of which he believes are worth remembering.

If there is anything hopeful in Winston's writing, it is his belief in the Proles. Not much is known about the Proles since the Party has control of the information dispersed to the citizens of Oceania. Winston does know, however, that the Proles make up eighty-five percent of the population of Oceania (Orwell, 69), and that the purpose of the Proles is to breed and work. The Party has described them as "natural inferiors who must be kept in subjection, like animals" (Orwell, 70). They are surveilled, but not like Winston and the other citizens of Oceania. Since the majority of the Proles do not have access to telescreens, different measures of control take place. Although they are the large majority, they are not difficult control. The Thought Police are said to move amongst them, and they eliminate abnormal individuals who may be of danger, and even civil

police interfere little with the Proles (Orwell, 71). For the majority of the novel, the Proles are described as being left to their own state.

Steve Cohen compares the Proles to illegal immigrants.[v] Since they are disconnected from the rest of Oceania, they are subject to similar living conditions of illegal immigrants. According to Cohen, the class systems in the novel are as follows: the dominant and privileged Inner Party, the unprivileged Outer Party which Winston is a part of, and then the Proles, who have been abstracted from the class system altogether.[vi] Because of the Proles' exclusion from the class system, the Party's oppression of the large populace is an example of successful control. The Outer Party does not need to use the same method of surveillance found within the Party. Although Winston is a member of the Outer Party, he recognizes that because of the continuous surveillance, there is no opportunity to revolt without being punishment. While Winston does not actively seek opportunities to overthrow the Party, he does insistently write that hope lies in the Proles.

Winston's optimism in the Proles is the only instance in the novel that shows hope for change in Oceania. The Proles ultimately have the freedom to rebel because they are individuals in their own state, although Winston describes them as unconscious, and it is not until they become conscious that he believes they can revolt.[vii] He states that the individualism of the Proles and the opportunity of recognizing their own strength is what can cause rebellion against Big Brother. He stresses that such a large population, eighty-five percent of Oceania, must have some power to revolt. Winston recognizes this power

when he becomes vigilant, knowing that his body cannot react abnormally in public, and admires the individualistic characteristics of a woman from the Proles. The Proletarian woman catches Winston's ear through her singing, and he approaches the window, notably peeping behind the curtain, and observes her.[viii] She is described as monstrous with brawny red forearms who is hanging clothes on a clothesline.[ix] Winston returns to Julia, another character in the novel, as she calls back his attention in the room, but soon after is he once again peeping at the Proletarian woman. He senses that the song she sings is known by heart and describes her voice as tuneful and full of happy melancholy, a kind of content to be considered abnormal yet she continues without worry.[x]

Naomi Jacobs discusses the Proletarian woman's body and Winston's admiration not only for her physique, but what actions her body creates. Jacobs states that the Proletarian body becomes a representation of a free body, one that is not surveilled like Winston's, and one that is able to enjoy the song the she sings, although it is subjected to Big Brother's propaganda. The Proletarian body is yet to be filled with this propaganda, and as Jacobs states, Winston's optimism and belief in the proles is described the "embodiment of human decencies rooted in a blind, instinctual physicality", something that Winston believes those in the Outer Party do not have.[xi] Because the Proles have not been subjected to the surveillance or control the Outer Party has, they are capable of causing a revolt once they realize the level of freedom they have. Winston comes to the conclusion after peeping at the Proletarian woman that they are indeed human; the Proletarian body is free.

By comparing the freedom of the citizens of Oceania to the amount the Proles have, Winston justifies his views towards the Proletarians. His insistence in the Proles' large populace, which has yet to realize their power, shows how awareness has little potential for change; there is no action through awareness. The minority of Oceania, the fifteen percent of the population, normalized surveillance, therefore portraying the success of Big Brother. Big Brother's visual representation of surveillance through the telescreens left lasting effects on Winston as seen through his almost involuntary actions of spewing filthy words after writing in his diary. But as he insists that the hope lies in the Proles, he acknowledges a potential that only they have. His inability to see surveillance as normal has only hurt him but it is the first step in the preventing the invasion of privacy from escalating further, although the damage has caused agony in Winston as he is unable to express himself. Since the Proles are the larger portion of the population, there was a bigger chance for a revolt against Big Brother.

Neil Richards sets surveillance in the present-day as he discusses why it is that surveillance is considered dangerous.[xii] Richards moves the argument forward from viewing surveillance as "bad", a view arguably set by *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, into understanding it in a public setting. Questioning the true definition of privacy is important while also trying to place surveillance in this setting and progressing its meaning from Orwell's text. Richards acknowledges the existence of laws made to protect the public from surveillance by the government but warns that secret government programs cannot be challenged since awareness of them has not been brought forward.[xiii]

Similar to the hope found by Winston in the Proles, awareness needs to be the first step but it can only do so much. Secret government programs can only be challenged once consciousness of their existence is brought forward but then there needs to be recognition of harm in their surveillance. The problem lies in the fifteen percent of Oceania since they unable to recognize the harm of surveillance because it has become normalized.

In the present-day, a large portion of the population has more than just telescreens at their reach. Cellphones and computers are currently the normal, and alongside the use of these devices, comes social media as a platform for users to share. Social media enables users to communicate with their friends or followers through social networking websites such as Facebook or Instagram, but ultimately, users are interacting with the technology itself. Since technology is the only medium for social media, the likelihood of surveillance has arisen. The only form of technological surveillance Winston mentioned were the telescreens, but in the present-day, users have access to much more. Social media provides an opportunity for people to share as much or as little as they please with other users, unlike Winston and his inability to express himself and be an individual in Oceania. Users can communicate as much or as little information about themselves or any topic and this means of expression has become normal, therefore, like in Winston's case, the majority of the population is unaware of the dangers that could arise from secret government surveillance.

In 2017, there was a widespread belief across social media platforms accusing the government, specifically the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), of surveilling internet users through computer cameras or by monitoring Google searches. This belief was expressed in the form of memes, which Limor Shifman defines as "a group of digital items sharing common characteristics of content, form, and/or stance; that were created with awareness of each other…".[xiv] Since this group of memes, labeled 'FBI memes', gained popularity, they are an example that users of technology, specifically those who spread these said memes, believed in the likelihood that the government is monitoring through technology.

Internet memes, or memes for short, are spread through social media but can also be shared through private messaging. Shifman supports the idea that memes can reflect social and cultural mindsets when they are shared among one or more people.[xv] She states that memes should be seen as "piece of cultural information that pass along from person to person, but gradually scale into a shared social phenomenon" (Shifman, 18) and thus supporting the idea that memes are more than images usually perceived humorously. In order to justify that memes, or in this case the FBI memes and their relation to surveillance, are an expression of a widespread common belief, a distinction must be made. When a single photo, video, or joke spreads rapidly it is considered to have gone viral whereas a meme is described as a collection of texts which encompass the same theme but the image can be replicated or altered without changing the content; this is

defined as being memetic.[xvi] The success of a meme is found through its ability to spread, maintain its popularity while also having the ability to be replicated or altered.

Users are interacting with memes when they are spread, replicated or altered. This interaction can express a message within the content of the meme and the user spreading it. The purpose behind the spread, replication, or alteration varies by user, but Guadagno et. al suggests that there is a level of social validation behind the purpose of interacting with memes and other users.[xvii] Social validation is defined as a "tendency for individuals to look to others to see what others are doing to determine if a behavior is normative and appropriate" (Guadagno, et. al, 2312). Guadagno et. al. argues that social validation is working within memes. For example, when a meme is spread from person one to person two, person one hopes to find that the content of the meme can be agreed upon or deemed as normal by person two. There are many reactions that users can have towards receiving a meme, but they are ultimately a form of expression. Their content can vary just as much as their longevity or success, but the role of social validation and expression among users of technology supported the rise of FBI related memes in 2017. By using social validation as a lens to understand why it is that memes become popular, this also creates an opportunity for a user to seek or express an idea that they hope can be agreed upon by other users.

Earlier Shifman was quoted by saying that when memes do rise into popularity then they are considered a shared social phenomenon, one that shows users have agreed

upon or deemed normal amongst users. This is prevalent in the FBI themed memes which discuss monitoring through computer cameras or Google searches. The first image is categorized under this theme. This example shows a Google search which says “how to get rid of the FBI age” which the person was typing in the search engine and was unable to finish their search because the FBI agent texted him saying “bro really” expressing that the agent is unhappy with the person attempting to get rid of them, thus showing that the agent was surveilling the user. The next example shows another person typing into the Google search engine the question “how to build a bomb (but chill it’s for a school project)” which addresses that one, that building a bomb could be called to question, and two, that someone will eventually be monitoring this search and might begin to worry thus the need to say “but chill it’s for a school project”. The FBI agent says through text message that pops up on the person’s screen “Nice save bro, go ahead” in order to show that they were surveilling the user but since the user stated that this bomb was going to be for a school project, there is no need to worry. Both examples are some of many FBI memes that have been shared across social media.

The final image is not like those shown previously. Instead this meme references George Orwell and his novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, as a reaction towards the memes that gained popularity. This meme describes Orwell’s imagined reaction from the afterlife towards users creating memes about surveillance. The meme says “George Orwell in the afterlife after seeing us all making memes about the government constantly monitoring us”. The image makes reference to an episode of *Family Guy*, where one woman tells the

other woman “I told you! What did I tell you? Didn’t I tell ya? Cause I told ya…” and so on, as if Orwell was expressing that he was correct all along. The original context of this scene from *Family Guy* was not making reference to Orwell, but like in meme fashion, the scene was captured into one frame and was altered to fit the caption that was placed above it, therefore giving it a new meaning. These three memes are only an example of the many which have expressed their awareness of government surveillance.

Big Brother’s surveillance is not hidden from the citizens of Oceania. As mentioned earlier, Winston expresses that telescreens are everywhere and citizens are actively interacting with them as part of Big Brother’s control. Surveillance or monitoring, in the present-day is similar, but seemingly less overt. As people today use their phones or computers, they interact with their devices seemingly unaware of the dangers of surveillance. Social media is a way that users have been distracted from the possibilities of monitoring through cell phones or computers, but because of this, as Richards mentioned earlier, if users are unaware of this surveillance, then there is no acknowledging the dangers. Technology has grown and the chance of surveillance, as seen through the memes, has been brought to the forefront but despite this, awareness of surveillance or the call to action to prevent the invasion of privacy, remains just as stagnant as it did in the novel. Years after the publishing of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the warning against government surveillance is expressed in a new setting. The individuals who have shared these memes and helped them gain popularity illustrated their belief during a time where self-expression is easier through social media. Although technology

has advanced since the novel's setting, social media users are just like the Proles, even though they are subject to different living conditions and have the ability to use social media platforms to fight the present day's version of Big Brother. It is hopeful, like Winston's belief in the Proles, that those conscious of being surveilled may one day rise to action and take measures to prevent unwanted government surveillance from progressing even further but who knows what that will look like. The novel ends with the Proles never becoming conscious in their ability to rebel against Big Brother, and Winston is punished after O'Brien reveals that he had been monitoring him for seven years.

CHAPTER VI

WHAT WE SHARE: KINSHIP BETWEEN NATIVE & MEXICAN AMERICAN CHARACTERS IN TOMMY ORANGE'S *THERE THERE*

Yaltiza Aparicio, an indigenous Mexican actress from the 2018 drama *Roma*, is the first Indigenous American woman to receive a Best Actress Oscar nomination. Through *Roma,* where Aparicio stars as Cleo, she received support from the Latino community due to being a victim of racial slurs and blackface after the movie's release. In one instance, Mexican soap opera actor, Sergio Goyri, was filmed calling Aparicio a "pinche India" or a "fucking Indian" ("Mexico News Daily"). Later, *Televisa,* a Mexican TV network, was under fire when one of their television personalities posted a photo and video of themselves on social media with brown skin paint and thick lips in order make fun of Aparicio's indigenous traits (*Associated Press*). As a result of her popularity and the discrimination she has received, what was revealed is Mexico's history of racism, and continued discrimination, towards its indigenous populations. I begin my paper with this summary of Aparicio's experiences before discussing Tommy Orange's *There There* in order to lead into a brief history of Mexico's racism towards its indigenous populations. I bring this brief conversation to the forefront in order to establish the relationship or tension amongst Mexicans and Indigenous peoples. With this, I hope to analyze Orange's text through Gloria Anzaldua's *Borderlands/La Frontera*: The New Mestiza in order to address the racial ambiguity amongst characters whom I will identify as being of Mexican decent. Ultimately, I want to address the kinship between characters of Native

and/or Mexican descent in order to use Orange's text as an example of the necessary kinship amongst Native and Mexican peoples, despite history dividing them. Through identifying the kinship amongst the Native and characters of Mexican descent, I will address the complexities of these characters through analyzing the violence, family, and trauma of their stories.

Mexico cannot be defined without its indigenous roots. The country has one of the largest indigenous populations in the western hemisphere. According to *Minority Rights Group International*, it was not until 1992 that a Mexican constitution deemed the country as "pluricultural", despite the existence of their indigenous population centuries prior to that year. Their indigenous populations are about 12.7 million and speak about sixty-two languages and the many languages have been used as a tool to measure their population. As a result of this, it leaves out many of those who are indigenous but do not speak the language. This is one of the many suppressions of indigeneity in Mexico. Although there are many indigenous supporting organizations in Mexico, many of them came as a result of the continuous discrimination against indigenous populations. The country's history cannot come without addressing the racialized discrimination and in fact, the majority of the indigenous populations experience low economic standings, low levels of education, and are used for cheap labor (*Minority Rights Group International*). Not to mention the historical assimilation that led up to this, and the country's history of discrimination is quite possibly the root of Goyri's comment towards Aparicio. As result of this assimilation, racism, violence towards Mexico's indigenous populations, it is interesting to consider whether this history shapes or impacts how Tommy Orange's

There There is read considering it takes place in Oakland, California, a city with a large Mexican population, all while the setting of the text establishes a Native community.

Tommy Orange's *There There* takes place in Oakland, California, a city which connects various populations from different backgrounds and ethnicities. The text mirrors the connections or coming togetherness found in Oakland, but the most prominent gathering is the significant scene at the end of the novel where the powwow takes place. Although the powwow is ultimately the gathering place of all the characters, what should be addressed is how the characters got to Oakland in the first place. The text does not give significant background to determine this for all characters, nor does it intend to do so. Instead, the text does create a Native community while many of its characters question what it means to be Native. Other characters such as Octavio Gomez and Daniel Gonzales are more complex and ambiguous where conversations or questions about their identity do not drive their stories, but instead it leads the reader to question their role in the text. Although Tommy Orange does not identify Octavio Gomez and Daniel Gonzales as characters of Mexican decent, I will identify them as such as I address the discussion of racial ambiguity in *There There.* My main focuses are Octavio and Daniel and their relationships with the other characters, but I do not discount characters like, for example, Dene Oxendene and Tony Loneman. This essay I will discuss the various markers or signifiers that may lead a character or characters to identify or question the identity of themselves or of others. Through identifying moments of kinship between Octavio, Daniel, and their Native counterparts, we are acknowledging their place in the Native community.

Chicana feminist scholar, Gloria Anzaldua is most widely known for her text *Borderlands/La Frontera* where she discusses the differences between borders and borderlands, and argues that as a *mestiza,* she is "continually [walking] out of one culture and into another because [she is] in all cultures at the same time" (99). Although her text specifically addresses the United States and Mexican border, her use of the word 'mestiza', meaning "a woman of mestizo descent" or "a person of mixed American Spanish and American Indian descent" (*Oxford English Dictionary*), fits when addressing a more ambiguous border or identity. In order to understand the origins of term 'mestiza' or 'mestizaje', Anzaldua provides brief history of Spanish, Indian, and Mexican ancestry and how the intermixing of these ethnicities led to racial ambiguity. She states, "Indians and *mestizos* from central Mexico intermarried with North American Indians. The continual intermarriage between Mexican and American Indians and Spaniards formed an even greater *mestizaje*" (Anzaldua, 27). As mentioned earlier when defining the word 'mestiza', similarly, *mestizaje*, is defined as the "interbreeding and cultural intermixing of Spanish and American Indian people; or the racial and cultural intermixing" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Although Anzaldua is more specific about the regions in which this intermarriage happened, the intermixing of races is prevalent in Oakland, thus necessary to consider in *There There*.

Tommy Orange also works the history of the kinship between Natives, Mexicans, and the Spanish into his text. For one, in the prologue where he historizes the stories to come, he states, "But we do have in our minds, those of us who saw the movie, the heads rolling down temple stairs in a world meant to resemble the real Indian world in the 1500s in Mexico. Mexicans before they were Mexicans. Before Spain came" (Orange, 7).

Part of Orange's prologue leaves the reader with the reminder of the "real Indian word" and how it all changed as a result of the Spanish, but this conversation does not end here. As I look to address the kinship between Octavio and Daniel with other characters, in a similar way both Octavio and Tony Loneman's grandmothers' express attitudes about the Spanish. In Tony's story he refers to a conversation he had with Octavio about Octavio's grandmother. He says, "I listened to him talk about his grandma…and that she called anyone not Mexican or Indian gachupins, which is a disease the Spanish brought to the Natives when they came" (Orange, 22). In order to learn more about Octavio's ancestry, it is important to point out that his grandmother says, "anyone not Mexican or Indian" meaning that she is either one or both. Later, when Tony himself is discussing history of the Native peoples, he brings up his friend's own attitudes. He says, "The sad part is, all those Indians probably knew but couldn't do anything about it. They didn't have guns. Plus diseases. That's what Maxine said. Killed us with their white men's dirt and diseases (Orange 18). Connections are constantly being threaded throughout the text; both to history, like the examples provided here, but also are used to connect Octavio and Daniel to the Native characters.

In Orange's text, there are many markers or signifiers which add to the discussion of racial ambiguity as the characters learn more about what it means to be Native. Many of these markers or signifiers can categorize someone to races or ethnicities aside from their own, but they are important to address. This racial ambiguity is presented in many ways, especially through characters who have identified as Native. One example of this comes from Dene Oxendene's story, which is written in third person thus many of his experiences are described. For one, the narrator mentions that Dene has been 'assumed'

various ethnicities. “Dene is not recognizably Native. He is ambiguously nonwhite. Over the years he’d been assumed Mexican plenty”. Other ethnicities mentioned were Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Salvadoran (Orange, 28-9). It is not clear what about Dene has led others to ‘assume’ him as Mexican or nonwhite, but it is important to place emphasis on the fact that he is “not recognizably Native,” as if those who were assuming things of him, had certain expectations of what indigeneity looks like. The text also suggests that the usual question he gets asked is “What are you?” (29). Similarly, many of those who are considered racially ambiguous have heard this question.

As previously mentioned, racial ambiguity can result from this historical racial intermixing and in Michelle R. Montgomery’s book, *Identity Politics of Difference: The Mixed-Race American Indian Experience,* she discusses the history of racial hierarchy and race “mixture” alongside her own experiences with the question, “What are you?”. Montgomery shares that she has been accustomed to hearing the question and through her own personal experiences, she argues that racial identifications, and those that lead to racial ambiguity, are “developed in relation to collective identities within racialized societies and spaces” (3). She also adds that racial identifications are as a result of historical, political, and social struggles (Montgomery, 3). As she is explaining the New Mexican tribal college where she conducted her research, she addresses the setting or the environment in regards to “Indianness”. She states, “Spanish/white identity was an option for lighter-skinned mixed-race people, but the darker-skinned persons were forced into a Mexican/mestiza/o identity; these dynamics influenced “Indianness” (Montgomery, 6). Her explanation behind the reason to use this setting for research is interesting as she identifies that those racial identifiers are what some had the “option” to be a part of

whereas some were “forced” to identify. In regards to Orange’s text, Montgomery’s argument can be applied to the various intermixing of identities within the novel. The setting of Oakland, California naturally allows for this to happen, but in a text that establishes a Native community, it is interesting to observe which characters have the “option” to choose their identity, whereas others are subjected or “forced” to identify as a result of their environment.

As I address the kinship between Octavio, Daniel, and their Native counterparts, I want to discuss Orange’s prologue and his conversation of the Urban Indian. With this, I want to also address racial slurs regarding Native peoples and those with Mexican descent as these populations move towards or are forced into an urban setting, where their authenticity continues to be questioned. Orange’s discussion on urbanity shows the shift of racial identifications over time. He states, “plenty of us are urban now. If not because we live in cities, then because we live on the internet. Inside the high-rise of multiple browser windows” (Orange, 9-10). Like Montgomery argues, racial identifications are also a result of historical, political, and social struggles, and in order to continue combatting the idea that Native American populations are a part of the past thus no longer exist, and for these populations to be moved away from what some consider “authenticity”, Orange addresses that they have been called sidewalk Indians, citified, superficial, inauthentic, cultureless refugees, and apples (9-10). He also adds, “An apple is red on the outside and white on the inside” (Orange, 9-10). Being that this conversation moves from addressing the Urban Indian to the various racial slurs that Native American populations have received, in a similar way, “Nopal en la frente”, which translates to “cactus on the forehead”, is usually used to describe Hispanics, specifically Mexicans

who are said to have facial traits or a skin tone similar to Mexicans with indigenous blood. The majority of the time, “nopal en la frente” is used towards someone who does not “claim” their ethnicity, but instead would be described as “white washed” alongside this slur. Orange’s attention to language is crucial to my argument of establishing the kinship between both the Native and characters of Mexican descent. Both ‘apple’ and ‘nopal en la frente’ having similar meanings, but being called these terms suggests that there is an internalized whiteness or a separation from what it means to act ‘nonwhite’ or even as “authentic”.

The majority of characters in *There There* question their identity and what it means to be “authentic”, both directly and indirectly. In Mark Rifkin’s *Beyond Settler Time* he discusses authenticity in regards to “modern life”. He states, “to be ‘authentic,’ Indian identity remains separate from “modern life,” such that “integrity” appears to reside in priorness: retaining what was before they were ‘swept up’ in the tidal wave of ‘white standards” (Rifkin, 85). With this, it is important to consider how and when the slurs in the previous paragraph take place. Usually, this happens when someone is being accused of internalizing whiteness or they are seemingly denying their race/ethnicity, however, these slurs could also be used by someone arguing that a person is no longer “authentic”. It could also suggest that as Native American populations “become more Urban”, as some are forced into these more urban areas, they are said to be losing their authenticity. Orange’s choice to address the Urban Indian in his prologue is important because the setting of his text takes place in the urban city of Oakland, where many characters are questioning or struggling with what it means to be authentic. Although I do

not address technology in my essay, the text's technology does play a role in the conversation of authenticity and how that impacts the Urban Indian.

It is important to consider how facial features/markers and identity coincide in the text, especially since characters are being read and read each other. Dene is one character in particular who uses visual markers to identify those who will be judging his project. As he walks towards the panel of judges when he is about to pitch his idea, he analyzes the judges and without hesitation, identifies what he believes are their race/ethnicities. This suggests that it is easy to use those markers as first impressions, whereas Orange's "an apple is read on the outside and white on the inside" suggests that the person being called an "apple" has behaved or exuded actions that are not normally associated with their race/ethnicity (10). He identifies an old white lady, two middle-aged black guys and white ladies, a Hispanic guy, an Indian—from India, and an older guy who the text says is "definitely Native" (Orange, 39). This certainty is then followed with markers that are used to identify the man as Native. The "Native guy" is described as having "long hair and turquoise-and-silver feather earrings in both ears" (39). Dene's certainty about the Native guy continues after he gives his pitch and the Native guy questions the vision of the project. The text says, "Dene knew it would be the Native guy. He probably doesn't even think Dene is Native" (Orange, 41). Dene's indigeneity and the lack of a work sample are the two things he believes will keep him from receiving the grant. When Dene is first introduced in the text and thinking about the pitch of his project, he imagines the reasons that may keep him from receiving the grant; those reasons which he bases around how he will be visually marked. The text says, "They'll see immediately how unqualified he is. They'll think he's white – which is only half true – and so ineligible for a cultural

arts grant." (Orange, 28). Although this is what Dene is said to imagine, he does receive the grant for his project, however, in relation to the text and the larger theme of my essay, it is important to address how easily Dene identified his judges and how being half white was going to consider him ineligible. This happens all before Dene pitches his project and it is evaluated over quality of idea, rather than his indigeneity or how indigenous he is.

Since this is a text and readers are unable to see what the characters look like, where racial ambiguity tends to take place, the descriptions or backgrounds provided by characters like Dene, or those whom interact with either Octavio or Daniel, start formulating who they are and what their roles are in the text. In particular, Tony Loneman's story introduces Octavio and thus the opportunity to question his role begins. Tony and Octavio's relationship seems to be close since Tony provides information surrounding Octavio's grandmother, who later is known as Josefina or Fina. Tony describes the setting and states that although Octavio was drunk, Octavio expressed his love for his grandmother. Octavio says, "I'd give away my own heart's blood for her" (Orange 22). As a result, Tony expresses that he feels the same way about his grandmother. He says, "His own heart's blood. That's the way I felt about Maxine"; Maxine is Tony's friend (22). Both young men have loving connections with their older females, and although this should not be an example of kinship, the conversation of blood is important to mention as Tommy Orange himself later dedicates a portion of his interlude on blood. Blood is important to consider when identifying kinship, thus it is important to see how it is working in interactions between Octavio and Tony, and later Daniel as well.

As the kinship between Octavio and Tony develops early in the text, a conversation regarding Tony's indigeneity does not seem like a conversation they have had previously. Octavio looks for confirmation about Tony's identity when he says, "You're Native, right? He said. 'Yeah,' I said, and wondered how he knew. 'Cheyenne'" (Orange, 23). Tony wonders how Octavio assumed this, but does not dwell on it for too long. Then Octavio responds with, "'Tell me what a powwow is,' he said. 'Why?' 'Just tell me.' (23). Because Tony affirms that he is Native, Octavio automatically assumes that Tony has been to a powwow or at least has knowledge of what it consists of. The conversation continues with Tony responding to Octavio's command by describing what may be read as stereotypical signifiers of Native Americans. Tony responds with, "'We dress up Indian, with feathers and beads and shit. We dance. Sing and beat this big drum, buy and sell Indian shit like jewelry and clothes and art" (23). As this goes on, it seems as if Octavio cares about the significance behind the powwow, but quickly decides that it ultimately does not matter. Instead, he is motivated by the fact that there is money involved. As I continue arguing that Octavio and Daniel are complex characters where Mexican decent is hinted at, I want to address that in the beginning of the text, there are many things uncertain about Octavio and Daniel. Their own stories are not written into the text until after the interlude. Although there are many things uncertain about Octavio in particular, one thing is for sure, he is the one who suggests robbing the powwow (23). The conversation about Tony's indigeneity or his knowledge of it, ultimately lead Octavio to hear what he wanted to hear.

Connections between Tony Loneman and Octavio Gonzalez are strengthened when Octavio's story is introduced after the text's interlude, but even before then, Tony's

story sets an important foundation in the connection between Octavio, and Daniel as well. Although the prologue is obviously the introductory section of the text, the first story in *There There* is Tony's, and his story is, quite literally, the first and last face of the entire text. It reveals his "Drome" or how fetal alcohol syndrome impacted his facial features. Ultimately his story revolves around on how this syndrome has affected the way he is visibly perceived. What Tony's story does is describes how faces are read or understood, and openly expresses the various ways he understands the impact of fetal alcohol syndrome. In one instance, he states "That's the Drome too. My power and my curse. The Drome is my mom and why she drank, it's the way history lands on a face, and all the ways I made it so far…" (Orange, 16). Tony's statement suggests that there is much more that comes through his face, than just fetal alcohol syndrome. It is also his mother and her struggle with alcoholism, and that is where the history of his face traces back to. Later in Octavio's interactions with Tony, Calvin Johnson, and other characters, readers can easily identify that Octavio seems to struggle with alcohol, or at least when given details about Octavio, alcohol is involved. By identifying these similarities, in the rest of my essay I hope to strengthen these connections once Octavio's and Daniel's stories are introduced and readers learn about their past familial trauma and how violence and alcohol were involved.

Both Octavio Gomez's and Daniel Gonzales' stories are introduced after the interlude and through this, readers can finally begin to construct their identities, especially in a text where the majority of the characters are attempting to understand their own. Their stories use family history to construct cultural and individual identity and what is revealed through their stories is the trauma that resulted from violence. In

particular, Octavio's story includes his beloved grandmother Josefina, and the text hints that she is a curandera, or a woman with healing powers who attempts to cure him when he comes home. Soon after, as Octavio is lying in bed attempting to go to sleep, he reflects back to the moment his father saved his life and lost his own. That day Octavio and his father had just moved to the couch when bullets were said to come flying through the window. He states that this was "sudden, but it wasn't unexpected" (Orange, 174) and later hints that his uncle Sixto, his dad's brother, had robbed someone's home. After the death of his father, Sixto also killed Octavio's mother and brother in a car crash where his only punishment was that his license was revoked and was let go. Although the text does not mention how soon after his father's death came the death of his mother and brother, Octavio's relationship with his grandmother strengthens. The relationship with his uncle, the man who received no punishment for the death of Octavio's mother and brother, not to mention Octavio's description of the bullets being "unexpected" hinting at the fact that Sixto had a possible role in the death of his father too, was filled with anger and resentment. Despite this, after some time Octavio does converse with his uncle, since they are still family.

Octavio's identity continues to be constructed through his familial background, but one crucial moment to analyze is when he sits down and talks to Sixto and Sixto mentions that their family has bad blood. Sixto says, "We got bad blood in us…Some of these wounds get passed down. Same with what we owe" (Orange, 182). Intergenerational trauma is a continuous conversation in indigenous studies, but it is not limited to only indigenous peoples. But although it is not clear what resulted in their family's bad blood nor what they owe, it is important to consider how this has impacted

Octavio's motivation and desire to rob the powwow, as early on the in text he hints that he owes someone, but does not mention who. At the beginning when Octavio's is devising his plan begins, he suggests, "I wouldn't be getting into shit like this, but I owe somebody," Octavio said. "Who?" "Mind your business," Octavio said." (Orange, 24). Sixto's explanation for their reason for having bad blood suggests that a form of betrayal comes from becoming "less Native" as a result of all of the white in their skin tone. He asserts, "We should be brown. All that white you see that you got on your skin? We gotta pay for what we done to our own people" (Orange, 182). As mentioned earlier, racial ambiguity can result from the racial intermixing and since Sixto argues that the amount of whiteness in their skin tone is, I argue, a form of betrayal and thus they own their ancestors or "own people", then it suggests that their family blood line is not as Native as they used to be. Their kinship was once stronger. The topic of betrayal comes back at the end of the novel and it ultimately is what causes guns to go off.

Considering that Octavio is the one who suggests robbing the powwow, in the moments leading up to that section, he exhibits various instances of violence or anger towards the other characters. He also shares moments of violence within his own family past, then as a result, his reactions are more than likely linked to the trauma he experienced. Although at first these moments may just be an example of Octavio's friendship dynamic with Tony Loneman, Calvin Johnson, and Daniel Gonzales, amongst others, they progressively build to the final significant moment at the end of the novel. One of the first moments of this, and establishes his relationship or dynamic with Tony, when Octavio asserts his power on Tony with a simple look. "*Remember who you're talking to*" (Orange, 23). Later, when Daniel presents the 3-D printed gun to them, he

points the bullet-less gun at them and the only one not to flinch was Octavio. Instead, Octavio commanded Daniel to put the gun down, and Daniel states that Octavio pulled the gun out of his hands. He also says that Octavio "looked down the barrel, pointed it at us. That's when it was my turn to get scared. Octavio holding it made it even more real" (Orange, 189). In M. Bianet Castellanos' "Becoming Chingon/a", she explores the word "chingar" by discussing the various conjugations, meanings, and/or connotations. 'Chingar' can be a verb, an adjective, and many times it is used in a vulgar sentence, but I primarily want to focus on Castellanos approach of the word in its masculine connotation in relation to Octavio's actions or attitudes throughout the text. Committing "chingaderas" is quite frequently masculine driven action and Castellano's argues that "the macho commits chingaderas, that is, unforeseen acts that produce confusion, horror and destruction. He opens the world; in doing so, he rips and tears it, and this violence provokes a great, sinister laugh. And in its own way, it is just: it re-establishes the equilibrium and puts things in their places, by reducing them to dust, a misery, to nothingness. The humor of the macho is an act of revenge" (Castellanos, 279). In Octavio's case, and later even including Daniel's experiences with his abusive father, the type of masculinity that commits these chingaderas are the forces that drive the text. The choice to rob the powwow, get Tony involved, the tension between Octavio and characters like Charles and Carlos and his familial traumatic past, leads to the violent ending of the novel.

Instead of Octavio's story being driven by questioning his identity like the other characters, his story is driven by his actions to rob the powwow, which causes the ultimate chaos at the end of the novel. His reasons are said to be monetary, but at the

same time, the violence at the end of the novel is towards indigenous peoples. This violence is important to address in a larger and more real setting of violence towards indigenous peoples. In 2014, three Hispanic teens brutally beat three Navajo men, two of whom later died, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Jennifer Nez Denetdale's "No Explanation, No Resolution, and No Answers" refers to this act of violence in regards to her discussion of border town violence and its indigenous populations. She mentions that the beatings were said to be "so severe" that two of the three men, Gorman and Thompson, "could not be identified because their faces and bodies had been so disfigured" (Denetdale, 123). Despite being barely recognizable, they were still identified as Navajo. Denetdale suggests that the question surfaced on whether this was a racially motivated crime, but the legal community surrounding this case decided that it was not since these men were homeless and that the homeless are frequently subjected to violence.

Although the incident caused by the three Hispanic teens was said not to be racially motivated, Melanie Yazzie's article on Indian Country Today titled "Brutal Violence" argues that violence against Indigenous peoples is rooted in the settler nation and/or linked to colonization within the United States. She pairs this conversation alongside 'common sense' and states, "Common sense is a term that describes how consensus is formed about rules, norms, and social expectations" and this consensus is a result of the norms established ("Brutal Violence"). Yazzie furthers her argument and says this consensus and common sense result in "conscious and unconscious" choices ("Brutal Violence"). Whenever an act of violence is committed, one question that always surfaces is why one would commit a such a senseless act, but Yazzie argues that it was

not senseless or unconscious, but instead part of the established norms which causes these actions. For the characters in the text to exhibit violence, it is important to note what in their environment has normalized violent responses. Both Octavio and Daniel have experienced familial trauma through violence thus it is important to use this background to question their responses or actions.

Daniel Gonzales is the other character whom I argue is a character with Mexican descent. He is also involved in the plan to rob the powwow, and like Octavio, his story also comes after the interlude and readers get insight into his own family past and how it has shaped him and his role in the text. Through Daniel's first story it is revealed that him and Octavio are cousins and that Daniel's deceased brother Manny did not like Octavio. Daniel even states that he knows his brother would be unhappy knowing how much time him and Octavio are spending together. It is unclear why Daniel thinks this, but does hint at the fact that something is Octavio's fault. He says, "I mean, in a big way it was Octavio's fault. But he's our cousin. And him and Manny had become like brothers" (Orange, 188). One of the first hints of Daniel's family dynamic actually comes through Octavio's story. He reflects back to the violent moment where Manny and their father are fighting. The rapid build-up of this reveals even more family violence, particularly Manny and Daniel's father's abusing their mother. Still from Octavio's perspective, he states, "When we got upstairs the first thing we saw was their dad throwing their mom against the wall, then slapping her once with each hand. She pushed him and he laughed. I'll never forget that laugh" (Orange, 176). For Daniel and Manny to witness their mother be physically abused by their father, it would make sense that they have been traumatized by it.

Both Daniel and Manny exhibit violence reactions or sentiments towards their father. Like mentioned previously, Octavio's story continues providing witness details of this abuse. After Manny and Daniel's father laughs as a result of being pushed by the boys' mother, Octavio states that Manny attempted to solve the problem or stop the abuse through using violence. "And then how Manny took that laugh right the fuck out of him. Manny came up from behind his dad and pulled back on his neck like he was trying to rip all the breath he'd taken out of him" (Orange, 176). Although the text does not provide moments where Daniel is partaking in the violence, Daniel discovers an email he received from his brother to which he never responded. Despite Manny being dead, he decides to respond to the email and through his response he reveals his sentiments towards his father and his abuse. He states, "Doesn't matter. Cuz of what he did to Mom. To us. That piece of shit. Deserved what he got. He had it coming. Long time coming. He woulda killed mom" (Orange, 193). Soon after this, Daniel wishes that he had the 3-D printed white gun to give to his brother so that he could ultimately attempt to kill their father, as if it would have been the best way to stop the violence and abuse. It is important to note that Daniel expresses he would give the gun to his brother, not take matters into his own hands. Throughout Daniel's stories, he seems hesitant about being involved in the plan to rob the powwow. He also starts sensing like their plan may not be successful. In one of his stories closer to the end of the novel, he shares that he had been having violence dreams. One of those dreams which the text states:

> "He'd been waking up in the middle of the night the week leading up to the powwow. He'd thought they were the usual zombie-apocalypse-type dreams he'd always had, until he noticed the people were Indian. Not dressed like Indians, but

> he just knew like you just know stuff in dreams. The dreams all ended the same. Bodies on the ground. The silence of death, the hot stillness of all the bullets lodged in the bodies" (Orange, 265).

In a move by Orange, this is an element of foreshadowing since the novel does end in violence but also ambiguously, where the text makes it unclear who dies. But Daniel's wish to give his brother the white gun and then his distant involvement in the plan to rob the powwow, suggests that there is an underlying sensation of violence, but does not choose to express it.

The violence at the end of the novel presents an example of violence against kin. Even within the larger community of Oakland, the young men involved in the planning and partaking of robbing the powwow established their own community, but all because of violence and money. Some of the characters are literal family, like Octavio and Daniel, but their friendship established a dynamic, but not a perfect one, since Octavio exudes his power over many of them, but it all ends in betrayal. It is unclear who actually dies as result of this violence, but in order to complicate the community that the young men had "established", it is important to note who dies and by whom. The stories during this scene are limited about one, two, or three pages, so quickly, perspectives on this violence shifts from character to character. Both Calvin Johnson's and Tony Loneman's perspectives are those that provide the clearest information. First, Carlos turns his gun on Octavio and then Charles does as well (Orange, 273). Instantly the violent betrayal begins and they all respond. Calvin's story in particular shares that Octavio throws the gift cards at Charles and while doing so he fires a few bullets. In response, Charles does the same and finally,

Tony is also involved in this betrayal as bullets come from Tony's direction (273). The dismantling of this community is caused because of aggression and violence.

Although Anzaldua is most commonly known for her text *Borderlands/La Frontera*, in 2015 her text *Light in the Dark/Luz en lo Oscuro* was published about ten years after her death in 2004. In this text, she addresses the "web of connection" and it appropriately describes not only the connections of all of the stories in Tommy Orange's novel, but also applies to the conversation of identity, racial ambiguity and establishing kinship, which ultimately fails in the powwow section due to betrayal. One section titled "Nos/Otras: Bridging Splits, Leaping Across Abysses", she discusses the dangers of fighting amongst other "others". She addresses this for an academic setting, but applicable when considering the betrayal at the end. Anzaldua states that, "Chicanas silence indigenous women, and indigenous women lambast Chicanas for appropriating Indian identity. We hurt an "other" for their identity, race, gender, sexual preference. Wounded, we let our anger stomp on others as if they're ants" (76). Through this, the conversations of trauma are also included. In regards to Orange's novel and the overall purpose of my argument, Anzaldua's responses towards "others" not supporting each other, our divide continues to deepen. Like mentioned in the introduction, instead of Goyri supporting Aparicio for sharing many common qualities, instead he perpetuates racism. With Octavio, Daniel, Tony, Calvin, and the rest of the characters involved in this plan, there is no support or understanding for the similar experiences they have had, which motivates the violence against each other at the end of the novel.

In Anzaldua's text *Light in the Dark/Luz en lo Oscuro*, she also addresses what she calls a "web of connection" which she describes as being "strands of energy

connected to each other in the web of existence. Our thoughts, feelings, experiences affect others via this energy web. Our pervasive, excessive sense of woundedness compels us to erect barriers that create knots on the web and block communication" (Anzaldua, 83). This appropriately describes not only the connecting stories of Tommy Orange's text, but also applies to the conversation of identity, racial ambiguity and the attempts to establish kinship, which fails. Orange's novel has literally created a web of connection through the short story cycle, which at first do not seem connected, but later, the majority of characters come together at the powwow. This web of connection happens through various ways, one of which is through the use of technology, however, the emotions, experiences, traumas, and searching for an understanding of indigenous identity, are important for creating a strong web of connection. Like mentioned above, when we are kin, we must support each other. The text's racial ambiguity allows for space to connect and to acknowledge that we are connected even if we decide or have no ability to identify as one race or ethnicity. Addressing the kinship and acknowledging the things we share is important to strengthen indigenous and Mexican populations, and thus crucial for supporting each other and the larger communities.

CHAPTER VII

YOU GET WHAT YOU DESERVE?

CRIMINALITY & PUNISHMENT IN PAT BARKER'S *BLOW YOUR HOUSE DOWN*

Pat Barker's 1984 novel *Blow Your House Down*, takes place in an English city where the underlying fear running rampant amongst the characters is a murderer who seems to only target and kill prostitutes.[xviii] Kath, Jean and Brenda, the main characters of the text, alongside the other characters are those who are having to watch themselves and each other as their night lives revolve around sex work. Although illegal and thus frowned upon, the women create a system of solidarity and protection, because despite the fear of being murdered, the women continue to prostitute for various reasons, some of which could be argued they have no control over. For many of these women, this job is their choice, and for others, the text suggests that they had no choice but regardless, they are considered criminals, more or less like the murderer they fear. This criminality results from the class system or structure which has deemed their work criminal, but also what ultimately is in danger are these women due to the lack of protection from those like the police. Instead these women-considered-criminals are punished in various ways. In this essay, I will apply Bryan Reynolds' *Becoming Criminal* and Michel Foucault's *Discipline & Punish* in order to support the themes of class, sex, and criminality in

Barker's *Blow Your House Down*.[xix] The majority of my analysis will focus on Brenda, one of the main characters of the novel, however, I will also address Kath and her important role which coincides and challenges Foucault's "The body of the condemned", "Panopticon", to name a few, and I will also address how Jean's choices complicate the end of the novel.[xx] By using these two critical texts to analyze, support, and challenge Barker's text, I will argue whether or not these women are being punished and the implications of that punishment.

To begin, it is necessary to identify both Foucault's and Reynold's arguments or theories before they are applied to Barker's *Blow Your House Down*. Barker's themes of criminality and class structures are conversations that the two scholars have discussed both directly and indirectly. The first piece I will use to support and challenge Barker's text, is Michel Foucault's *Discipline & Punish* which covers the topic of discipline, punishment, and criminality, and how the body has a role in it all. There are many parts or chapters within *Discipline & Punish*, but I will primarily use "The body of the condemned", "The spectacle of the scaffold", and "Panopticon" for this analysis. Although these chapters further his arguments in various ways, Foucault's overall argument is that the body is used as a power tool in order to discipline and thus regulate the behaviors of an individual, and this ultimately regulates every single body or individual in society. Although discipline is most commonly associated through a system like an institution and by those who are privileged or in an elite position, Foucault argues that this power is ultimately exercised.[xxi] Discipline and power work alongside each

other, especially when regarding the punishment that results from criminality. In order to prevent criminality, Foucault states, that the effectiveness of punishment comes from "certainty of being punished and not the horrifying spectacle of public punishment that must discourage the crime".[xxii] Although knowledge of punishment is what causes this to be most effective, Foucault still addresses "The spectacle of the scaffold" and how the body was used as a tool to make discipline effective.[xxiii] Ultimately, the discipline and punishment upon a criminal body politically operates to lessen criminality. Throughout the rest of my essay, I hope to provide more detail and examples from various sections of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* as it relates to Barker's text.

The secondary critical piece I will be using to support *Blow Your House Down* is Bryan Reynolds' *Becoming Criminal*. Written in 2002, *Becoming Criminal* is primarily focused around early modern England's sociocultural phenomenon of its criminal culture.[xxiv] This criminal culture resulted in groups like, for example, gypises and prostitutes. Although Reynolds' argument of what creates a criminal is geared towards the sixteenth century, his argument is foundational since the reinforcing, or othering of groups similar to those mentioned in his text, continues after early modern England. The basis of Reynolds' argument begins with addressing the 'truth' and how our society's truth, like he states, "is often *this* society's "reality" since, as an everyday operative "truth", it informs the lived experience of the society's members".[xxv] The truth of these lived realities informs Reynolds' "Transversal Theory". His "Transversal Theory" suggests that, "there are processes of identity formation that work within and in response

to configurations of social power that lead to the construction and destruction of societies".[xxvi] The established characteristics of those identities are what creates criminal culture. Some of those characteristics includes, "aesthetics, ideology, and sociopolitical conductors common to and cultivated by a certain group of people…and official culture is the culture of distinguishable or imagined group of people characteristically aligned with the [characteristics] mutually support state power".[xxvii] Those whose identity does not align with those characteristics of the state power, or resist these characteristics, are deemed "abnormal, unconventional, or illegal according to the dominant ideology", and thus are considered criminal.[xxviii] In Barker's text, the prostitutes have their own criminal culture where they acknowledge their criminality and they create their own system or structure to work under. Like mentioned previously in regards to Foucault's text, I hope to provide more details and examples of Reynolds' *Becoming Criminal* as it also relates to Barker's text.

To simplify the women of *Blow Your House Down* as 'common' prostitutes, one would not be doing them justice.[xxix] There many layers to these women, some of which are written into the text early on and then are placed in the background, as the majority of the text revolves around them as prostitutes. Brenda, one of the main characters, is first introduced in her role as a mother, and in the fast paced first chapter, she is attending to her children before she leaves them for the evening with their uncle Norman. Brenda's identity as a mother continues through conversations with Audrey, but quickly within the second chapter, Brenda, Audrey, and Maureen are in a bar and readers soon find out that

they are prostitutes through revelation of a murderer running rampant. Maureen expresses what she listened to during her time with other prostitutes in Bradford and suggests that they established a set of do's and don'ts to avoid any possible danger. Some of those do's and don'ts were, as Maureen says, "Always get out of the car." "Never get out of the car." "Take the numbers." "Work in pairs." "Don't bend down." "Don't turn your back." "Don't suck them off".[xxx] Although Maureen says she rejected these rules, there is still contemplation about what can be done to protect themselves since they are not being protected. Later, as Brenda is with a client and starts sensing possible danger, she hears Audrey's, Jean's and Carol's voice in her head, "stick to your regulars. That's your best bet".[xxxi] As seen throughout the novel, the women show their sensibilities in different ways, all of which serve as examples of their roles in the system they have created since they are not accepted in the dominant one.

Blow Your House Down begins with the prostitutes' system already established as a result of the novel beginning after the Ripper has already murdered some women. It would not be fair to suggest that these women did not have a system or female solidarity amongst which they functioned under before the fear of being murdered. Brenda, Jean, Kath and the other prostitutes in the novel seemingly have accepted their roles in society, as if they had a choice. They are aware of the many things that have 'othered' and have accepted what could be described as a form of punishment and are subjected to living a life where they provide sex services, but ultimately, they have still adopted the group or structure they have been put into. Reynolds' text provides an example of a female

stripper, and this conversation can be put into the discussion of the prostitutes of Barker's novel. He primarily uses the female stripper as an example of symbolic power and suggest that whether or not the female stripper cares to acknowledge how their work reinforces the sexual commodification of women's bodies in a male-dominated society, regardless a stripper's continuous participation in this line of work.[xxxii] Similar can be applied to prostitutes. Prostitution also reinforces the sexual commodification of women's bodies and may even be pushed forward with the explicit scenes found within the text. Like Reynold's argument suggests, Brenda, Jean, Kath and the others, have established their own system by accepting their roles in society, so much so that later, Brenda is offended that a police officer considers her a "common" prostitute. Although it could be argued that Brenda does not have a choice but to be a prostitute, by becoming upset at the fact that she was considered a "common" prostitute, she is ultimately adapting her 'othered' role into her own and distinguishing herself from them, despite being a class structure that keeps her and the other women at a low level. What is important to consider as a result of this, is that like any system outside factors like the murderer can change or impact a system without the women, for example, being able to do anything about it.

The lack of agency plays an interesting role specifically in Brenda's life. Although *Blow Your House Down* does not track Brenda's life from the beginning, it is still necessary to address the background the text provides in order to acknowledge what has made her who she is today. This can also be used to acknowledge how this constructs

her role in the text and whether or not she has true agency. When looking at what the text does provide, the cycle Brenda cannot break seemingly began through her lack of having a family. Brenda only had a foster mother who she continues to keep in touch with. This sequence continues when she became pregnant at sixteen, all of which she suggests came to no surprise, and later she would get married and then be left with her children without no husband or father. As Brenda is recalling the winter when Brian, the father of her children and her once husband, left her with the children, she reveals that she was working at the chicken factory. When Brian leaves her, she describes the situation came to her as "no surprise" and that she had "seen that coming".[xxxiii] Even though she suggests that it came no surprise, she was surprised that he had not paid bills. As a result, she decides to take the unpaid bills to Brian's mother, but this does her no good. Brenda states that his mother never liked her, because she felt that Brenda trapped Brian with pregnancy and marriage. Even within the text, it suggests that this was expected of this situation. "Brenda was sixteen when she married Brian—pregnant, of course—".[xxxiv] All the factors—pregnant, sixteen, and of low class—are what has reinforced and promoted this cycle thus the question then asks whether Brenda even had the ability to break this cycle.

After marriage, the traditional unification of families follows, however, this is not the case in Brenda's experience. Brenda was not accepted into Brian's family after their pregnancy and marriage even though she attempted to integrate herself. For her it was obvious that she was not welcome, not only by her mother-in-law, but even by Brian's

sisters and their families. “All of his family was against her, and there was a lot of it: his mother, his granny, his three married sisters, their husbands, their kids. They lived within a few streets of each other.”[xxxv] Similar to how Barker begins the novel by describing the tight fitted space between the two beds and a wardrobe, no matter where Brenda turns, she is trapped. The fact that that text mentions that they all lived within a few streets of each other truly emphasizes Brenda’s inescapability. This familial structure comes with a sort of hierarchy, where Brian’s mother and his immediate family are using their power to exclude Brenda, especially since they believed Brian was the one who was truly trapped. Foucault addresses how power works within a structure, and in the text’s case, it seems that the hierarchical structure of family, where Brian’s mother-in-law and his immediate family are those in power due to this exclusion, but instead Foucault suggests that power is, “exercised rather than possessed” and even though the ‘privileged’ is the one who is normally dominant and uses this power, it still must be exercised.[xxxvi] In the novel’s case, however, since Brenda is trapped in the cycle of her life, Brian’s mother-in-law and his immediate family do use power to continuously exclude her to the point that his mother refuses to take care of her own grandchildren. Brenda was outside the structure of Brian’s family, but through a forced marriage, she was then made to be a part of it. She attempted to integrate, but did not have the choice.

Sarah Falcus argues that the motherhood element of the text is another form of imprisonment and adds that this is especially the case when father figures absent.[xxxvii] In Brenda’s case, she was the one who was truly trapped, and Faclus’ argument of

motherhood as a form of imprisonment suggests that this imprisonment came as a result of Brenda needing to be punished, but not Brian. The various forms of cyclical punishment that she experiences are necessary to consider when questioning if and why Brenda is being punished and for what reasons.[xxxviii] When referring back to the Brian's mother's response to her son marrying Brenda, the novel suggests that, "[she] made no secret of the fact that she thought her lad had been trapped into marrying a common little cow".[xxxix] In modern day, women are still said to trap men through pregnancy, but in Brenda's case, she is ultimately the one who is trapped yet again. If Brenda is being punished, then to consider her a "criminal" even before she works in prostitution, can only imply that this punishment results from becoming pregnant, which has an important role in her cyclical life. Later, she is punished once again when she realizes that Brian was not paying the bills and thus being trapped into debt. The imprisonment of motherhood and money are what keep her in a job that she suggests works best when considering the hours and the amount of money she earns. It is important to consider how this imprisonment is impacted when knowing there is a murderer on loose and that their only option of work is in danger because of him. Their last hope of freedom from the punishments they are receiving is the system they have established amongst each other.

Blow Your House Down is a primarily female character-heavy, however, this is not to say that the males in the text do not have an impactful role in these women's lives. In the novel, the men have the choice to use their power either to leave their wives, to murder, and even to taunt the prostitutes. Early on in the text when the women are at the

bar conversing about the Ripper, Audrey mentions that in one instance as she had been working, a man decided to jump out and tease her about being the Ripper. “I know one night I was stood on a street corner and there was an alley just behind me and this bloke jumped out. ‘I’m the Ripper,’ he says”.[xl] Her comment then stirs a conversation about what kinds of men they have experienced during their work, especially when considering their “stick to your regulars” rule.[xli] Audrey comments about this rule and questions the logic behind it. She adamantly questions then states, “But it’s true, isn’t it? You can go with somebody ten, twenty times, and he’ll be alright, and then something’ll happen and he’ll flip”.[xlii] Her sensibility here questions whether or not the rules the others have established will be effective. Her example is one of the many that exposes the toxic masculine roles of the novel. In Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish,* he addresses a similar masculine role and pairs it alongside sexuality and suggests that based around their interactions with women, men whom “demonstrate their masculine prowess, might have felt somewhat emasculated and threatened by the more sexually adventurous and voracious criminal men and women”.[xliii] Prostitutes are women who considerably more sexual adventurous, so the male’s violence towards the women seems appropriate, although still problematic. The violence enacted upon them alongside the use of the women as bait is a form of punishment.

The most dominating role in the novel, a group of which could have used their power to protect the prostitutes but instead use their power against them, are the police. The policing has a small role in the novel and although they are not violent towards the

prostitutes, they do punish the women in various ways. For one, they use the prostitutes as a method to capture the Ripper. Throughout the novel, the prostitutes know that their work is operating under a society that deems them criminal, thus this causes the police not to protect them. David F. Waterman analyzes the use of the prostitutes as bait in Barker's text and how addresses how inhumane this choice was. He states, "such methods would be unthinkable in any other context—using children to lure a pedophile, for example—and yet, such tactics pass for normal when it concerns these women".[xliv] This is obvious to the women themselves in comments like, "I wish to God they'd catch the bugger. Too busy catching us", or later, Maureen says," Did you see where it said in the paper that if a woman was found with pepper or anything like that on her she could face a charge? Possessing an offensive weapon".[xlv] The fact that these women are considerably used as bait and may also be charged with their attempts to defend themselves from the Ripper, addresses one of the many issues of their; the murderer, or Ripper, is a criminal as well, but neither the text, nor anyone with seemingly the most power, does not attempt to stop him.

When considering the punishments for the crimes committed, there are many ways to which this punishment can be played out. As mentioned previously, Foucault's suggests that the effectiveness of punishment comes from knowing that there will be punishment after a crime is committed, but this does not mean that the spectacle of public punishment is not in use. Not only does this become punishment towards the person who was said to commit the crime, but it is also used to discipline the witnesses of this

spectacle. Certainly, there are more specifics setting where Foucault is evaluating this spectacle, but when analyzing how this supports or challenges Kath Robson's murder scene, the only witnesses of this murder are the murderer himself and the reader. The reader's witnessing of this graphic murder does not suggest that they are needing to be disciplined, but when reading the details, one cannot help but be impacted with the process of it all. In the chapter when Kath gets murderer, throughout her interactions with the man have been seemingly tense. The aggression begins when the man pushes her face down into the mattress. As he is sodomizing her, Kath seems to want to turn away, but instead "he hit her again, not vey hard, just enough to make her keep still".[xlvi] Quickly Kath continues her attempts to get away but the man does not stop punching her and even though she was crying, he continues until he determined that he was unhappy with how their interaction ended. He then stabs her and she dies unnoticeably.[xlvii] There are so many more gruesome details throughout the entire section in order to emphasize the purpose behind a spectacle, but in the end, her death was quick and soundless. Questions about why the man chose to murder Kath is not clear, however, later in my essay I will analyze this section of text to continue questioning and arguing whether Kath was punished and for what reasons.

If readers can assume that the man who murdered Kath was the Ripper, then an important thing to question is why was she chosen to be murdered? Or even further, if one argues that was a punishment, then what was she being punished for? When considering the relationship between discipline and punishment, but readers and the man

were the only ones to witness the murder, it would be important to consider the effects of the spectacle. Although Foucault would argue that the certainty of being punished after the crime was committed is what is most effective, the underlying nightmare of the text is the uncertainty of the man or Ripper being caught and punished. Instead, prostitutes continue to be murdered and there is no certainty that he will be punished. It is important to consider Kath as a witness to her own death, although her knowledge of this is ineffective since she dies. Unlike the other prostitutes which have gathered knowledge about what to possibly look out for when approaching possible clients, Kath later becomes a sort of witness or seeing eye when her image is placed on a billboard after her death. Foucault suggests that this is a "role reversal" and that the "tortured criminal [becomes] an object of pity or admiration", thus her body after death is continued to be used as a tool to discipline.[xlviii] Ann Ardis suggest that what makes this effective in Barker's text is the craft and dimensions of which Kath's murder scene is presented. She states, "[Barker] turns a one-way mirror into a window, and then in the effect breaks the glass and draws us into the scene of this horrific crime as she switches from past to present tense and describes our approach to Kath's body".[xlix] Again, it is important to question why exactly Kath deserved punishment, but since this answer is unclear, through Foucault's theoretical approach, the audience and the Ripper's experience of watching this spectacle, are those impacted. Later, when Kath's image is placed on the billboard, it is important to consider Jean's approach to the results of Kath's death.

A similar spectacle is found within the text in regards to the chicken factory. The chicken factory plays a significant role when addressing Barker's themes of class in regards to labor, and like readers are able to witness Kath's murder, similar is found when readers experience the grotesque details of how the chickens are stripped away from their own appendages. The chicken factory appears all throughout the novel, such as when Kath is recalling her experiences there. At one point, many of the women were said to work in the chicken factory, but later left the job, or in Brenda's situation, she was let go. Although the chicken factory does establish a topic of labor and the working class, it is interesting to consider how the chicken's own role in the text leads to question whether these chickens are being punished in order to fulfill someone else's desires. Foucault addresses the conversation of working-class labor and his statement can help situation the chicken factory works as a part of its system. He states, "it was a question of distributing individuals in a space in which one might isolate them and map them, but also of articulating this distribution on a production machinery that had its own requirements".[l] In this factory, there is a process and placement for everything. As Brenda is recalling her time there, she mentions the sort of placement women particularly had in this factory. "I went in there, she said, pointing to the other door. He seemed quite shocked. 'Oh, you don't go in there,' he said. 'Killing's for the men.'.[li] Not only does this express the separation between men and women and what they are and are not chosen to do, this foreshadows the fact that the Ripper is a man and is the only one allowed to do the killing.

If one argues that these chickens are being punished in order to fulfill the desires of consumers, it is interesting to consider what role both the men and women factory workers have in this process. The men are the ones who are in a separate room and they kill the chickens, but the women are allowed to strip them, clean, and prepare them for the assembly line. Although this process is not uncommon today, it is important to note the details Barker provides to immerse the reader into this scene, and possibly even make them uncomfortable. Brenda's recalling of her experiences provides the most in-depth descriptions of what these women had to endure. In one instance, she is describing the setting and sets the tone of it all. "The noise hit you just as earlier on the smell had done…A line of headless chickens, naked, with plump thighs, jerked around the room above the women's heads. At intervals they were taken down to be gutted, cleaned, chilled, trussed and frozen".[lii] She also mentions that the floor was covered in blood and guts and the contact between the women and the blood and flesh of the chickens was close, especially when considering the chicken's blood.[liii] Brenda states that the women wiped blood from their necks and they "[pushed] their hands into the vent as far as the wrist, pulled out piles of steaming guts".[liv] Similar to the details of Kath's death, once again the reader witnesses a grotesque before and after, and if this spectacle is in attempts to promote discipline through punishment, then later, when Kath is murdered and the Ripper commits a similar stuffing action on Kath, then the prostitutes, or factory workers, and the chickens are placed at the same level. Both expected to fulfill a purpose or desire and without any agency.

The two spectacles of the text lead into the one continuous theme where the characters suggest that they are being watched in some way. This 'watching' eye is not attributed to one thing in particular, but it does lead into one of the two most important moments in the novel. I argue that putting Kath's image on the billboard after her death suggests a role reversal and challenges Foucault's "Panopticon", which derives from Jeremy Bentham's "Panopticon".[lv] By putting her image on the billboard, as Jean suggests, she becomes the seeing eye. In Foucault's popularization of Bentham's "Panopticon', he terms "panopticism" in his text *Discipline and Punish* and defines it alongside its relationship with discipline. The purpose behind this form of discipline is to, as he states is, "to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power".[lvi] Since Bentham's 'panopticon' is working under an architectural structure, Foucault suggests that the method of design was to "arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary".[lvii] In the prison setting in which is was intended for, the placement of this seeing eye must achieve a balance, but most importantly Foucault argues that the prisoner must know that he is being observed.[lviii] Ultimately, the goal is for the prisoner or person to acknowledge their actions and function them to work according to the seeing eye's desire, which is the culture who has deemed certain actions criminal and others not.

In the "Panopticon", this seeing eye is most effective when it is someone who is exercising their power, and as mentioned earlier, when the women say that they are being

watched, this could result from many things. One, obviously enough is the Ripper, and others like the police, the overall structure of the novel's society looking down upon these women and their sex work, but this is then challenged when Kath's image on the billboard is said to "look" at Jean. If one argues that Kath was punished which resulted in her death, then her spectacle continues when her image is placed on the billboard. This is one of the first shifts in the text as the positioning of the hierarchy as Kath's body is used as a tool to discipline the other prostitutes, seemingly suggesting that they could be next. One night as Jean is working and is by herself, she states, "except for Kath, who's still here in a way, stuck up there on her billboard. Hiya, Kath".[lix] Jean's attention on Kath's billboard suggests that Kath is visible, but previously throughout the novel, there were moments where Kath was described as unnoticed, and it seems that it is not until after death that people like the police, or those who put up the billboard are now noticing her. Their noticing still leads into her being used to discipline. Jean continues her comments over the billboard and says, "I watched them putting that up and it was very strange if you knew Kath, because it was too big to go up all at once. I watched them pasting across first one eye and then the other and I thought 'My God. Because her eyes, they follow you. They do, they follow you everywhere. I can be walking along with me back to her and I still feel them".[lx] It is interesting to consider that Jean dwells on the fact that Kath is watching. Later in the novel, this makes a lot more sense when considering the fact that Jean is the one who murders the man she *believes* is the Ripper. Ultimately, the fact that Jean feels that Kath is watching over her foreshadows that the women do not want to end

up dead like Kath, but then that leads to question whether it would be better to be the murderer.

There are many ways Foucault's argument expands or supports Barker's novel, but one underlying question about the novel overall is whether or not women like Brenda and Jean had any agency to take some matters into their own hands. Brenda's life is more cyclical and her life as a prostitute results from various elements of her past, and Jean is different than Brenda. Jean who is arguably the most sensible of them all, questions her own sensibility when determining if the man who she murders is the one who has been murdering all along. Through analyzing the second most important moment in the text, one cannot help identify Jean's amount of agency. Agency, or creating action, does or does not have to work alongside sensibility, but in Jean's case, her supposed knowledge was supported through her ability to believe she was sensible to know who the murderer was. Knowledge influences agency or action. But thinking about oneself knowledgeable or sensible enough to truly know that one's actions will achieve the correct answer is where the difficulty lies. Even after Jean murders the man, she seeks that answer to let her know she was correct and that the choice she made was correct. "There *was no knife*. I scoured every inch of the car and there was no knife. And there had to be a knife. He strangled Irene, he battered the others, but he stabbed them all. That's the one thing he *has* to do. So where was the knife".[lxi] She does not find the one thing she believes will caused the violence to end, but all of this is done with violence itself.

In Foucault's "The body of the condemned", he states "Knowledge of the offence, knowledge of the offender, knowledge of the law" are what guides towards a judgment of truth.[lxii] Although no one witnesses Kath's murder, there is only so much knowledge characters can have about her death that may be clues to the Ripper. Instead Jean takes what she and the other women have gathered and deemed it enough knowledge to murder the man she at first believed was the murderer. Barker's novel poses the question of who receives justice and what that justice may look like. If Jean truly did kill the Ripper, then is justice served? Then would Jean be the next one punished for murdering, even if the person they murdered were criminals themselves. Foucault suggests that although this knowledge is important, there needs to be a deeper judgement of the crime. "What is this act, what is this act of violence or this murder?"[lxiii] The cyclical nature of this punishment continues as an endless cycle in the case of the novel.

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