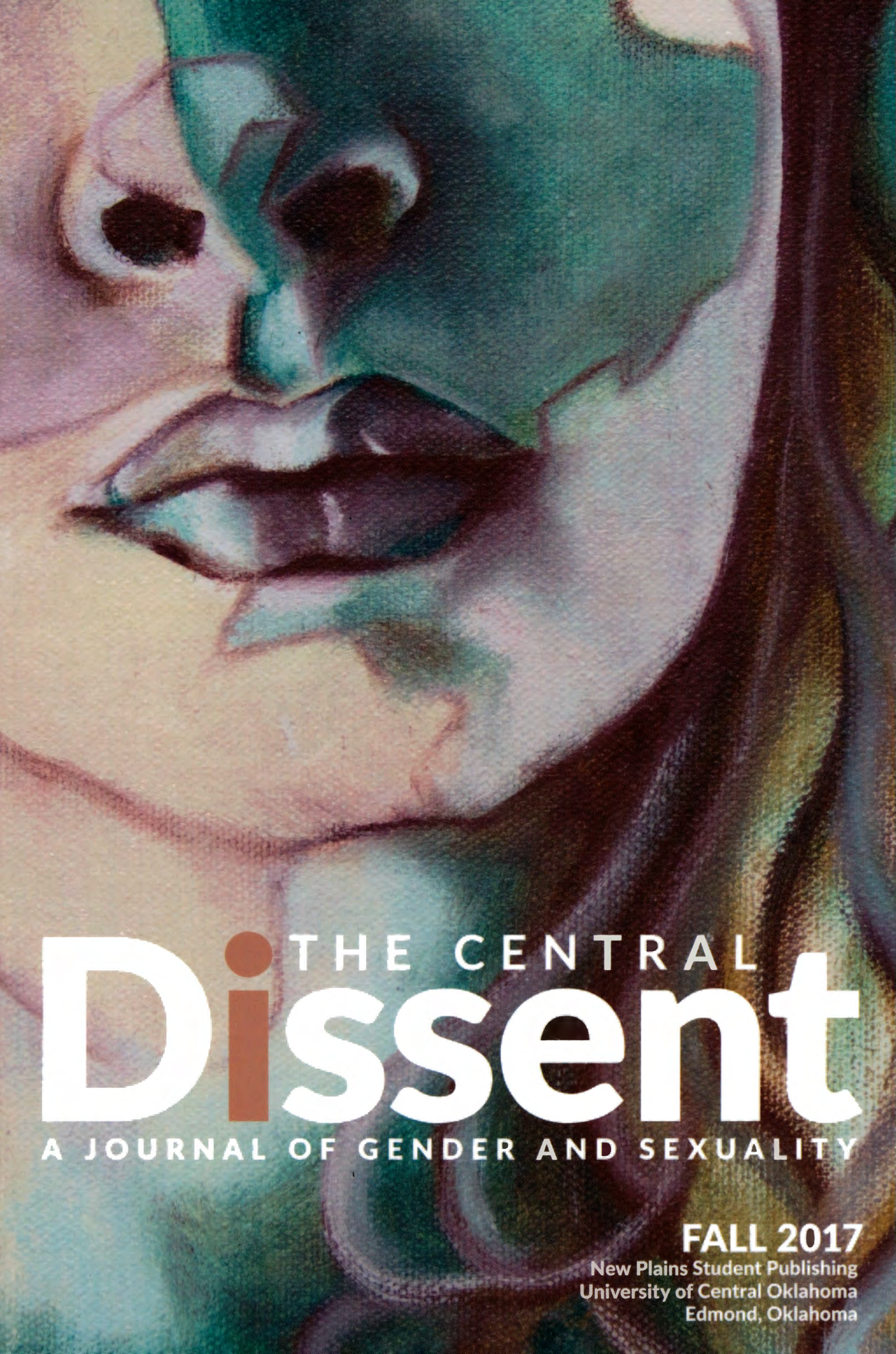

THE CENTRAL Dissent

A JOURNAL OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY

FALL 2017

New Plains Student Publishing
University of Central Oklahoma
Edmond, Oklahoma

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A Journal of Gender and Sexuality

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Foreword

The Central Dissent: A Journal of Gender and Sexuality is an interdisciplinary academic journal based out of the University of Central Oklahoma's Liberal Arts College. The journal is produced by New Plains Student Publishing and is sponsored by the UCO's Women's Research Center, and the BGLTQ+ Student Center.

Our mission is to gather and disseminate quality research, prose, poetry, and artwork that explore gender theory, gender identity, and how race, class, and ethnicity shape society's expectations of the individual in the past and present.

We are pleased to present to you the first inaugural edition of *The Central Dissent.*

Brendon Yuill,
Associate Executive Editor

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Butterfly

Kaylee Howard

So much of my life
I have hidden who I am.
I have lied
To myself and everyone else around me.
I am done lying and hiding.
I am a lesbian just as much as I am a human.
The amount of relief I feel from saying
those words has changed my life.
I love who I am.
I have grown to be more confident.
I have started living for myself and not for others.
I have escaped from my lifelong cocoon
And I have become a butterfly.
My wings have always been deep down inside of me.
I just had to crawl out of my comfortable cocoon
In order to experience the life I was meant to live.

Western OK

Kate Beasley

NOT BEING STRAIGHT IN WESTERN OKLAHOMA meant being ashamed of yourself. It meant thinking about your sexuality in seventh grade and then immediately abandoning those thoughts. Maybe you acted on these non-heteronormative notions in the real world. You told those you trusted you think you're Bi. You told one of your best friends you liked her, but that was not the end of what you thought was an easy confession.

Classmates begin asking about it, but not in a curious or friendly way. You were raised in a religious town where most children were taught that only men and women should be together. You became fearful of their judgment and let it rule you. So you told your classmates no and fervently denied that you were different. You ignored the first person who liked you back and gave a brittle excuse about why you claimed you liked her when she moved.

You were young. It's a shame that no one had told you that you were not broken, because you fit outside the societal norm of your town. If you could go back knowing what you do today, you would tell your younger self to embrace who you are and what you look like. You can't always change the mind of your peers. Instead, trust in your own happiness, know you're not alone, and remember that there is no perfect box you need to fit in.

Your experiences are still with you today. You think about that girl and what you did to her when she crosses your Facebook. It has been a slow process, but you are finally beginning to accept who you are. Even today, your parents still don't know, but you know they wonder why you haven't had "a serious boyfriend" yet. However, you understand everything is going to be okay. You cover yourself with compassion and love while striving to surround yourself with people who do the same. Being the invisible sexuality isn't always easy, but you're figuring it out, and the ghost of your past is surprisingly there to helpfully guide you.

Pursuing Manhood: African American Soldiers In The First World War And The Rise Of The New Negro Movement

Edith Ritt-Coulter

ON THE EVE OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR, D.W. Griffith released *The Birth of Nation* (1915), a silent film that promoted the white-supremacist organization the Ku Klux Klan. The narrative of the film depicted Klansmen as the saviors of the community and American culture. The imagery used exposed society's perceptions of black masculinity as savage hypersexulized beast. African American men found themselves in a social climate that characterized them as black brutes while in the same breath demanding their patriotic service. Many of African American men questioned the Wilsonian democratic ideology of "making the world safe for democracy" when the discriminatory practices of Jim Crow inhibited the autonomy of the black community in the United States. In order to prevent the black community from being viewed as unsympathetic to the American war effort, predominant African American leaders promoted men of color's participation in the First World War as a means to prove their manhood. The social and political pressures placed upon African American men led to their involvement in the Great War. They used military service as a means to combat American society's preconceived notions of black masculinity.

Men of color served under the assumption that military service would improve how white-dominated society conceptualization black manhood. Unbeknownst to African American soldiers, the ideologies of Jim Crow and the theory of the black brute would encompass their military service. The long arm of America's racial hierarchy created a climate where extralegal violence in the form of lynching and the genderization of the black male body would dominate their experiences. As a result, African American men found themselves disillusioned by the pre-war propaganda and assertively began to project a black-generated perception of their masculinity that directly combated the white male dominated society's suppression of African American manhood. American expansions of Jim Crow mentality and the treatment of soldiers of color during the First World War directly contributed an increase in racialized violence, as well as a renewed gender approach to black nationalist movement in the years that followed the conflict.

Arthur E. Barbeau and Florette Henri established the historical examination of the black experience in the First World War in 1974 with their book *The Unknown Soldier: African American Troops in World War I*. Barbeau and Henri used their monograph to shed light on African American contributions to the First World War, which was largely ignored by scholars prior the writing of their book. Barbeau and Henri argue that the black soldier experience during the Great War influenced how African Americans viewed participation in the Second World War. They argue that the First World War marked a transition in the black community's civil rights strategy. Barbeau and Henri assert that the experiences of black soldiers pushed the African American community to seek equal citizenship through strategies that were not dependent on the goodwill of whites. In their argument, one can see the First World War as a transition point into the ideology of the civil rights movement of later decades. Adriane Lentz-Smith, author of *Freedom Struggle: African Americans and World War I*, continued with Barbeau and Henri's theme of transformation. Lentz-Smith argues that the Great War marked a significant change for the black political sector. The author situated the First World War in the historical narrative of the black freedom struggle, which allowed for the analysis of the intersectionality between social, military, and international narratives of black troops. Lentz-Smith stated, "The Great War marked [black soldiers], changed them, and readied them for a life long struggle."[1] Similar to Barbaeu and Henri, Lentz-Smith's argument alludes to the First World War being a transitional moment in the larger civil rights struggle of the early twentieth century. Lentz-Smith also discussed the concept of manhood unlike previous historians. Continuing on the established historical discourse that the First World War marked a defining moment in black history, Chad L. Williams contributed his work *Torchbearers of Democracy*. His work examined the impacts of the Willsonian democratic ideology on the black community's equality struggle. He claims previous historians' work neglected to view the black soldiers social experience outside of the military in and after the First World War. Williams argues that the examination of American democracy is incomplete without a narrative of black servicemen.[2] Williams further asserts that the black community's pursuit of democracy influenced postwar black identity.

"Pursuing Manhood" continued the historical school of thought that asserted the First World War as a transition point in black history. This work contributed to the existing scholarship because it examines how men of color used their negative experiences during the war to develop the concept of the New Negro as a means challenge white popular society's views of black manhood. In addition, this work explored white society's use of extralegal violence during the First World War

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[1] Adriane Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African American and the First World War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 11.

[2] Chad L. Willaims, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 100.

and how it influenced the manner in which men of color sought to project their own sense of masculinity. Previous historians examined the societal and ideological changes set in motion by the Great War, but have neglected to provide a fully realized gendered analysis to the scholarship regarding the black male experience during this era. The masculine nature of the war itself provided men of color the opportunity to analyze manhood from a different perspective, and opened the door for the development of the New Negro concept. The analysis of black masculinity in the context of the First World War allowed for a greater understanding of the perceptions and development of black manhood and the African American equality struggle.

To fully engage the black male experience in the First World War, one must explore the racialized gender hierarchy and examine the meaning of manhood within the context of the United States. America's patriarchal society defined the meaning of manhood as one who protected and provided for their families. In the Reconstruction era, Victorian values instilled the idea that white women needed to be protected by men. The fragile construction of white womanhood directly aligned the protections of their virtue with the gender role of white men. American society viewed the new levels of black autonomy after the Civil War as a threat to the masculine role of white males, and they assumed that all African American men wanted relationships with Caucasian women. The racial hierarchy established in the United States attempted to render black men ineffective in their own masculine role by characterizing them as uncontrollable brutes or docile.[3] White-dominated society perpetuated the belief that men of color held an insatiable lust for white women that caused an ongoing imminent threat. James Cone asserted in his book *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* that white men believed men of color must be carefully watched and violently kept in their place, segregated and subordinated.[4] Negative perception of black manhood and the rising instability of racial norms led to the rise of lynching as a means to police the behaviors of African American men. Black men pursued military service in the First World War as a means to challenge and break free from the social constraints that suppressed the growth of black rooted perceptions of manhood.

The lynching of the black body must also be examined in order to conceptualize the extent in which white males policed African American masculinity. Historical, Caucasian-led patriarchal American communities utilized extralegal mob violence in order to maintain a sense of racial law and order. The manner in which lynch mobs tortured the black body reflected the fear and volatile state of white masculinity. In many cases, lynch mobs emasculated men of color to feminize the black male body, separating them from the physical representation of manhood. Lynch mobs also chose to burn their victims as a means to completely dehumanize them. In order to validate the lynching of the black male body, dominant society criminalized men of color not because of any illegal actions committed, but because of their racial and gender identity. Lynch mobs cloaked their murderous intention by claiming the protection of white womanhood, and demanded the highest forms punishment to African American men who crossed the color line. In this belief, lynching rendered an efficient and honorable act of justice and served to help reunite the North and South after the civil war as a White Christian nation at the expense of African Americans.[5] The perceived threat posed by black men to white masculine hegemony genderized the development of the American lynching culture and directly contributed to the hypersexualized portrayals of men of color. When African American soldiers in the First World War began to globalize their understanding of manhood, white Americans turned to lynching and other forms of extralegal violence in order to maintain the accepted racial dynamic of the time.

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[3] Lawrence E. Gary *Black Men* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications Inc, 1981), 13.

[4] James H. Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Maryknoli , New York: Orbis Books, 2011), 7.

[5] James H. Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Maryknoli , New York: Orbis Books, 2011), 7.

American media outlets and black community leaders persistently appealed to African American men's sense of manhood and loyalty in the hopes that their propaganda would encourage military service. Recruiters used posters to promote black participation in the European conflict. One of the most famous posters, *True Sons of Freedom*, depicts black soldiers overpowering the German troops while a fatherly President Lincoln looks approvingly upon the scene. Recruitment imagery such as this provided black men with a tangible possibility of asserting a dominant position over men of European descent. In addition, pro-enlistment propaganda played upon the imagery of Lincoln as a means to connect the European conflict with the tradition of black service in the Civil War. The imagery of Lincoln also evoked the idea that African American men owed their freedom to the union and should repay the blood tax that provided their emancipation. During the Civil War, Frederick Douglass urged men of color to rise up and prove their dignity in manhood by contributing to their emancipation through military service.[6] First World War recruiters played to the legacy of black participation in the Civil War as means to promote the current conflict as an avenue for the elevation of African American manhood. Affluent black community leaders used ideologies of American manhood and patriotism to persuade African American men to sacrifice their bodies in the hope that their loyalty would transform the racial dynamic. H.H. Procter promoted the idea that the

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[6] Jeffrey T Sammons and John H Morrow Jr, Harlem's *Rattlers and the Great War: The Undaunted 369th Regiment and the African American Quest for Equality*, (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press), 25.

sacrifice of the black male body in the First World War would eventually create a new meaning of democracy in the American South.[7] African American leaders supported patriotism as means to improve the perceptions of black masculinity in the United States social structure. W.E.B. Du Bois supported men of color's participation in the First World War and promoted the idea that darker people would not occupy the same places they had before if they contributed to the war effort.[8] African American leaders sold war as an avenue to gain equal citizenship and recognition as men. White promoted recruitment and black leaders alluded to the masculine nature of military service to encourage men of color to join the armed forces. The propaganda used to entice black men into the armed forces established the gendered nature of the African American experience in the First World War.

African American men's decision to join the US armed forces produced a widespread fear of the militarized black male. American society's characterization of men of color as brutes triggered an oppressive force upon African American patriotism. Many black men viewed their service as means to elevate their standing in the racial hierarchy, but due to fear and negative perceptions of African American masculinity the white dominated department of defense set boundaries that reinforced rigid al constructions. Due to the fear of the militarized black male, officials ordered training facilities to maintain a significantly higher number of white recruits then black recruits. This methodology was used to ensure the safety of the military base and surrounding areas in the chance that the African American soldiers decided to revolt. The Brownsville Affair of 1906 lingered in the memory of American society and perpetuated the fear of the militarized black man. In some instances, African American soldiers were prohibited from executing military drills with guns. The US armed forces altered the manner in which black men received training due to the genderized characterization of black masculinity. These perceptions inhibited many men of color from serving in combat divisions or in leadership roles. African American soldier's aspirations of honor and glory on the battlefield became unrealized for many black troops when they were forced into labor battalions, which pacified the white community's fear of the militant black brute. Disillusioned with their military experience, men of color who did not see combat themselves began to pursue other methods of achieving a black-dominated view manhood with the United States. Segments of African American regiments served overseas under French command. Within the ranks of the French military, men of color encountered a liberating environment that enabled them to see their masculinity and identity as black men outside of the constraints of American society. African American troops encountered French colonial soldiers while serving on the Parisian front. These encounters enabled them connect their own ideas of blackness with the African continent itself. Interactions between colonial and African American troops bridged the ideological Atlantic gap that divided the consciences of African-decedent men from one another. African colonial soldiers became a source of racial pride for African American servicemen, as many of them were struggling against an army power structure that attempted to devalue their sacrifice.[9] Soldiers of color also interacted more freely with French women than the American women they encountered back home. African American soldiers who engaged in intimate relationships with French women represented the ability for men of color to cross the color line, challenging the established racial hierarchy. African American troops who served overseas experienced new levels of social freedoms that enabled them to openly explore a black-driven masculinity.

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[7] H.H. Proctor, *Between Black and White* (New York, 1925), 167-68.
[8] W.E.B.Dubois, "Editorial" in the *Crisis* 16, no 6. (June 1918): 60.

When white military officials recognized the transformative nature of the French frontline for African American men, they decided to transplant the stereotypes of black masculinity into the Parisian community in the hopes that it would stifle the expansions of the developing black notions of manhood. White officers heavily promoted the American ideology of the black brute and rapist as a means to control the interactions between men of color and French women. They feared that relationships between French women and black troops would destabilize the color line back home in the United States.[10] Louis Linard sent a memo to the French military stating, "The American point of view on the Negro question may seem strange to the Frenchman, but the French have no right to discuss what is known as prejudice. American opinion is unanimous upon the Negro question and does not admit discussion."[11] Linard and other military officials warned the French about filling African American men with ideas that were deemed intolerable by the American public. Caucasian troops decided to police the black soldiers behavior and stifle their expanding global perspective by turning to extralegal violence. The extension of Jim Crow justice on the frontline took the lives of sixty-two black soldiers without formal charges being brought against them.[12] Black troops in France experienced the full extent of their masculine potential while serving overseas outside of the racialized social constructions of the United States. When military officials realized the transformative possibility of African American service in the First World War, they turned to extra legal violence to stop the expansion of a black rooted view of manhood. The suppression

[9] Chad L. Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 100.

[10] IBID, 167.

[11] Louis Linard, *Concerning Black American Troops*, August 7, 1918.

[12] U.S. Senate, *Alleged Executions*, 55-49.

of black males from exploring their own masculinity gave rise to a new thought process within the African American community that believed equality for people of color could only be achieved through their own efforts not through white dominated avenues.

African American troops returned home from service to an intensified racial climate. White southerners viewed veterans of color as representations of the black population rejecting the accepted racial hierarchy. In order to stabilize the American racial dynamic in their favor, whites resorted to mob violence and lynching as a method to regain social control. During the Summer of 1919, twenty-five race riots broke across the United States in response to the perceived threat to white hegemony. James Weldon Johnson labeled the racial turmoil that followed the conclusion of the First World War the "Red Summer."[13] Over the span of this violent summer, several lynch mobs reportedly killed ten black soldiers who were still in uniform on the assumption that they had assaulted white women.[14] The imagery of the murdered black veteran due to racialized mob violence became the symbol of postwar racial injustice.[15] Men of color realized upon returning home that their patriotism and loyalty to the American war effort did little to alter white dominated society's negative characterization of black manhood.

In the midst of the heightened racial turmoil, men of color successfully projected their own definition of black manhood due to their transformative experiences during the First World War. Despite the rigid racial constraints and the use of

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[13] Chad L. Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War Era*, (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 225.

[14] Arthur E. BarBeau and Florette Henri,' *The Unknown Soldiers: African American Troops in World War I*, (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press), 177.

[15] Chad L. Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War Era*, (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 225.

extralegal violence, the concept of the New Negro emerged as one of the first African American-driven definitions of black masculinity. The New Negro projected black masculinity as transcending the derogatory ideologies that shaped American perceptions of the Old Negro. African American men asserted their own definition of manhood and aggressively sought to establish organizations and social movements that contributed directly to the black equality struggle. Marcus Garvey was one of the leading proponents of the New Negro concepts that materialized after the Great War. His organization the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) appealed to veterans of color because it validated their own sense of manhood. The political and intellectual black nationalist movements that arose during this era are directly linked to the experiences of black soldiers during the First World War.

The legacy of the New Negro movement that stemmed from the First World War reshaped the manner in which men of color projected their masculinity. The decades that immediately followed the conclusion of the Great War gave rise to militant black men who assertively pursued equal citizenship with their white counterparts. The ideology of the New Negro and values of the UNIA directly inspired notable civil rights organization and leaders of the 1960s. Malcolm X, one of the most influential black nationalists, embodied black notions of manhood and asserted the self confidant militancy that reflected the concept of the New Negro. African American men's pursuit of recognized black rooted masculine identity did not conclude with passage of the civil rights acts; the ideas of the New Negro have continued to develop and transform through into the twenty-first century.

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I Didn't Serve

Nicholas A. Brush

I didn't serve because I wanted to be a patriot.
I didn't serve because I wanted to be a hero.
I served because I didn't want to be a faggot.

I'm still called all three.

"Men Of A Certain Turn": Sentimentality And The Subversions And Subordinations Of Masculine Bodies And Masculinities In Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey*

Nicholas A. Brush

THE CHARACTERS IN LAURENCE STERNE'S *A Sentimental Journey* enjoy looking at one another. The word *look*, in various permutations, appears a whopping 105 times throughout the novel. Everyone "looks" at everyone else; they also view, see, and eye each other. Like a true sentimentalist focused more on emotion than reason, our protagonist, Pastor Yorick, does most of the looking himself. Interestingly, one synonym never makes an appearance in the novel: *gaze*. Throughout the novel, Yorick *looks* but never gazes, at least as far as terminology is concerned. This, however, does not mean that he never actually gazes. In fact, when it comes to the men of the novel that is exactly what he does. Yorick's emotion overcomes his reason as he objectifies and sexualizes, or at least attempts to, the men in *A Sentimental Journey*, his sentimentality engendering his use of the queer male gaze to further support the ideas of hegemonic masculinities in the struggle against his own subversion and subordination. Threats of self-subversion and self-subordination drive Yorick's use of the queer male gaze, causing him to sentimentally subvert the masculine bodies and subordinate the masculinities of the other men in *A Sentimental Journey.*

Defining and Understanding *Journey's* Sentimentality

Samuel Johnson's dictionary contains no entries for *sentiment*, *sentimental*, or *sentimentality*. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the definition of *sentiment* as Sterne used it in Journey is "In general use: Refined and tender emotion; experience or manifestation of 'sensibility'; emotional reflection or meditation."[1] In editor Paul Goring's introduction to *Journey*, he says, "'Sentiment' was generally used to mean a thought or a reflection which was produced or informed by emotion; it conveyed a 'mental feeling'—an attitude which is at once intellectual and emotional."[2] While these two definitions appear to be at odds with one another, they are not contradictory. The *OED* leaves out the "intellectual" side of the sentimental equation, but this omission does not mean that Goring added the concept of reason into his definition. Reason does not factor into sentimentality here. Goring admits that even "Sterne himself recognized...there was no firm agreement regarding [*sentimental's*] meaning,"[3] leaving the interpretations of *sentiment* and *sentimentality* up to the novel's readers. Goring says as much as he later describes the history of *Journey*. He explains, "Sterne hints...that there will be more to *A Sentimental Journey* than mere sentiment"[4] and that Sterne "displays an ironic distance from sentiment, yet at the same time he is confident that sentimentally attuned readers will find satisfaction in his book. It is as though the work will serve different purposes for different readers."[5]

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1 *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "Sentiment."
2 Paul Goring, introduction to *A Sentimental Journey*, by Laurence Sterne (London: Penguin, 2005), xxi.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid, xxvii.
5 Ibid.

One of these purposes, Goring suggests, is filling the role of an anti-sentimental novel, with Sterne including emotions and situations that, as far as the sentimental genre is concerned, should not be present within *Journey*:

> Scene after scene performs the work of sentimental literature, and with the immense flair and virtuosity of Sterne's style, it is easy to see why the work has been celebrated as a masterpiece of the genre. But repeatedly these scenes are also permeated with subtle counter-energies—irony, self-indulgence, carnality—which continually threaten to puncture the sentiment.[6]

The carnality that Goring mentions lies at the heart of Sterne's criticism of sentimentalism, at least how that criticism is presented in *Journey*. Throughout the novel, Yorick has a plethora of sensual and near-sexual flirtatious encounters. "Yorick's flirtations—" Goring says, "coupled with the fact that he is at such pains to protest his carnal innocence—wittily probe the problematic borders between sensibility and sensuality."[7] His protestations may bring to mind in readers a line from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, a play often mentioned, and often directly referred to, in *Journey*: "The lady doth protest too much, methinks."[8] The problem *Journey* presents is that "[sensibility]...is inseparable from the body, yet sentimental bodies are often unreal, desexualized constructs."[9] Sterne takes this notion and runs wild with it, cranking up the sexualization and objectification of masculine bodies and masculinity, forcing his readers to rethink sentimentalist novels as a genre and the ideas of sentimentality and sentimentalism as a whole.

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6 Ibid.
7 Ibid, xxviii.
8 *Hamlet*, ed. Harold Jenkins (Walton-on-Thames: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1998), 3.2.230.
9 Goring, introduction, xxviii.

The Queer Male Gaze And Masculinity

The gaze as a concept exists within many fields. According to Amanda du Preez, as a term, *the gaze* refers to "the complex visual matrix incorporating the one who looks as well as the one who is looked at. This means," she continues, "the one who imposes the gaze and the one who is the object of the gaze are both implicated in the construction of the gaze."[10] In her article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," Laura Mulvey takes the gaze and genders it according to standards of heteronormativity. She refers to this version of the gaze as *the male gaze*. The male gaze, according to Mulvey, projects the "sexual imbalance…split between active/male and passive/female…[onto] the female figure."[11] While Sterne certainly utilizes the concept of the male gaze within the interactions between Yorick and the women of the novel, it is the *queer* male gaze that truly defines Sterne's use of sentimentality.

To put it simply, the queer gaze stands outside of the heteronormativity of the male gaze, allowing the gazer, the one who does the looking, and the gazed, the one who is looked at, to both be of the same sex or gender identity while also, as Tim Wray describes it, "[looking] to be reflected, [looking] for a mirroring of the same desires back, [locating] men as both subject and object, uncomfortably challenging the role-identity of all it surveys."[12] For Wray, the subject is the gazer, and the object is the gazed. Wray's idea of the self-reflective aspect of the queer gaze fits perfectly into Sterne's presentation of Yorick in *Journey*. Goring says that the novel "is…very much an inward voyage into the emotional life of the central character and narrator."[13] He also says, "[Yorick's] account is partially the record of his watching himself respond to the world around him."[14] These explanations provide a firmer theoretical basis when it comes to reading *Journey* through the sentimental lens of the queer gaze. There is, unfortunately, one aspect of Wray's understanding of the queer gaze as it applies to *Journey* and Yorick that is not wholly appropriate or, at least, not precise enough when discussing Yorick's male-to-male interactions. Because *queer* does not necessarily apply to men only, the term *queer male gaze* will be used when describing the gazed interactions between Yorick and the other men in the novel to clarify the presented genders and sexes of the characters involved.

In order to understand how the queer male gaze can subvert masculine bodies and subordinate masculinity, an overview of masculinity hierarchies must be conducted. In "The Social Organization of Masculinity," R. W. Connell explains that "[gender] is social practice that constantly refers to bodies and what bodies do…It is not social practice reduced to the body… When we speak of masculinity and femininity we are naming configurations of gender practice."[15] The only way for Yorick to subvert the other male characters' masculine bodies is through the queer male gaze, effectively negating their inherent masculinities and subordinating those masculinities in reference to his own. It is the queer male gaze that allows Yorick to attempt to objectify and sexualize the various men he encounters, working his hardest through the queer male gaze to maintain the established masculine hierarchy so as to prevent his own subversion and subordination.

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[10] Amanda du Preez, "Gaze, the," Grove Art Online, http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T2093880.

[11] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, ed. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 837 [833-44]

[12] Tim Wray, "The Queer Gaze," *Bauhaus-Universität Weimar*, 2003, https://e-pub.uni-weimar.de/opus4/files/1267/wray.pdf.

[13] Goring, introduction, xi.

[14] Ibid, xx.

[15] R. W. Connell, "The Social Organization of Masculinity," in *The Masculinities Reader*, ed. Stephen M. Whitehead and Frank J. Barrett (Malden: Polity, 2001), 34.

This hierarchy of masculinities, according to Connell, consists of four distinct categories, ranked here from highest to lowest: hegemonic, complicit, marginalized, and subordinate. "Hegemonic masculinity," Connell says, "can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women."[16] This is the position of power as it refers to masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is only for people who are on top and want to keep themselves in these positions of power over not only women but also men who fall into the other three categories of masculinity. Connell defines complicit masculinities as "[masculinities] constructed in ways that realize the patriarchal dividend, without the tensions or risks of being the frontline troops of patriarchy."[17] Those who practice complicit masculinity, then, are men who, failing to meet whatever standards have been set for hegemonic masculinity, which includes whiteness, heterosexuality, and cisgenderism, still uphold hegemonic masculinity as the "best" example of masculinity while, at the same time, refusing to stand up and support it outright. When dealing with marginalized masculinity, it "is always relative to the *authorization* of the hegemonic masculinity of the dominant group" as it applies to race.[18] If, therefore, hegemonic masculinity includes whiteness, then any men of color are confined to the marginalized category, even if they support the hegemonic status quo and are near-complicit. Because of their ethnicity, however, these men cannot move out of the classification of marginalized masculinity. The final category, subordinate masculinity, includes everything not covered by the other three categories. Connell does not provide a true definition; but based on the requirements for hegemonic, complicit, and marginalized masculinities, determining what constitutes subordinate masculinities is not incredibly difficult. Basically, subordinate masculinity includes queer, i.e., non-heterosexual and non-cisgender, men.

La Fleur as Gazed Object

The obviousness of Yorick's queer male gaze, and his apparent lack of concern to how it affects his choices, makes its first appearance when he begins describing the traveling companion that is chosen for him. When Yorick introduces us to La Fleur, he says outright that "the genuine look and air of the fellow determined the matter at once in his favor; so I hired him first—and then began to inquire what he could do."[19] Without any hesitation whatsoever, Yorick tells readers that he chose La Fleur based solely *on his looks.* He has absolutely no clue what La Fleur's current position is; he does not know what the young man does. But, he is *attractive.* Yorick continues, saying, "La Fleur had a small cast of the coxcomb—but he seemed at first sight to be more a coxcomb of nature than of art; and before I had been three days in Paris with him—he seemed to be no coxcomb at all."[20] Here, we see Yorick deliver his first full description of the young La Fleur, the unqualified yet somehow still hirable traveling companion. This description highlights Yorick's focus on the sentimental, the emotional instead of the reasonable, choice to hire a grossly unprepared and unqualified travelling companion based simply on his looks, the object of Yorick's gaze, because his "weakness was...insulted by his wisdom."[21] Because of the queer male gaze, Yorick is overtaken by sentimentality.

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[16] Ibid, 38-39.
[17] Ibid, 41.
[18] Ibid, 42. [Author's emphasis]

[19] Laurence Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey* (London: Penguin, 2005), 31.
[20] Ibid, 33.

La Fleur's "small cast," further elaborated on by Yorick, sounds a bit sarcastic, if not a lot sarcastic, possibly insinuating that he has, in fact, a rather large cast of the coxcomb. According to Samuel Johnson's dictionary entry, which is now found in the *OED*, the coxcomb is a "fool" or "simpleton."[22] Even though Yorick tells us that La Fleur can "do nothing more in the world but beat a drum, and play a march or two upon the fife,"[23] leaving readers wondering why he would be selected for the role of Yorick's valet, the protagonist's obsession with the object of his queer male gaze, La Fleur's male body, reminds readers that Yorick chooses the young La Fleur based solely on his physical appearance. In this moment, readers see the beginning of Yorick's fetishization of and fixation on the young man's body, subverting La Fleur's masculine body, subordinating his masculinity in a way that matches his style of dress. One of the primary clues that the queer male gaze reading is more accurate and representative of Yorick's focus lies back within the *OED*. Another definition found in this same entry also defines the coxcomb as "a fop,"[24] which is further defined as "One who is foolishly attentive to and vain of his appearance, dress, or manners; a dandy, an exquisite."[25] Even this does not seem to directly address La Fleur's sexuality, as perceived through Yorick's queer male gaze, until we go back and reexamine an important distinction that Yorick makes in his description of La Fleur. Yorick specifies that La Fleur, at first sight, looks like a coxcomb of *nature* instead of a coxcomb of *art*.

This supposed difference between the natural and the artistic coxcomb allows us to look through the same eyes, the same gaze, that Yorick uses when fetishizing La Fleur's subverted masculine body and subordinated masculinity, which, in this historical moment, may be considered more hegemonic, or at least complicit, even as a fop. After all, Yorick tells readers that "in Paris, none kiss each other but the men,"[26] implying that foppishness may be more complicit, or even hegemonic, in Paris than it is in England. Even if foppishness is more "acceptable" in Paris, its inherent femininity remains. A fop, argues Susan Scott Parrish, "is effeminate because of his fixation on dress and on the beauty of his own person."[27] Based on Parrish's linking of the fop to an effeminate and, therefore, subordinate masculinity, understanding La Fleur's foppishness, his coxcomb-like personality, also has a link to homosexuality, or at least a non-normative sexuality.

If this foppishness is indeed natural instead of artistic, La Fleur would then be placed in the position of subordinate masculinity without Yorick's gazing. Connell suggests, "Oppression positions homosexual masculinities at the bottom," the subordinate position, "of a gender hierarchy among men...Hence, from the point of view of hegemonic masculinity, gayness is easy assimilated to femininity."[28] A simple reversal of this equation—if queer = feminine, then feminine = queer—helps readers to understand Yorick's subverting of La Fleur's masculine body from a hegemonic, or at least complicit, masculinity to one that now lies within the subordinate "gay," or queer, end of the masculinity spectrum. Someone exhibiting the characteristics of a "natural" queer would, sensibly, attract Yorick's queer male gaze more than someone who merely acted the part. Even then, though, readers have to wonder what it means for La Fleur

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21 Ibid, 31.
22 *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "Coxcomb."
23 Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, 31.
24 *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "Coxcomb."
25 Ibid, "Fop."

26 Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, 65
27 Susan Scott Parrish, *American Curiosity: Cultures of Natural History in the Colonial British Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 139.
28 R. W. Connell, "The Social Organization of Masculinity," 49.

and the sentimental subversion of his masculine body through Yorick's queer male gaze if La Fleur's foppishness was artistic and not natural. Yorick, then could be accused of imposing his own possible non-normative sexual desires and internalized subordinate masculinity, which will be discussed later, upon La Fleur's body, the traveler's sentimental journey considering his new companion's body as an object of subordinate, and not hegemonic or complicit, masculinity and queer masculine desire.

This queer masculine desire that Yorick projects upon La Fleur's body through the queer male gaze brings Yorick's homosocial eroticism to the forefront, with La Fleur's sexually objectified body on a pedestal for both Yorick and Sterne's readers to consider like the work of art it is presented as. In *Images of Bliss: Ejaculation, Masculinity, Meaning*, Murat Aydemir explains that "the body's pleasure lifts and projects the...gaze into totality and eternity. On the other hand," Aydemir continues, "the mortality of that same body must be overcome for the subject to reach true transcendence." [29] As previously mentioned, readers are invited to participate in Yorick's gaze, making them complicit in transforming the young Frenchman's masculine body into an object for Yorick's subordinating sentimentality. In order for La Fleur's body to reach the height to which Yorick places it, it must transcend normative understandings of masculinity and the male gaze, hence the concept of the *queer* male gaze, to levels in which the gazer can obtain pleasure from the body at which he gazes. If La Fleur's body reaches this level of transcendence, then Yorick can prevent his own self-subversion and self-subordination by maintaining his gaze and the subversion and subordination of his young companion, forcing La Fleur's masculine body and masculinity further down the hierarchy and spectrum.

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[29] Murat Aydemir, *Images of Bliss: Ejaculation, Masculinity, Meaning* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 269.

After readers are introduced to La Fleur and both he and Yorick prepare to leave, Yorick gives us a bit more information regarding his intentions for taking on La Fleur as a traveling companion even though he should be much happier with someone more experienced in the role of valet than someone who, like La Fleur, apparently has no real idea of how to serve a master like Yorick. As the two ensure everything is packed in Yorick's portmanteau, a multitude of women appear to wish La Fleur *bon voyage*. The young man has apparently been fairly busy with the ladies of the town, considering "he promised he would bring them all pardons from Rome,"[30] implying that he has been sexually involved with, and perhaps impregnated, many, if not all, of these women. Watching the interactions between La Fleur and the ladies pushes forward the idea that La Fleur does indeed fall within a hegemonic or complicit masculinity instead of a subordinate like Yorick's queer male gaze suggests.

However, readers quickly discover that "[the] young fellow...is beloved by *all the town*, and there is scarce a corner in Montriul where *the want of him* will not be felt," for, as the landlord says, "[La Fleur] is always in love."[31] One could easily take the landlord's comments as an implication of bisexuality in La Fleur, or the landlord could simply be speaking hyperbolically. Yorick, too, either understands the landlord's meaning or misinterprets it completely in his reply: "I am heartily glad of it...'twill save me the trouble every night of putting my breeches under my head."[32] Any confusion regarding Yorick's decision to hire on La Fleur as it applies to his queer male gaze has now dissipated. Here, Yorick outright tells everyone around, including readers, that he desires La Fleur as an object of physical desire as well as a travelling companion, one that he can direct his gaze upon any time he wishes, even when resting for the evening. Everything readers have been told up to this point has made them question exactly why Yorick would choose the young Frenchman as his valet even though there have to be other, more qualified candidates. Now, however, Yorick tells the truth. He tells us why, as Goring says, "he is unable *not* to hire La Fleur."[33] His queer male gaze heightens his queer masculine objectification, his emotion overcomes his reason, and his gaze subverts La Fleur's masculine body and, "[subsequently] and surprisingly, the body and its carnal mortality, temporarily overcome by the power and pleasure of the gaze," in this case, La Fleur's new position as Yorick's valet, "must serve as the resting place or ground for the vast view that is taken in."[34]

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[30] Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, 33.
[31] Ibid. [Emphasis added]
[32] Ibid.

Not all objects of Yorick's queer male gaze reach the aforementioned levels of transcendence, precisely because of their inability to overcome the mortality Aydemir mentions. Yorick's descriptions of Parisian men he sees in the street from the window of his hotel reveals a queer male gaze that, in trying to objectify and sexualize the bodies to which it is directed, fails to do so because of their mortality. Yorick laments seeing "old [men] with broken lances, and in helmets which had lost their vizards—the young in armour bright which show like gold, beplumed with each gay feather of the east."[35] In this moment, readers see what happens when Yorick's queer male fails to objectify the objects of his queer masculine desire because of their brokenness and unattractiveness. The fact that these objects are phallic, however, still evidences that Yorick's intention was to sexualize these bodies and subvert their masculinity for his own gaze. While easy for Sterne's eighteenth-century audience to understand, Goring explains, "the embedded innuendo [in this scene]

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[33] Goring, introduction, xx. [Author's emphasis]

[34] Murat Aydemir, *Images of Bliss: Ejaculation, Masculinity, Meaning*, 269.

[35] Ibid, 47.

is perhaps not obvious but, once noticed, can trigger a leakage of lewd meanings."[36] Even when simply glancing out his bedroom window, Yorick cannot control his queer male gaze and his desire to objectify the masculine body for his own queer desires, even when the queer male gaze cannot help fulfill those desires.

The Father Lorenzo Conundrum

Even though readers get their first glimpse of Yorick's queer male gaze during his initial encounter with La Fleur, that is not the first time his gaze has played an important role in the novel. Upon Yorick's first meeting with Father Lorenzo in Calais, which happens before the scene in the Parisian window, and prior to his first encounter with La Fleur, the narrator has a similar situation with the failure of the queer male gaze. "The moment I cast my eyes upon him," Yorick says, "I was predetermined not to give him a single sous."[37] Yorick's queer male gaze has already objectified Lorenzo based solely on his appearance. As such, Yorick has decided that this monk is not worth giving a single coin to. Even though the two eventually become close friends, Lorenzo's "few scatter'd white hairs upon his temples, being all that remained of it"[38] were more than enough to dissuade Yorick's queer male gaze and cause him to look upon Lorenzo with contempt and accusatory glances rather than take him in without question the way he did with La Fleur. Yorick as discussed above, takes in the young La Fleur only because of the protagonist's queer male gaze, the fact that his instant attraction to the young man's body pulls him into the process of subverting La Fleur's masculinity. Yorick's obsession with the young man's body drives this passion. This subversion does not happen with Lorenzo, even though sentimentality seems to be at play here. Reason dictates that people should give money to poor monks and other men of the cloth. Emotion, as readers see in Yorick's first reaction to Lorenzo, dictates otherwise. The disheveled man asking for money should be the type of person to which who Yorick, a pastor, no less, gives his money. However, upon his first gaze at Lorenzo, Yorick refuses.

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[36] Goring, introduction, xxix.

[37] Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, 7.

[38] Ibid.

Lorenzo proves problematic for Yorick's gaze in other ways, as well. Lorenzo himself seems to be of a sentimental nature, because, as Yorick describes Lorenzo, "[he] look'd at something beyond this world."[39] Lorenzo's perceived sentimentality, seeing something else in the world that reason cannot, gives Yorick pause as his gaze attempts and fails to sexualize and objectify Lorenzo's masculine body. As Yorick appears guided by emotion and carnal attraction, both of which are aspects of sentimentality that threaten self-subversion and self-subordination, encountering another sentimentalist throws his male gaze off-kilter, disallowing the gazer to take in this old man's body and subvert it. The carnal mortality of the body, as mentioned previously in Aydemir's work, is far too prevalent in the body of the old monk and, therefore, cannot transcend and be transfigured into a gazed object. Carnal mortality and sexual immorality cannot be applied through the queer male gaze to this grotesque display of sentimental masculinity found in Lorenzo, possibly because Lorenzo's masculinity has already been subverted, or at least subordinated, before Yorick ever meets him. Yorick tells readers that Lorenzo "abandon'd the sword and the sex together"[40] so that he could take "sanctuary, not so much in his convent as in himself,"[41] giving up his masculinity and masculine proclivities of warfare and fornication to, in a sense, find himself, something decidedly more unmasculine, even though not quite feminine. Even if Lorenzo's body presents itself as masculine, giving Yorick a moment's opportunity to attempt subversion through the queer male gaze, Lorenzo's unmasculine-but-not-quite-feminine sentimental nature somehow prevents Yorick's gaze from having an effect on both the gazer and the gazed.

The question of how this prevention occurs is one that cannot be left open without any discussion. William S. Wilkerson, in his book *Ambiguity and Sexuality: A Theory of Sexual Identity*, gives readers a possible answer for consideration regarding Yorick's queer male gaze and its failure to sexualize a male body, albeit an unattractive one. Wilkerson says, "Males engaged in active, insertive sexual behavior as a part of their masculinity; and females took the passive, receptive role as a part of their femininity."[42] Because Lorenzo gave up sexual relations, he is no longer participating in the patriarchal insertive sexual behavior that Wilkerson argues must be utilized in order to be classified as a male. This lack of maleness, though, does not make Lorenzo feminine; it merely makes him unmasculine. Without the passive and receptive role that Wilkerson says is required of women, Lorenzo lacks true womanness. This binary is not so cut and dry, however. Wilkerson takes his original binary and further complicates the matter: "Masculine comportment, mannerisms, and occupations indicated male, while feminine comportment, mannerisms, and occupations indicated female. A man who found himself acting effeminately would very likely be labeled as such."[43] When considering Lorenzo's gendered space as falling somewhere between male and female, due mainly to his presenting as male but giving up masculine traits for more feminine ones, norms and sentimentality mentioned by Adam Smith in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments.* Smith says, "The delicate sensibility required in civilized nations sometimes destroys the masculine firmness of the character."[55] The delicate sensibilities of Yorick and La Fleur allow the novel's protagonist to utilize the queer male gaze in his attempt to participate in complicit masculinity, destroying any "masculine" firmness that may have existed within the young Frenchman as a means to destroy any femininity that exists within himself. The same holds true for Yorick's interactions with Father Lorenzo and for his viewing of the men through his Parisian window. Sentimentality relies heavily on sensibility to operate; so, through tearing down and diminishing these characters' sensibilities, the issues with sentimentalism become more apparent. The sentimental "looks of simple subtlety,"[56] as Yorick says, become not so subtle when we, as readers, begin gazing into our own sentimentalities.

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid, 21.

[41] Ibid.

[42] William S. Wilkerson, *Ambiguity and Sexuality: A Theory of Sexual Identity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 80.

[43] Ibid.

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[55] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), V.ii.13.209.

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As a Child

Alexandra Savage

Together we sit,
on the bed of our
deflowering.

Separated by half a century,
and hundreds of miles,
but connected by the thread
that touches so many of us—
violates so many of us.

Woven into the tapestry of me
is the narrative of a man and his
hands.

Her fabric displays a story just like mine.
I see it in her
chaos,
in her storm and bellowing roar,
fearsome righteousness.

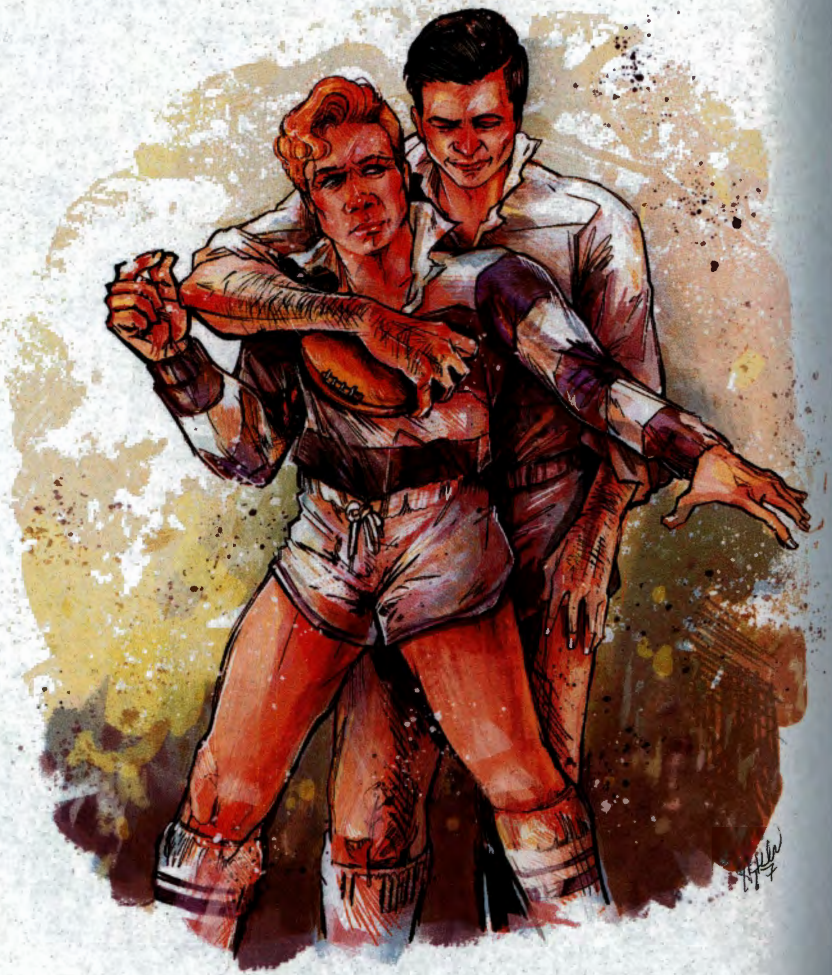
Is it any wonder
why our edges are
Torn?
Frayed?

Is it any wonder
why our corners are
Rough?
Jagged?

Let him touch
my tapestry again—
this time he'll find a
needle among
the softness of my cotton.

Ollie and Julian

Shannon Hochman



The Bachelor and the Old Maid: Gender Duality in Tabitha Gilman Tenney's *Female Quixotism*

Kaycee Chance

TABITHA GILMAN TENNEY'S 1801 NOVEL *FEMALE QUIXOTISM* grapples with several major themes throughout the story, while also providing a satirical commentary about the traditional romance novel. Essentially, *Female Quixotism* is a romance novel that highlights the perceived social dangers of romance novels through the disastrous courtships of the story's main character, Dorcasina Sheldon. This meta-commentary Tenney provides about the genre throughout the novel gives the entire story a dual nature that presents itself through thematic elements as well as structure. As the novel progresses, Tenney's descriptions of Dorcasina (both physical and emotional) become increasingly bleak and pathetic. At the start of the novel, Tenney portrays her heroine as a respected, smart, yet physically average young woman. But by the time the novel nears its end, Dorcasina is aged, balding, and fawning after much younger men, giving her an air of the literary grotesque. As the story progresses and Dorcasina ages, Tenney makes it rather clear that Dorcasina's worst enemy is her own relentless pursuit of real love, which reveals a larger theme about age, marriage, and gender in early American literature. The dualistic nature of *Female Quixotism*'s opening letter and Tenney's characterization of Dorcasina from young woman to old maid, when analyzed alongside the characterizations of several of her bachelor counterparts, namely Mr. Sheldon and Mr. Cumberland, highlight an important sub-textual commentary about stereotypes surrounding single, aging women during the time period.

Before the story *Female Quixotism* begins, Tenney opens the novel with a letter from someone called "The Compiler," an unnamed, androgynous character who provides an interesting preface to the story and hints at further themes about gender. The letter is addressed "To all Columbian Young Ladies, Who read Novels and Romances" and provides an important, gender-focused lens for the reading of *Female Quixotism*[1]. The author of the letter never reveals his or her gender, and there is an implied masculinity despite the apparent intended sense of femininity. The letter starts "Dear Girls," and the Compiler claims to have a firsthand account of Dorcasina Sheldon, "a knowledge of her entire history"[2]. The Compiler keeps reminding the female readers of the letter that this account is "an extraordinary piece of biography" and not a "mere romance," such as the ones Dorcasina is infatuated with (3)[3]. The sense of intimacy implied in the account of the Compiler leads readers to assume the gender of the Compiler as female. However, the same passionate proclamations of truth could hint at a male identity, as it was common in Tenney's time for women to be governed by their husbands and other men in their families and culture at large. Furthermore, Tenney's use of language in the letter further hints at masculinity. The Compiler calls his or her account "a true uncoloured history of a romantic country girl, whose head had been turned by the unrestrained perusal of Novels and Romances"[4]. The language of this statement, along with the rest of the letter, casts a sense of foreboding, as the Compiler further comments on Dorcasina's life as "despicable and miserable" and wishes to protect the women from a life of disaster (3)[5]. The Compiler's judgement of Dorcasina's life as a failure clearly identifies marriage as a common staple of success for women in early America, as the danger lies in becoming an old, single woman. The placement of this heavy sentiment so early in the book foreshadows that the stereotype of the older, single woman will be at play throughout the novel, and indeed, the juxtaposition of the bachelor and the old maid is a heavy focus for Tenney throughout *Female Quixotism*.

Despite the gender of the Compiler being unknown in the opening letter, Tenney manages to present Dorcasina as a Female Quixote early on, which hints at further sub-textual commentary—specifically about gender—in the subsequent plot of *Female Quixotism*. Sensing potential hesitation from the young female readers, the Compiler compares the accounts of the novel to those of *Don Quixote* as a staple of truth. The strangeness of this proclamation is two-fold: first, although the Compiler is comparing the two in a seemingly literal sense, *Don Quixote* could be read equally satirically or sub-textually; secondly, the Compiler grounds Dorcasina's mere existence in that of her male counterpart by providing "the celebrated hero of La Mancha" as Dorcasina's reference point. Dorcasina's inability to stand alone in any facet, demonstrated by the Compiler's need for a narrative comparison, hints further at Tenney's commentary about the double-standards of gender. *Don Quixote* and *Female Quixotism* are both novels that provide in-depth, satirical, dualistic, critical approaches to novel reading in early Spanish and American cultures. Assuming early American and current readers alike have knowledge of the earlier novel, Tenney provides an early clue about the dualistic nature of *Female Quixotism*, which becomes more complex as the story progresses.

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[1] Tenney, Tabitha Gilman, *Female Quixotism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 3.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

Throughout *Female Quixotism*, Dorcasina is deceived, hurt, and lied to by her suitors and sometimes even tricked and disrespected by her friends and family. Dorcasina's love for novels, a major component of her character, has made her blind, in a sense, to the real world. Although she faces consistently painful and disappointing courtships, Dorcasina refuses to give up on her romantic endeavors. In her article "Scratching the Surface: Reading Character in *Female Quixotism*," scholar Jessica Lang says of Dorcasina, "She repeatedly convinces herself that she possesses a special ability to recognize the true identity of a wooer that otherwise would remain hidden and so invites even more inappropriate liaisons than might otherwise have occurred"[6]. Despite Dorcasina's love for the novels and the happiness they provide her, Tenney provides the same dualistic treatment to this aspect of her characterization, as the very novels she treasures so deeply provide her endless heartache and disappointment. Early in the story Tenney establishes Dorcasina's love for romance novels as an undesirable aspect of her personality, stating, "Those, therefore, who were acquainted with this circumstance, notwithstanding the temptation of her money, and her agreeable person, were too prudent to think of seeking her in marriage..."[7]. Dorcasina remains blind to the idea that her knowledge and love of literature is a problem, and instead believes she has yet to find someone who can offer her the kind of romance she knows (from her novels) to exist.

Despite Tenney's early portrayal of Dorcasina as the Female Quixote and her focus on Dorcasina's love of literature, there are no further mentions of *Don Quixote*. Instead, Tenney focuses early in the novel on establishing the physical characterization of Dorcasina as quite different from desired women during the time period, which becomes increasingly important as Dorcasina ages. In an article titled "Imaginary Character of a Fine Woman," published in the *South Carolina Weekly Museum and Complete Magazine of Entertainment and Intelligence* just four years before Tenney published *Female Quixotism*, the unknown (obviously male) author describes the common characteristics of a desirable early American woman, "though we all know what women now are, it were worth inquiry to consider what women should be"[8]. The author goes on to describe the idyllic woman as someone who has "eyes that look humility and love," a complexion resembling "rose and lilly," and a "particular charm that arms her when she smiles"[9]. In addition to these physical characteristics, a "Fine Woman" should also be witty, refined, sensible, agreeable, and kind. While Dorcasina's personality certainly meets some of these perceived societal norms, Tenney's physical characterization of the novel's heroine feels intentionally argumentative towards standards of beauty and acceptance in early America and early American literature alike. She makes a cheeky, playful remark about how she "should" describe Dorcasina as having an "elegant form, delicately turned limbs, auburn hair, alabaster skin, heavenly languishing eyes," and much more in order to keep true to the genre of the early American romance novel[10]. However, she instead describes Dorcasina as "a middling kind of person; like the greater part of her countrywomen; such as no man would be smitten with at first sight, but such as any man might love upon intimate acquaintance"[11]. Dorcasina has a rough, dark complexion, a normal stature, and average features; however, she is smart, kind, caring, and has some control over the

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6 Lang, Jessica, "Scratching the Surface: Reading Character in *Female Quixotism*," Texas Studies in Literature and Language (51, no. 2, 2009), 119.

7 Tenney, Tabitha Gilman, *Female Quixotism*, 14.

8 "Imaginary Character of a Fine Woman," *South-Carolina Weekly Museum and Complete Magazine of Entertainment and Intelligence* (1 (Jan 1, 1797), 13.

9 Ibid.

10 Tenney, Tabitha Gilman, *Female Quixotism*, 5.

11 Ibid. 5-6.

money in her father's estate, which will someday be hers. Despite the playfulness with which Tenney delivers Dorcasina's description, the stark contrast she provides between Dorcasina and other romance novel heroines not only sets the tone for Dorcasina's chaotic adventures in love, but also highlights the sub-textual commentary about the physical expectations of women in early America. By pointing out to readers that there is, indeed, a way Dorcasina "should" be described, Tenney is calling for inquiry into why Dorcasina is set apart from these idealized standards, a question that lingers throughout the duration of the novel.

Over the course of *Female Quixotism*, it becomes abundantly clear that Tenney is providing sub-textual commentary about the common American stereotypes surrounding single, aging women, and she accomplishes this task by employing the common societal figures of the old maid and the bachelor. Women were not expected to work or earn an education in early America; instead, they were to find respectable men to marry and start families with, fulfilling their duties as wives and mothers. Of course, not all women could find husbands, and were referred to as "old maids." If a woman fit this role during the time period, it was assumed something was wrong with her that prevented her from marrying. In a 1791 poem titled "The Comforts of a Married Woman: and the Sufferings of Old Maids," the writer discusses the happiness of women who have found their sole purpose in the form of matrimony, and laments the old women who failed, claiming "When young this great command they spurn, / 'Increase and multiply' / But punish'd in their age they burn, / They languish and they die"[12]. Tenney's characterization of Dorcasina (and its rapid decline throughout the novel) makes it clear that ideas about how American society at large viewed single, aging women were on Tenney's mind when writing the novel.

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[12] "The Comforts of a Married Woman: and the Sufferings of Old Maids," *New York Weekly Museum* 151 (April 2, 1791), lines 21-24.

To strengthen this commentary, Tenney employs several male characters who fit the role of the bachelor, the counterpart of the old maid; however, the characterization of each man is much milder than that of Dorcasina, another nod by Tenney to American gender-norms. In a time when old maids were viewed by society as pitiful and unworthy, bachelors were treated with sympathy and kindness. For example, in a 1792 magazine article titled "The Bachelor's Apology," the author pities men who die alone, and provides many possible reasons such a scenario could arise, such as misfortune, ailing parents who need support, or unrequited love[13]. "The Bachelor's Apology" utilizes a tone much different than that of "The Comforts of a Married Woman: and the Sufferings of Old Maids," stating "Let him rest undisturbed in the earth, and his memory unreproached, while his name dies silently away, and is buried in oblivion forever"[14]. The juxtaposition of the two stereotypes is important to understand in order to fully analyze Tenney's thoughtful, multi-layered characterizations of Dorcasina and some of her male counterparts, mainly Mr. Sheldon and Mr. Cumberland.

One of the most important relationships in Dorcasina's life, aside from her novels, is the bond she has with her father, Mr. Sheldon. In addition to his importance to Dorcasina, his characterization by Tenney is essential to highlight her commentary about gender and marriage. Like Dorcasina, Mr. Sheldon loves to read and sees little wrong with her love of books, as he "unfortunately indulged his daughter in the full latitude of her inclination; never considering their dangerous tendency to a young inexperienced female mind..."[15]. In many ways, Mr. Sheldon is quite progressive with his views on women, as he treats Dorcasina very much like an equal, letting her have ownership over her own life and only stepping in only when he worries about her wellbeing. In addition, he also trusts her to manage money as she sees fit, which was quite uncommon for the time. Tenney establishes early in the novel that Mr. Sheldon is a widower who never remarried after Dorcasina's mother died when she was small. "By degrees his grief subsided, and his affection for his infant daughter increased, till it engrossed almost every thought of his mind; and his very existence seemed to be bound up with hers"[16]. Although Mr. Sheldon was married at one point, Tenney makes it clear that his reason for never remarrying was a lack of desire to do so. Instead, he focuses on raising Dorcasina and spending time enjoying his books as a conscious choice of bachelorhood. Undoubtedly, Mr. Sheldon is a positive, trustworthy figure in Dorcasina's life; however, the amount of similarities between him and his daughter draw clear attention to the treatment of their characterizations.

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[13] "The Bachelor's Apology." *The Massachusetts Magazine; or, Monthly Museum. Containing the Literature, History, Politics, Arts, Manners & Amusements of the Age* 4, no. 10 (October 1792), 614.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Tenney, Tabitha Gilman, *Female Quixotism*, 6.

Despite his being a country-dweller who does not like big cities, Mr. Sheldon is respected by members of his community, educated, and wealthy. In fact, there is little attention paid to the fact that he is a bachelor. Tenney never mentions any romantic interests for Mr. Sheldon or indicates that he feels his life is lacking, despite having spent much of it romantically alone. On the other hand, although Dorcasina displays many of the same positive attributes as her father, her entire existence essentially revolves around finding a spouse, as the plot of *Female Quixotism* takes its shape from her chaotic, messy romantic endeavors. When Dorcasina is still somewhat young, her father introduces her to a young man named Lysander, the son of one of his close friends. After a seemingly pleasant interaction between the two, Lysander extends an offer of companionship to Dorcasina, which she quickly refuses after being disappointed by his letter. "Not even the slightest compliment to her person; nothing of angel or goddess, raptures or flames; in the whole letter"[17]. Despite Dorcasina's desire for a spouse, she is unwilling to settle for someone she does not believe she loves, "She determined, therefore, without much deliberation, to answer it in plain terms, and to give him a flat refusal..."[18]. Dorcasina's refusal of Lysander, while similar to her father's choice not to pursue companionship aimlessly, is treated quite differently. Lysander questions why she, "with the greatest good sense and propriety," would refuse his offer, as it was common for a young woman like Dorcasina to marry someone of good standing like Lysander regardless of real romantic attraction[19]. It would not be uncommon for the time period for a man to simply decide a woman is senseless and foolish for her desire not to marry someone, as the intellectual role of women in early America was nearly non-existent. In an article from 1789 titled "Thoughts on Women," the author states that "As judgement then can come but from knowledge, I will readily agree, that the number of women who have solid judgement is very small"[20]. Because Dorcasina is so well-read and seemingly full of knowledge, it becomes impossible to ignore the social commentary Tenney is making. Despite Dorcasina's expression of many of the same characteristics as her father, her choice to remain single (even if just for the time being) is portrayed as senseless, and it is implied that she should have taken her opportunity with Lysander, as no one else will love someone so infatuated with romance novels. The main

[16] Ibid., 5.

[17] Tenney, Tabitha Gilman, *Female Quixotism*, 13.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] "Thoughts On Women." *The Christian's, Scholar's, and Farmer's Magazine: Calculated in an Eminent Degree, to Promote Religion; to Disseminate Useful Knowledge; to Afford Literary Pleasures and Amusement, and to Advance the Interest of Agriculture*, 1, no. 1 (Apr/May 1789), 86.

source of this foolishness and the implied judgements of Dorcasina harken back to the warning of the Compiler; Dorcasina's father is not viewed as foolish or senseless, because he is a lover of history books, so his decisions are not swayed by literature. In fact, Mr. Sheldon's decision to stay single even after Dorcasina is a young woman capable of caring for herself is never questioned or studied. The many similarities between Dorcasina and her father Mr. Sheldon are undoubtedly essential to understand Tenney's sub-textual commentary about the unfair, unrealistic expectations on women in early America. Just three years before *Female Quixotism* was published, an article titled "To The Fair Sex" by Timothy Touchstone was published in *The Philadelphia Minerva.* The author claims that men have practiced novel reading from time to time, but that no "man of learned powers" would have interest in reading novels[21]. The author goes on to claim about the "fair sex" much of what Tenney is dissecting throughout the novel through the themes of duality and gender. Dorcasina's love for literature being such a wretched part of her characterization, yet the same quality being seemingly harmless for Mr. Sheldon provides another sub-textual commentary about female characterization in both society and literature. This dualistic treatment of character is evident again in Dorcasina's interactions with Mr. Cumberland; Tenney uses their brief courtship to further dissect the stereotypes of the bachelor and the old maid.

In addition to the many important counterpoints Mr. Sheldon provides, another important bachelor in *Female Quixotism* is Mr. Cumberland, one of Dorcasina's later suitors. Mr. Cumberland is a complex and interesting character; he is nearly fifty, widowed, engaged in other romantic affairs, and a father to five. Despite these qualities, Mr. Sheldon still views him as an acceptable suitor for middle aged Dorcasina, now forty-five. Interestingly, Mr. Sheldon can overlook Mr. Cumberland's flaws with ease, because he is a good business man, punctual, and would be able to provide for Dorcasina[22]. Mr. Sheldon's actions seem heavy-handed, but they were rather common for the time. In an article titled "Laws in Massachusetts" from 1788, laws about marriage specifically state how it is the responsibility of the parents to find their children a spouse, something God commands[23]. As Dorcasina ages, her father does as well, so he wants to find her someone to settle down with, a common "burden" for parents. After many disappointing courtships in Dorcasina's life, the acceptance by her father is not surprising. Mr. Cumberland treats the proposal like a business interaction; he was a trader for work, which is a quality that translates into all areas of his characterization; for example, despite being unhappy because of Dorcasina's appearance, he is able to accept it "after considering the thousand a year" that she earns from her family estate[24]. The relationship between Mr. Cumberland and Dorcasina is cringe-worthy at times, and the situations between them provide more specific sub-textual commentary about the stereotypes of the bachelor and the old maid, specifically in the characterization of Mr. Cumberland and Tenney's characterization of Dorcasina from his perspective.

Tenney's portrayal of Mr. Cumberland feels quite intentional as a means to highlight her commentary about expectations of gender and marriage in early America. The primary way Tenney accomplishes this goal in *Female Quixotism* is by her treatment of Mr. Cumberland as a bachelor and Dorcasina as an old maid. Both characters have money and come from respectable families, but because Dorcasina is in her mid-forties, it is assumed by Mr. Cumberland that she will live up to certain expectations of being agreeable and industrious, despite disappointing his physical expectations. There is no inquiry into her true personality, largely because it is assumed she will accept his proposal joyfully simply because of her age. Although Dorcasina has always believed in true love and love at first sight, she does not want to agree to marry Mr. Cumberland, and feels his proposal before they even meet is cold and disheartening, which sets the tone for their further interactions and characterizations. Mr. Cumberland provides no false notions of love, but instead treats Dorcasina like a commodity, stating that she was his "purpose" for traveling there and it would be a shame to "return without having accomplished my object"[25] Dorcasina is disgusted with Mr. Cumberland and disappointed, confronting her father in a telling, rich scene: Mr. Sheldon states, "I find I must be plain with you ... and repeat that, at your age, you cannot expect either to experience or inspire a passion, which only belongs to youth..."[26] (207). Dorcasina tries to get her father to understand that she is perfectly happy remaining single unless she can find the kind of love she desires, but despite her father's early progressive views, he ultimately agrees with the societal views of his daughter as a failure if she remains alone in old age. Despite his similar decisions to be single, he struggles with the societal views of Dorcasina remaining single for the rest of her life.

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[21] Touchstone, Timothy, "To the Fair Sex," *The Philadelphia Minerva, Containing a Variety of Fugitive Pieces in Prose, and Poetry, Original and Selected* 4, no. 10 (April 7, 1798), 39.

[22] Tenney, Tabitha Gilman, *Female Quixotism*, 205.

[23] "Extracts from Ancient Records," *The American Magazine, Containing a Miscellaneous Collection of Original and Other Valuable Essays in Prose and Verse, and Calculated Both for Instruction and Amusement* 1 no. 5 (April 1788), 324.

[24] Tenney, Tabitha Gilman, *Female Quixotism*, 205.

After being rejected by Dorcasina, Mr. Cumberland briefly pursues Miss Stanly, as he was "struck with her youth, her figure, and her vivacity"[27]. The brief introduction of Miss Stanly to the interactions between Dorcasina and Mr.

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25 Tenney, Tabitha Gilman, *Female Quixotism*, 206.
26 Ibid., 207.
27 Ibid., 218.

Cumberland is purposeful, as it further highlights how little Mr. Cumberland cared for Dorcasina in the first place, easily replacing her with someone younger and more acceptable to popular beauty standards. Further illustrated in a popular culture piece from 1796, titled "Inconveniences Attending Beauty," the author states "A lovely face and graceful shape never fail to attract a multitude of admirers"[28]. Tenney's interpretation of this kind of popular belief takes place in these interactions and characterizations; although Mr. Cumberland portrays behavior that is bold, rude, and inappropriate—all behavior that would never be allowed for a woman—his flaws are treated the same as Dorcasina's decision to remain single. Seemingly, as stated in the primary text, this kind of behavior would be allowable for a bachelor. Tenney's inclusion of Mr. Cumberland highlights important sub-textual commentary about the unfair treatment of single, aging women in early America.

Similar to its opening, *Female Quixotism* ends with a letter. A single, elderly Dorcasina writes to her old friend Miss Stanly (now Mrs. Barry) lamenting a life wasted on reading and wishful thinking, writing, "The spell is now broken; the pleasing illusion has vanished"[29]. She commits herself to a life of charity work, and warns Mrs. Barry, if she has daughters, to keep them far away from romance novels. After a harrowing, tumultuous life of romantic endeavors, Dorcasina's letter reinforces the early warning of the Compiler, which could be Tenney's way of further reinforcing the duplicitous nature of Dorcasina and *Female Quixotism* as a whole. Despite Dorcasina's commitment to charity, a noble cause, Tenney hints at a dull, bleak existence for the old maid. Dorcasina writes in her letter, "However unjust and

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28 "Inconveniences Attending Beauty," *The Rural Magazine; or, Vermont Repository. Devoted to Literary, Moral, Historical, and Political Improvement* (August 1, 1795), 395.
29 Tenney, Tabitha Gilman, *Female Quixotism*, 323.

indelicate may be the opinion, that matrimony is essential to happiness, it is perhaps the first that a romantic girl forms. For myself, I candidly acknowledge that it has governed all the actions of my life"[30]. Ultimately, Dorcasina's refusal to give up on the love she believes to be possible because of her novels leaves her bitter and full of resent and regret, a disappointing ending to the novel. Tenney's final portrayal of Dorcasina as a bitter old maid reinforces her previous sub-textual commentary about the expectations surrounding gender and marriage in early America. *Female Quixotism* successfully functions as a multi-layered piece of social satire that attempts to understand popular beliefs about gender and marriage in early America. Tenney's portrayal of Dorcasina from average young woman to stubborn old maid, especially when studied alongside some of her male counterparts, provides a clear sub-textual lens for the reading of *Female Quixotism.*

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[30] Ibid. 324

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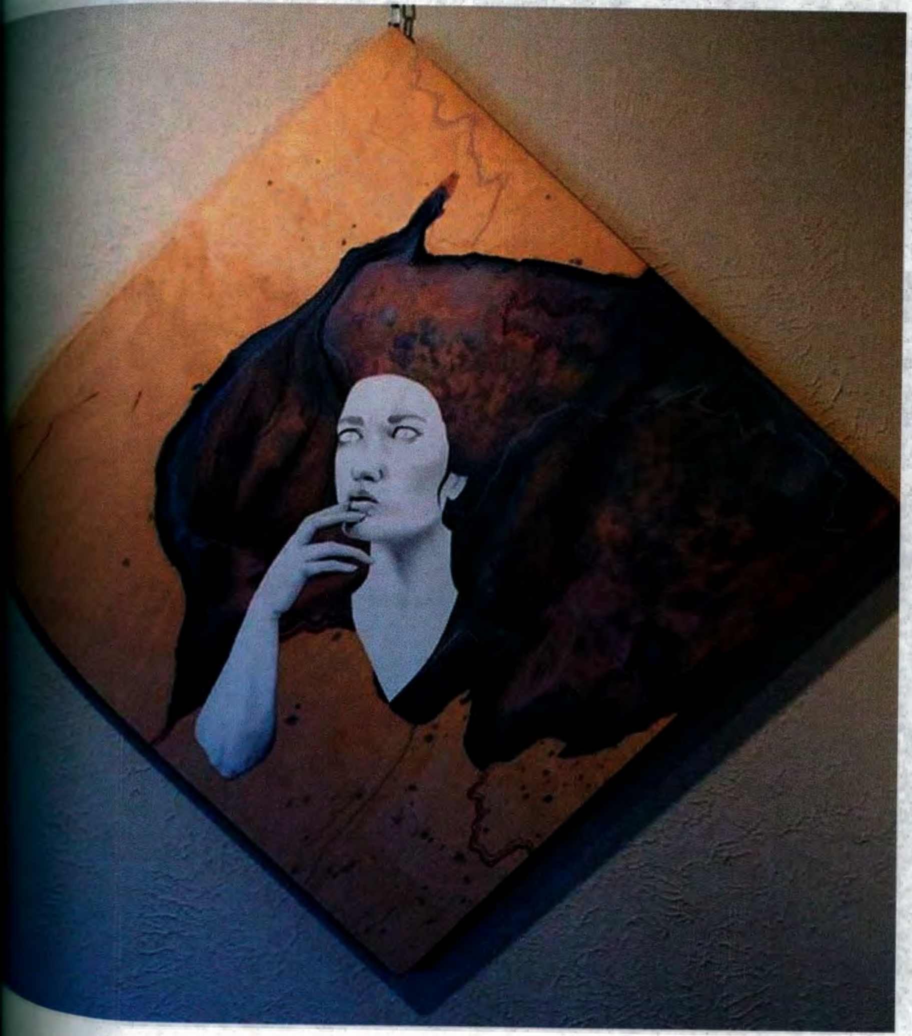
Artist Statement

Gretchen Rehfeld

In a society that emphasizes the value of individuality, I find a distressing gap in the acceptability of the human body in its unclothed state. I firmly believe our identity should grow from within, and my work tends to use the visual of the naked form to invoke and explore complex emotion. If those viewing my work will take a moment to put themselves into the piece, they will, for a moment perhaps, see themselves within and experience a familiarity and further gain insight into their own emotional landscape.

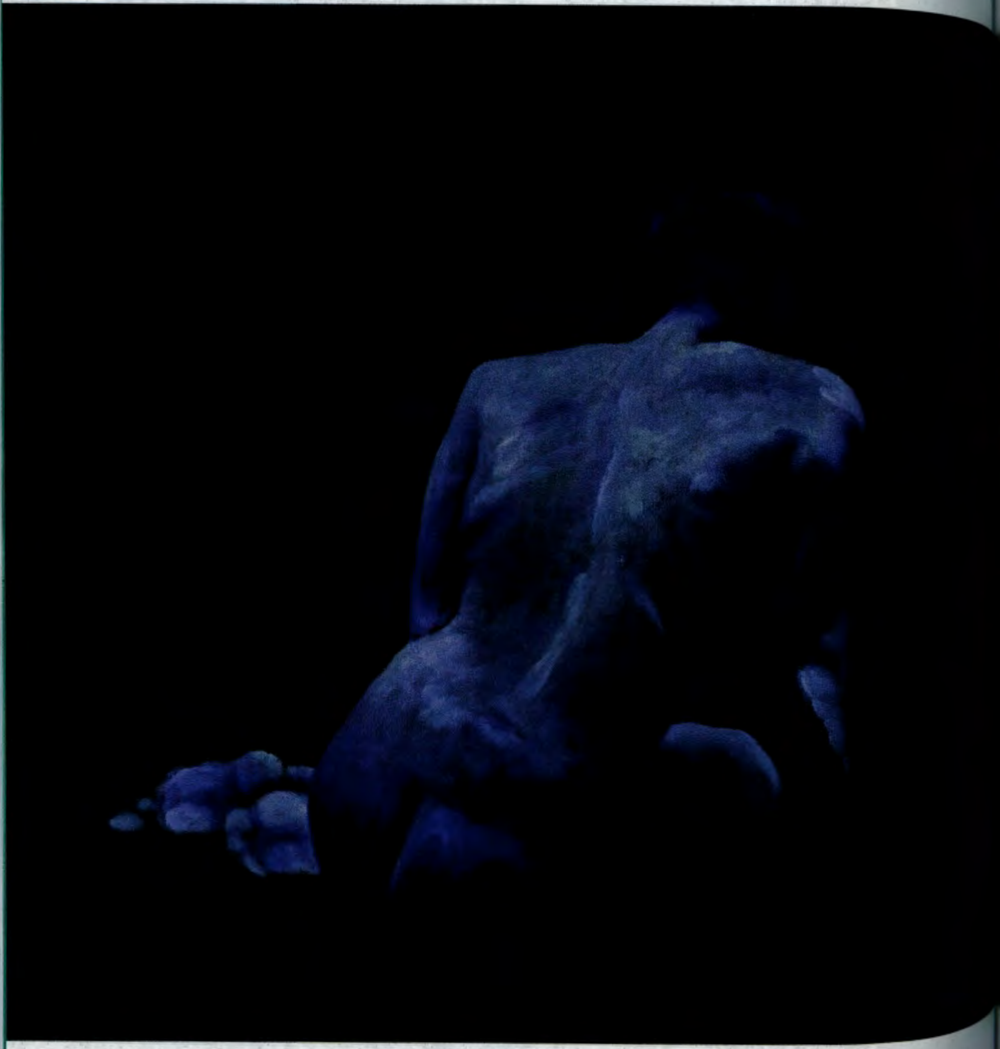
Nostalgia

Gretchen Rehfeld



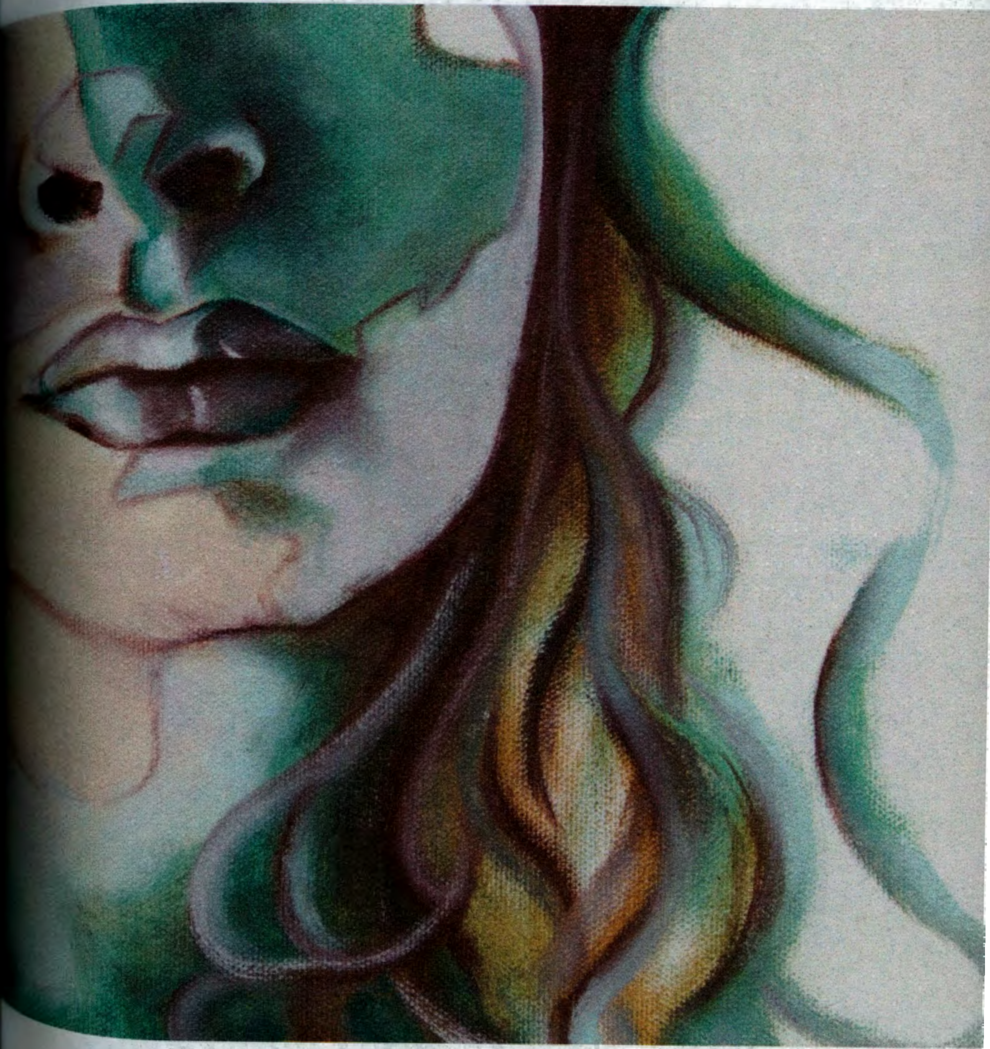
Moment

Gretchen Rehfeld



Ephemere

Gretchen Rehfeld



#TooSoon

Alexandra Savage

I would have named her Emmaline Catherine.
Or Avalon Rose.

She would have known to
#SayHerName, to cry out #HandsUpDontShoot, and that
#BlackLivesMatter.

She would have understood that
#Feminism has to be
#IntersectionalOrGTFO.

She would have laughed, bitter, at
#MaleEgoSoFragile and would have spat
#NotAllMen #JustMostMen like venom.

She would have been taught about
#JeSuisCharlie and she would have been
#StandingWithOrlando.

Her #SJW #Pulse would have pumped
#Rainbow blood through her veins as she marched
and screamed that Donald Trump is
#NotMyPresident.

Instead,
she came out.
Too soon, too soon.
A tiny red bean in a
sea of crimson,
swept out with the tide.
Left to rot
in the wastebasket of the bathroom.

I would have named her Emmaline Catherine.
Or Avalon Rose.

Interview

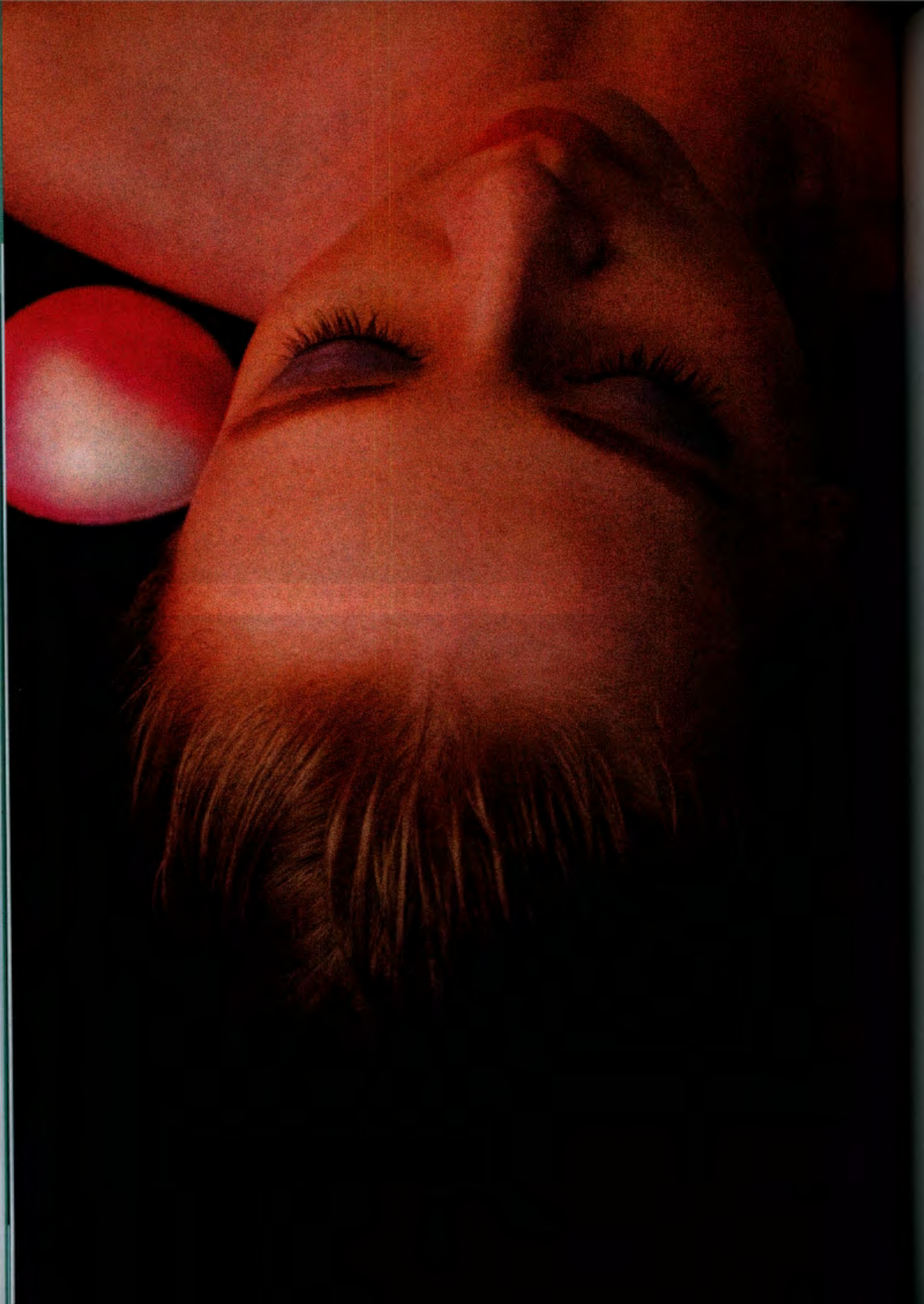
Nina Lucien

Gabi Glidewell

NINA LUCIEN AND I SAT ACROSS FROM EACH OTHER drinking coffee in my living room. Nina, a bit nervous, started answering my questions with thoughtful pauses between sentences. This is her first series published in a journal. Lucien has been a photographer for the past five years. When asked about what interested her in art she mentioned photographer Helmut Newton, as well as, directors Lars von Trier and Harmony Korine.

"I was influenced a lot by films," Nina recalled, "I love movies like *Nymphomaniac*, *Gummo*, and *Kids*. I've always loved beautiful films and those are part of what interested me in photography." Currently, she is focusing on incorporating art deco color schemes such as pinks, blues, reds, and greens into her work.

"I'm a really neurotic person so I'm really drawn to imagery surrounding certain subjects, like suffocation and silence." Lucien mused, "It's not a conscious thing a lot of the time, but I'm sure that a lot of what I find visually appealing is heavily influenced by my experiences." She further explained how her photography focuses on the model as her canvas. "[My photography] is entirely about the model, but nothing about the model."



When asking about her creative process a smile slowly crept across her face. "Ultimately, I get immense personal enjoyment from thinking about the way my photos are going to look. It's a lot about the process." She started chuckling and said, "and sometimes that process involves gluing over 70 cigarettes to a back drop in my yard."

Her work featured in *The Central Dissent* are moving photographs that explore issues of gender, sexuality, consumerism, and intimacy. "Lots of people think nudity means something is sexual. But it's not. It's not porn, nudity is not inherently sexual. Humanity has always captured the human body in art, nudity is just more interesting. It makes the piece more vulnerable."

She continued to discuss the double standard between men and women in the industry. "If a man was taking the pictures I am no one would ask about how his gender or sexuality affected his work outside of the 'male gaze.' But because I'm a gay woman people question my art because of it. I'm a feminist, and I'm an artist, but I do not necessarily make art because I'm a feminist or a woman."

"I want to eventually move from photography to film." Nina continued, "I want to be a director and I want to be able to support myself with my art. I just don't want to have to do data entry." I asked about her advice for young queer aspiring artists and she started laughing at me again. "I'm a young queer aspiring artist. But I would have to say to study other photos. Don't be scared to make it yourself. Don't wait for a picture to happen."

"I'm really excited about *The Central Dissent*. I think it will be good for Edmond and for UCO to have something like this. I think the Center is doing important work."

Nina will be featured next at the Paseo Photography Festival throughout the month of September at The Paseo Art Space in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. To see more of her work, go to her website ninalucienphotography.com. To inquire about her work please contact her at dm.nina.lucien.photography@gmail.com.

As A Mother

Kayelee Howard

As a mother,
I had created a hypothetical plan for all of my daughters.
I had a plan that they would grow up and do great things.
I had a plan that they would walk down the isle...to a man.

As a mother,
I busted my ass to give my daughters everything they needed.
I thought I was doing everything right,
But evidentially not.

As a mother,
I do not understand what went wrong.
I just want her to be with a man,
Is that too much to ask?

As a mother,
I take everything my daughters do personally.
Is this something I did?
Could I have prevented this somehow?

As a mother,
I want my daughters happy.
As long as they are good people and they are happy,
That should be good enough right?

As a mother,
Why don't I feel like that is enough?

Halters Round Their Necks: Queer Ecofeminism in *Moby-Dick*

Rachel Copeland

> *All men live enveloped in whale-lines.*
> *All are born with halters round their necks.*
> –Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*

AT A TIME WHEN AMERICA WAS BECOMING AN independent nation, literature was continually reinforcing the concept of America as a wild frontier, waiting to be conquered. The belief that the United States was destined to expand to the Western shore, or manifest destiny, captured the imagination of writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson, who envisioned a beckoning wilderness, ready to be shaped by the whims of man. Less than twenty years after Emerson published "Nature," Herman Melville published *Moby-Dick*, a wild, seafaring adventure with a healthy respect for the unknowability of nature and a hidden core of sexual anxiety and ambivalence. An ecocritical glance at Melville's unwieldy masterpiece yields an understanding of the author's complicated relationship to the sea and to whaling in particular, but to focus solely on Melville's treatment of nature ignores the clear relationship between sexuality and nature in the novel. By taking a queer ecofeminist approach, the concepts of manifest destiny and nature connect to homosexuality and gender. Various parts of *Moby-Dick* contribute to a queer ecofeminist reading, including Ishmael, Ahab, the racial "others" such as Queequeg, and, of course, the eponymous character. Melville's magnum opus provides a rebuttal to the notion of manifest destiny, proposes a new social order, and ultimately rejects it as unachievable in Western society.

Before lighting upon the branch of feminist ecocriticism, the topic of ecocriticism must be explored in the context of *Moby-Dick*. As Cheryll Glofelty succinctly explains, "Simply defined, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment"[1]. Any work of literature that focuses in some way on the environment can be filtered through this lens. According to Lawrence Buell, "American literature has been considered preoccupied with country and wilderness as setting, theme, and value in contradistinction to society and the urban"[2]. Using nature as a wellspring of metaphorical potential, American writers conceptualized a world in which humans were destined to inherit nature. The concept of manifest destiny had already taken root in the American consciousness around the time that Melville wrote *Moby-Dick*. However, Melville provides a more complicated relationship with nature; rather than simply dominate it, he actively struggles with it, ultimately concluding that nature, in fact, is indomitable. To complicate this relationship, the topic of gender can also be explored in the context of nature. One distinct feature of environmental writing is the tendency to assign a gender to both nature and civilization. Though often

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1 Glotfelty, Cheryll and Harold Fromm, *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1996), xviii.

2 Buell, Lawrence, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (Cambridge: Belknap, 1996), 33.

writers assign femaleness to nature, Buell credits Leslie Fiedler with articulating how "Wilderness in American writing serves as a liminal site for male self-fulfillment in recoil from adult responsibility associated with female-dominated culture in the settlements"[3]. In this sense, wilderness can be considered a place where men can retreat from civilization and "go back to" nature, à la Thoreau. In *Moby-Dick*, nature and the wilderness extends to the ocean—a completely female-free environment.

Feminism and gender studies further complicates ecocriticism by foregrounding the subconscious gendered approach that writers take toward nature writing. As Stacy Alaimo points out, "feminist theory and gender studies have demonstrated... that many unmarked, ostensibly ungendered fields, modes, and sites of inquiry have been shaped by the social categories of gender, race, class, and colonialism"[4]. Just as history is told by conquerors, almost all of literature up to a certain point is formed by male voices. By that same token, nature—inherently unable to voice itself—is gendered without its consent. In her essay "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism," Greta Gaard connects ecofeminism to queer theory using Val Plumwood's critique of Western thought's perpetuated binary, which holds that two categories of being are linked, oppositional, and inherently prioritized—for instance, male/female or white/black[5]—to critique how "heterosexuality and its associated gender identities are taken as the standard in dominant Western culture, and queers are defined primarily in relation to that standard, and our failure to comply

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3 Ibid.

4 Alaimo, Stacy. "Feminist Science Studies and Ecocriticism: Aesthetics and Entanglement in the Deep Sea," in *The Oxford Handbook of Ecocriticism*, edited by Greg Garrard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 188.

5 Gaard, Greta, "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism," *Hypatia* 12, no. 1 (1997): 116.

with it"[6]. The topic of nature presents problems for those who dispute what, exactly, constitutes nature. To define what is natural is to also define what is unnatural. Gaard explains: "Contradictions such as this are of no interest to the master, though such contradictions have been of great interest to feminists and queer theorists alike, who have argued that it is precisely such contradictions that characterize oppressive structures"[7]. Using queer ecofeminism as a lens reveals that the gendered focus of *Moby-Dick* provides a critique of these oppressive structures.

To complicate the use of queer ecofeminism, I would like to propose that *Moby-Dick* is, partly, a rebuttal that problematizes the notion of manifest destiny. The belief that the United States was destined to extend "from sea to shining sea" (to borrow a turn of phrase) permeates writing in the nineteenth century. As Kris Fresonke explains, "The plot of manifest destiny, bequeathed to us from the religious community that launches so much of our canonical literature, expands in the nineteenth century along with the territories it has to absorb"[8]. In this regard, *Moby-Dick* responds to both the religious undertones of manifest destiny as well as the unwieldy nature of its grasping arms—the crew of the Pequod sails around the world and, by extension, conquers the sea and its inhabitants in the name of America. As Ralph Waldo Emerson philosophizes in "Nature," "Every rational creature has all nature for his dowry and estate. It is his, if he will. He may divest himself of it; he may creep into a corner, and abdicate his kingdom, as most men do, but he is entitled to the world his constitution"[9]. For Emerson, nature was meant to be both

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[6] Ibid. 118

[7] Ibid. 119

[8] Fresonke, Kris, *West of Emerson: The Design of Manifest Destiny* (Berkely, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 9.

[9] Emerson, Ralph Waldo, "Nature," in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature: 1820-1865*. Edited by Nina Baym and Robert S. Levine (New York, NY: Norton, 2012), 220.

appreciated and harnessed for man's own purpose, a paradoxical proposal that allows for nature to be shaped into unnatural forms. At the same time, Emerson personifies Nature as a female—something that invites man's domination. He entices the reader, proclaiming that "Nature stretcheth out her arms to embrace man, only let his thoughts be of equal greatness. Willingly does she follow his steps with the rose and violet, and bend her lines of grandeur and grace to the decoration of her darling child"[10]. In this regard, the land that would become the United States is lying supine, begging to be conquered and shaped by man's benevolent hand. As Fresonke explains, "Our nationalism is, it seems, a bequest from nature, a cognitive faculty that makes possible our mastery of our world"[11]. To that end, extending this invitational concept of nature to encompass the sea of *Moby-Dick* seems logical when considering the subversive homosexuality at play throughout the novel—the sea, as the unknowable, invites men to conquer Nature without having to conquer their own nature.

When applying a queer ecofeminist lens to Emerson, we can see how pernicious the idea of manifest destiny can be. Though Melville focuses on the ocean in his narrative, the concept of manifest destiny can be applied to *Moby-Dick* as well. As Alaimo explains, "the ocean has been portrayed as the earth's last frontier or wilderness, which, in terms of American mythology, positions it as the place for narratives of domination"[12]. According to Gaard, "from an ecofeminist perspective, we learn that Western culture has constructed nature as a force that must be dominated if culture is to prevail"[13]. If, based on Emerson's writing, nature is female, Western culture must be male; indeed, Western culture is formed largely by male influence. In this sense, Western culture aligns with the notion of the for male self-fulfillment in recoil from adult responsibility"[23]. In seeking the succor of the sea, Ishmael also seeks to find himself. At the same time, the "tormenting, mild image" strikes Ishmael as haunting; if the image is mild, perhaps it is more socially acceptable than is possible for Ishmael. Despite that, leaving the land for the sea allows him to go where the laws of nature are wilder than that of the tamed American wilderness. He finds a futility in staying amidst society as it has been established in early America: binary, restrictive, and formed by the notion of "nature" as something to be tamed, conquered, and suppressed.

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[10] Ibid. 221.

[11] Fresonke, Kris, *West of Emerson*, 124.

[12] Alaimo, Stacy. "Feminist Science Studies and Ecocriticism," 193.

[13] Gaard, Greta, "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism," 120.

At the same time, whaling represents a new opportunity for both the grasp of manifest destiny and the suppression of homosexuality. To establish the reputability of whaling, Ishmael offers an impassioned declaration: "It was the whaleman who first broke through the jealous policy of the Spanish crown… [and] eventuated the liberation of Peru, Chili, and Bolivia from the yoke of Old Spain, and the establishment of the eternal democracy in those parts"[24]. This declaration contextualizes whaling as a civilizing endeavor—it brought democracy to the wilderness before any other enterprise could do so. While whaling purportedly brings freedom, it also brings suppression. When describing the benefits of whaling to the United States at large, Ishmael aggrandizes it: "[the world pays] us the profoundest homage; yea, an all-abounding adoration for almost all the tapers, lamps, and candles that burn round the globe, burn, as before so many shrines, to our glory!"[25]. If the goal of manifest destiny is to spread further and conquer more, the act of whaling offers another extension of this dream. To "civilize" the seas, the whale must be caught, killed, maimed, and repurposed—and repurposed for an entirely human need to extend their hours of wakefulness via candlelight. And, as will be established later, the symbolism of the whale is inherently masculine and queer; in this context, the world that burns these whale oil candles also complicitly suppresses the latent homosexuality of the sea by burning a purified, processed version of the raw spermaceti.

In this light, the practice of whaling in itself is akin to being homosexual. Though homosexuality does not enter the lexicon until much later, its practices carried a stigma: "homosexual acts were castigated as sinful excesses, moral transgressions of biblical injunctions"[26]. According to Ishmael, "this business of whaling has somehow come to be regarded among landsmen as a rather unpoetical and disreputable pursuit" because of its "uncleanliness" and "disordered slippery decks"[27]. Both homosexuality and whaling exist outside of the norm, deemed too extreme to be acceptable. Yet Ishmael finds peace in the daily life on board the whaling ship, regardless of the stigma. In "The Mast-Head," he notes the pleasure of daydreaming while looking for whales, saying "There you stand, a hundred feet above the silent decks, striding along the deep… while beneath you and between your legs, as it were, swim the hugest monsters of the sea"[28]. He finds no terror in the thought of monsters between his legs because he knows that the monsters are just misunderstood emblems of nature, like him.

Though writers like Emerson feminized nature, the sea in *Moby-Dick* provides more male-centric pleasures. As Greta Gaard explains, "From a queer ecofeminist perspective… we can explore how nature is feminized, eroticized, even queered"[29]. Melville characterizes the sea and whaling as erotically male, from the phallic imagery of the whales and the harpooning equipment to the visceral reality of whale parts such as whale steak, penis, and the all-important spermaceti. Never is the maleness of the sea and whaling more clear than in the chapter "A Squeeze of the Hand," in which Ishmael finds ecstasy in squeezing the spermaceti:

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[23] Buell, Lawrence, *The Environmental Imagination*, 33.
[24] Melville, *Moby-Dick*, 99.
[25] Ibid. 98.
[26] Gaard, "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism," 120.
[27] Melville, *Moby-Dick*, 97-98.
[28] Ibid. 133.
[29] Gaard, "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism," 119.

> Such an abounding, affectionate, friendly, loving feeling did this avocation beget; that at last I was continually squeezing their hands, and looking up into their eyes sentimentally; as much as to say,—Oh! my dear fellow beings, why should we longer cherish any social acerbities, or know the slightest ill-humor or envy! Come; let us squeeze hands all round; nay, let us all squeeze ourselves into each other; let us squeeze ourselves universally into the very milk and sperm of kindness.[30]

The homoerotic symbolism of this sperm-squeezing is clear, but what is remarkable is Ishmael's complete and unabashed happiness in this act. His happiness contrasts wildly with the beginning of the novel, in which he "[finds himself] growing grim about the mouth"[31]. If Ishmael sees civilization as the heteronormative hegemony from which he wants to be free, then the act of squeezing sperm—an act that physically brings him closest to the symbol of nature, the whale—represents pure freedom. As he notes in the same passage, this pleasurable act cannot be sustained, as "in all cases man must eventually lower, or at least shift, his conceit of attainable felicity; not placing it anywhere in the intellect or the fancy; but in the wife, the heart, the bed..."[32]. Clearly, Ishmael recognizes that pure joy of squeezing sperm—and all that implies—are not "attainable" because, in the context of civilization, it is not acceptable behavior, and he must settle for a heteronormative existence. Only in the natural world of the sea does this homosexual pleasure carry no stigma.

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[30] Melville, *Moby-Dick*, 322-323.
[31] Ibid. 18.
[32] Ibid. 323.

In the novel, the eponymous whale occupies an ambiguous space; he is natural/unnatural, life/death, predator/prey. Though he represents multiple binaries, he also transcends each because he also represents the "indeterminacy, indefinability, [and] unknowability" that drives queer theory[33]. Melville hints toward Moby Dick's unknowability from the start with an idiosyncratic etymology of the word "whale," followed by a collection of extracts that mention whales[34]. These entries, both humorous and disturbing in equal measure, establish the human perception of this creature; its proportions boggle the mind—"the aorta of a whale is larger in the bore than the main pipe of the water-works at London bridge"[35]. In "Cetology," Melville pokes fun at attempts to define and categorize whales, pronouncing "to be short, then, a whale is a *spouting fish with a horizontal tail.* There you have him"[36]. He classifies whales in terms of book size—folio, octavo, duodecimo—as if to signal to the audience: this is all bullshit. To attempt to categorize the mysteries of nature is folly, so the chapter that purports to do so is full of silliness. Paradoxically, though, Moby Dick himself can be categorized as a symbol of homosexuality because of his indefinability. From the start, Melville emphasizes Moby Dick's otherness with phallic and seminal imagery. Aside from the already-established seminal imagery of the spermaceti, the whale of legend is "seen gliding at high noon through a dark blue sea, leaving a milky-way wake of creamy foam"[37]. These phallic and seminal undertones extend to all the sperm whales: "Turn another page, and we are in *Moby-Dick*'s most totemic chapter, which focuses on the whale's penis, a grandissimus so heavy it takes three men to carry it"[38]. Melville takes no pains to hide this imagery—scholars have remarked upon it for decades.

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[33] Garrard, Greg, "How Queer is Green?" *Configurations* 18, no. 1 (2010): 76.
[34] Melville, *Moby-Dick*, 7-17.
[35] Ibid. 13.
[36] Ibid. 117.
[37] Ibid. 155.

Throughout the novel, Ahab chases Moby Dick to express frustration at his own powerlessness against nature. As Herrmann notes, "The lameness afflicting [Tommo's] leg [in *Typee*] ... corresponds mythologically to an injury to phallus"[39]. The same mythological leg/phallus imagery can be found in *Moby-Dick* with Ahab's missing leg. To compound this symbolism, Moby Dick himself is to blame for the missing limb: "aye, my hearties all round; it was Moby Dick that dismasted me; Moby Dick that brought me to this dead stump I stand on now"[40]. In this context, his monomaniacal pursuit of the whale expresses his impotent rage at nature for unmanning him. If this phallic imagery was not already sufficient, the harpoons used against the whales are, too, phallic symbols. As Camille Paglia notes in "*Moby-Dick* as Sexual Protest," "the harpoon Ahab darts at *Moby-Dick* is a phallic mental projection, born of frustrated desire"[41]. For Ahab, the wild, masculine force of nature that is Moby Dick represents a threat to his own wild masculinity, and thus the whale must die so that Ahab can reclaim his manhood.

Though somewhat puzzling, the inclusion of somewhat roughly-sketched multiracial characters makes sense from a queer ecofeminist standpoint. As Greta Gaard explains, with this perspective, "we can also examine how persons of color are feminized, animalized, eroticized, and naturalized"[42]. Camille Paglia notes that "Each ["pagan harpooneer"] bears some hermaphroditic sign: Tashtego and Fedallah have long hair; Daggoo wears golden hoops; Queequeg's body is adorned with tattoos that burn with 'Satanic blue flames'"[43]. Indeed, Ishmael in particular is captivated by these harpooners, none more so than Queequeg, whom Melville establishes as Ishmael's particular friend, and possible lover, in early chapters of the novel. Writers in the nineteenth century considered people like Queequeg to be "noble savages"—their perceived closeness to nature was a sign of their inherent nobility. Ahab, too, is tied to another "pagan" when Fedallah, magically, appears to become Ahab's harpooner. Steven Herrmann draws parallels between "the image of same-sex marriage between Ishmael and Queequeg and... the same-sex pairing between Ahab and Fedallah"[44]. As if both Ahab and Ishmael need a partner who is considered "closer to nature," Melville draws parallels between the two in order to show the latent sexual desire toward nature, and its representative otherness, within both characters. This final point solidifies what Leslie Fiedler posits in *Love and Death in the American Novel*: "Though Ahab and Ishmael are opposites, they are also one—two halves of a single epic hero; and only in their essential unity is the final unity of the book to be found. What Melville disjoined, in a typically American stratagem of duplicity, the reader must re-unite"[45]. Ishmael and Ahab are intrinsically linked by the former's desire to repurpose nature and that latter's desire to possess and destroy it.

Ultimately, the natural haven envisioned by Melville cannot be sustained. With the lens of queer ecofeminism, we can see how the concept of manifest destiny brings about the Pequod's demise. To attempt to conquer nature in the form of the whale is futile; to attempt to suppress or express homosexuality is similarly futile. In the end, as Moby Dick pulls the Pequod down to hell, he does so in a raging, yonic whirlpool: "concentric circles seized the lone boat itself, and all its crew, and each floating oar, and every lance-pole, and spinning, animate and inanimate, all round and round in one vortex, carried the smallest chip of the Pequod out of sight"[46]. But there is one bright spot amongst this destruction of the possibility of homosexuality in nature: in the epilogue, Ishmael survives because of Queequeg's coffin-buoy, the one remaining symbol of homosexual love, an enduring phallic symbol of hope for Ishmael. His subsequent rescue and return to civilization, hinted at in "The Town-Ho's Story," shows that for Ishmael, at least, reintegrating and challenging heteronormative society is possible.

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[38] Paglia, Camille, "Moby-Dick as Sexual Protest," *Moby-Dick*, edited by Hershel Parker and Harrison Hayford, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Norton, 2002), 699.

[39] Herrmann, "Melville's Portrait of Same-Sex Marriage in Moby-Dick," 72.

[40] Ibid. 139.

[41] Paglia, "Moby-Dick as Sexual Protest," 701.

[42] Gaard, "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism," 119.

[43] Paglia, "Moby-Dick as Sexual Protest," 700.

[44] Herrmann, "Melville's Portrait of Same-Sex Marriage in Moby-Dick," 70.

[45] Fiedler, Leslie, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (Champaign: Dalkey, 1998), 386.

In *Moby-Dick*, the relationship between sexuality and the environment is multivalent; nature is both queer and heteronormative, mystic and commonplace, inviting and brutal, wild and conquerable. Various elements of the novel point to a queer ecofeminist reading that problematizes the notion of manifest destiny by placing a group of American misfits upon the ocean, where nature's pull opens the door for sexualities beyond civilization's heteronormativity. The novel's ending, violent and sudden, discards the posited social order aboard the ship. Though men like Ishmael, Ahab, and Queequeg are happy at sea, away from society, the novel reinforces the idea that Melville's idealized genderqueer society cannot sustain itself.

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[46] Melville, *Moby-Dick*, 426.

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Her

Kayelee Howard

It was a warm, sunny day the first time I saw her.
She was wearing a black romper and black heels
With her sunglasses on and her pink and
black purse hanging on her arm.
The way she walked toward me demanded all my attention.
She was beautiful.
She is beautiful.

I was nervous.
I consciously had to tell myself to close my mouth
when she got out of the car.
I was in awe of her beauty.
I looked at what I was wearing: Nike joggers and a t-shirt.
I quickly realized I was underdressed,
But all I could see and think about was her.

I was afraid to look at her when she took off her sunglasses.
I knew that the moment I looked into those eyes
I would be hers forever.
I was right.
When I finally turned to look,
She was looking back at me.

Her eyes,
Blue, grey, and beautiful.
She was captivating.
Her laugh,
Loud, contagious, and unapologetic.
I could listen to that laugh all day.

I could not take my eyes off of her.
She did not seem to mind though,
She kept staring right back at me.
My heart felt like it was going to beat out of my chest.
With every touch of her hand,
I fell for her more and more.

Fast-forward two months,
Her eyes are still my favorite thing to see.
Her laugh is still my favorite thing to hear.
Her touch still makes my heart go crazy in my chest.
I have completely fallen for her,
And she has fallen for me.

Contributors

Kate Beasley graduated from the University of Arkansas with her B.A. in History in 2015. Currently, she is working on her M.A. in History-Museum Studies at the University of Central Oklahoma and expects to graduate Fall 2017. Kate works as the Guest Services Specialist at the Ninety-Nines Museum of Women Pilots. After graduation, she plans on continuing her education by pursuing a Museum Studies PhD.

Nicholas A. Brush has published and presented Shakespearean criticism around the country. His poetry has been featured in such publications as *Jazz Cigarette*, *November Bees*, *Dragon Poet Review*, and *Cuento Magazine*. Nicholas earned his B.A. in English from Cameron University, and he is currently finishing his M.A. in English Literature/Traditional Studies at the University of Central Oklahoma.

Kaycee Chance is a Masters Student in Creative Writing at UCO, where she is working on her thesis in poetry. This collection, titled *Feral* explores the intersection between mental health, class, gender, and region while also drawing on the human and animal connection. Kaycee's academic work often focuses on the role of gender, sexuality, and gender politics in various literature or film. Kaycee's work has previously been published in *New Plains Review*.

Rachel Copeland is in her final semester as a 20th and 21stcentury literature major graduate student at UCO. She graduated magna cum laude from Cameron University with a degree in English Education. She has taught at both the secondary and collegiate levels. She is married to the most dangerous of beasts: a poet.

Shannon Hochman is an illustrator and writer. Born and raised in Washington, D.C., Shannon moved to New York City to study traditional animation at Manhattan's School of Visual Arts. After ten years in the big city (and enough drama to fuel at least ten novels), Shannon took a risk and hauled his entire life to the deep American south, where he attended graduate school at the Savannah College of Art and Design. There, he had the epiphany that his artwork and his writing was meant to go hand-in-hand, which defined his creative identity. In Shannon's opinion, illustration has a place in books for all ages, including fiction for adults. This spawned a project which would eventually become *OLLIE*, his debut novel.

Kayelee Howard is a senior at the University of Central Oklahoma, majoring in General Studies with a concentration in physical education. After graduation, she plans to attend the Athletic Training program at the University of Central Oklahoma to further her education.

Gretchen Rehfeld is a multidisciplinary artist based in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma whose heart is equally divided between her love for outdoor adventures and her artist portrayal of the human form. When she's not scrambling over hillsides in the wilderness avoiding bugs along the way, she is obsessing over the colors and contours that cascade through her artwork.

Edith Ritt-Coulter is a second year Masters student in the History and Geography Department where she focuses on gender and sexuality within the African Diaspora. She is currently working on her Masters Thesis " By the Hands of Those Unseen: The Gendering of the Black Body in the United States Lynching Culture." and hopes to pursue her Ph.D in the African Diaspora in the future.

Alexandra Savage is a UCO senior pursuing a bachelor's degree in Creative Writing with a minor in Gender & Sexuality Studies. Her primary area of focus is genre fiction novels, but she dabbles in the poetic arts when others insist. The only thing in existence that she loves more than worldbuilding is her pet rabbit, Sirius Lee Blackbuns.

Butterfly

Kaylee Howard

So much of my life
I have hidden who I am.
I have lied
To myself and everyone else around me.
I am done lying and hiding.
I am a lesbian just as much as I am a human.
The amount of relief I feel from saying
those words has changed my life.
I love who I am.
I have grown to be more confident.
I have started living for myself and not for others.
I have escaped from my lifelong cocoon
And I have become a butterfly.
My wings have always been deep down inside of me.
I just had to crawl out of my comfortable cocoon
In order to experience the life I was meant to live.

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