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Volume 2

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EDITORS' NOTE

Welcome to the second issue of the student journal *Satura*. We are proud to present this collection of articles by students of WWU. Volume 2 features eight articles spanning the fields of anthropology, book history, literary and cultural studies, as well as linguistics and teaching English as a foreign language. This is the first issue to feature an article from the Department of Anthropology (Ethnologie Institut) of our university. The themes of the papers in this volume include a discussion of the importance of teaching critical thinking when using historical films in EFL classrooms; an analysis of the speech patterns of *RuPaul's Drag Race's* contestants; a contemplation on changes in published texts and collation of modern texts; a critique of the representation of mental illness in contemporary US-American TV-shows; a corpus-based analysis of Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign; teaching intercultural communicative competence at *Berufskolleg;* a discourse about governmental restrictions and online hashtags that are an important part of an organisation of feminist movement in Germany; and last but not least is an article on Shakespeare that questions the identities of the monsters in *Macbeth* and what that tells us about the culture they were born into.

There is much more in this issue of *Satura*. We are excited to present the Creative Writing section of the journal this year with a gripping excerpt from the previously unpublished novel *Mister Peep* - a story of power and violence that men exercise over women in the Nigerian university system and how the roles can be reversed. Also included is the mindful and strong poem *Enough,* that touches upon the power of words and asks questions that everyone can relate to. And there is *Body* – a poem that rhythmically examines what is deep inside and on the surface, how it lives with the world outside and the world within.

What do we want when we work on *Satura?* We are looking for diversity and encouragement. We are a learning and sharing experience. The team of the second issue of our journal has worked hard to bring the academic and creative writing pieces to our readers. We improved our skills and learned from our mistakes. The result of this collaborative work is a stepstone for both the authors and the editorial team. The second issue has the year 2019 on it but it comes to you in 2020 due to the complications in the publication process. We are nonetheless glad to see the work of so many people be shaped into a student-led journal that will become a long-lasting tradition at the English Department. The year 2020 will see another issue of *Satura* but for now let us read and discuss all the research questions asked last year.

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A Corpus-Based Analysis of the Pervasive and Effective Metaphor Use in Donald Trump's 2016 Presidential Campaign

Sarah Sifton

Metaphors are linguistic devices generally regarded as tools used in poetics and literature. Not only do they function artistically, but they also serve as pervasive linguistic devices appearing in political discourse. These tools simplify and collapse complex and intangible ideas into easily digestible concepts for the public to consume. Metaphors frame the description of many topics, and much of our experience in life is articulated in metaphoric terms (Cameron and Low x).

Metaphors are essential tools for politicians because they help create connections with constituents on a collective level, thereby aiding in voter acquisition and increased popularity. Political metaphors can function persuasively and manipulatively, eliciting particular images and feelings from the public, subsequently influencing the way we process events or reify policies: "…there is nothing trifling about a metaphor…we must eventually think critically about the metaphors we choose—where they come from, and why they were proposed, in whose interest they represent, and the nature of their implications" (Barnes 118).

The language of U.S. President Donald Trump has been the subject of myriad discussions. Many have deliberated on his syntax, lexicon, and oration. Yet, there has been little discussion regarding his use of figurative language, especially metaphors. Therefore, the present study takes a mixed method approach, specifically one of corpus linguistics, concordancing, and critical discourse analysis to analyze the metaphors used in Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign speeches. Furthermore, an investigation into the implications of his metaphor use will also be conducted in order to highlight his underlying ideologies and attitudes.

Creative vs. Conceptual Metaphors

In the traditional sense, a "metaphor is for most people a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish—a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language": a creative metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 3). Yet, a more mechanical definition of metaphor is "the use of language to refer to something other than what is was originally applied to, or what it 'literally' means, in order to suggest some resemblance or

make a connection between two things" (Knowles and Moon 3).

Conceptual metaphors are used conventionally, which means they are integrated into our everyday language and thought. For example, when recovering from an illness, we commonly express this process in terms of war: "to fight off an infection". We do not literally mean we are going to war with a disease, yet we use this conceptual metaphor to help simplify the idea of the healing process.

A conceptual metaphor consists of two conceptual domains, meaning the understanding of one conceptual domain (A) in terms of another conceptual domain (B). For example, ARGUMENT IS WAR; this links the concept of ARGUMENT to the one of WAR. Thus, a metaphorical linguistic expression of this conceptual metaphor would be "he shot down all of her arguments." Further conceptual metaphors include structural (war for arguments), orientational (to be on a high), and ontological (wasting time).

This paper will focus specifically on dehumanizing metaphors in U.S. political discourse, which include comparisons between human beings and animals, diseases, natural forces, and containers. Martial framing depicts the enemy as an animal or disease and subsequently capitalizes on this linguistic simplification in order to tap into the public's emotions. These metaphors strip human beings of their humanity, making them easier to disregard. The enemy is constructed through our language and this construction is streamlined through metaphor.

Metaphors in Corpus Linguistics

The method of analysis of this paper is that of corpus linguistics. A corpus or corpora "…is a collection of spoken or written texts to be used for linguistic analysis and based on a specific set of design criteria influenced by its purpose and scope" (Weisser 14). The concordancing program used for this research, AntConc, aids in analyzing digitized texts in order to explore patterns in a corpus. The corpus used for this study contains the Corpus of Presidential Speeches (CoPS), compiled by The Grammar Lab. The aim of analyzing Donald Trump's campaign speeches is to gain insight into the different aspects of his language use and to relate the results to established theories in dehumanizing metaphor use in political discourse. While the concordancing program aids in quick and efficient collection of relevant words and their frequency, it is ultimately up to the researcher to decide which words are particularly meaningful and metaphorical, and therefore partial to subjectivity.

Metaphors in Political Discourse

Metaphors not only aid in creating a feeling of connectedness between

politicians and the public, but they can also help the readers or listeners to relieve tension created by the incomprehensibility of complex issues. Metaphors enable both comfort and enlightenment, and they can have therapeutic effects on the receiver (Mio 121-122).

The conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR appears in much political discourse. Lakoff and Johnson state that we do not simply discuss arguments in terms of war but rather a person can actually win or lose arguments (4). According to Howe, metaphors in American political discourse revolve primarily around sports and war concepts. Yet, these metaphors are paradoxical because they do not reflect the reality of American politics. Howe states, "the destructive irony is that metaphors from sports and war can delude their users into believing that negotiations and compromise are forbidden by the rules of conflict" (99). These metaphors can discourage critical thought and yield oversimplification by using heuristic short-cuts. Meanwhile, Steuter and Wills highlight dehumanizing metaphors in Western media representations, focusing specifically on metaphors that persistently portray the enemy as an animal, vermin, or disease. Politics revolving around nationalist discourse frequently rely on notions of "otherness" and these metaphors are ubiquitous in political discourse.

Research Questions and Aims

This research paper analyzes metaphor use in a corpus of over 400,000 words from Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign speeches. This paper aims to illuminate his most frequent metaphors, the perceived effectiveness and corollary repercussions of his metaphors, his underlying ideologies as discernible from his metaphor use, and the manipulative use of dehumanizing metaphors. Additionally, this paper is sociolinguistic in nature as it desires to highlight signified meanings. Specifically, it asks how these supposedly intangible ideas and utterances create and exacerbate real-world problems. "Effective" is measured by an idea's popularity among the public, prevalence in the news, and subsequent policy decisions.

The research questions are as follows:

RQ1: Which metaphors does Trump use the most? What does this say about his underlying ideologies?

RQ2: Which metaphors seem to be the most effective? Which have turned into slogans?

RQ3: Through his metaphor use, does he dehumanize specific groups of people and, if so, who are the targets and what are the implications of this dehumanization?

RQ4: Are there any apparent or significant patterns in his metaphor use and

does this contribute to his overall narrative of rebuilding and saving the U.S.?

Method

The corpus-based approach identifies the persuasiveness and effectiveness of his metaphor use, in order to discern his underlying intentions and ideologies. After the identification of keywords, their meanings will be described in their context. Therefore, initial assemblage of the keywords contains words that are literal and metaphoric (conceptual and creative). After examination, the literal meanings are sorted out. The top political metaphors are chosen based on prominent metaphors highlighted, analyzed, and researched in previous literature, as well as those deemed important in the context of American politics and world events around 2016, such as the Syrian refugee crisis. The metaphors chosen pertain to: CONTAINER and DISEASE; SPORTS, WAR and BUSINESS; and ANIMAL concepts. When investigating these metaphors, different inflections of the keywords are included in order to cast the widest net possible and gather the most representative sample. The total frequency of the keywords includes metaphorical uses.

After the assessment of the data, the metaphoric language will be analyzed in a social context. Metaphors occurring frequently in the corpus will be examined in their contexts to find conspicuous patterns, followed by an investigation into their contribution to his overall narrative. These keywords are observed as potential markers for metaphors that contribute to Trump's thematic narrative of rebuilding and saving the United States.

Discursive focus will concern the relation of hegemonic power to inequality in Trump's metaphoric language and how this language marginalizes groups that are at a disadvantage in the U.S. According to linguist Ruth Wodak, the goal of critical discourse analysis is to analyze "…opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power, and control as manifested in language" (Wodak 204). Once the quantitative analysis is complete, the relationship between Trump's metaphoric language and the people it affects will be investigated.

Analysis and Results

Six conceptual metaphors and their corollaries were chosen to run through AntConc in order to find patterns in Trump's campaign speeches. The top conceptual metaphors are as follows: CONTAINER: *pour* (*pours, poured, pouring)* + *into/ in/ across/ out/ back* (255 instances), *drain* (*drains, drained, draining)* + *into/ in/ out/ out of* (88 instances), and *flow* (*flows*, *flowed*,

flowing) + *into/ in/ across / back/ out* (60 instances). DISEASE: *Spread* (*spreads, spread, spreading)* + *into/ in/ across/ out/ out of* (36 instances). WAR: *fight* (*fights*, *fought*, *fighting*) (160 instances). SPORTS: *win* (*wins*, *won*, *winning*) (1,208 instances). BUSINESS: *deal(s)* (710 instances). ANIMAL: *swamp(s)* (*swamps, swamped, swamping*) (85 instances), *unleash* (*unleashes, unleashed, unleashing*) (70 instances), and *snake(s)* (*snakes, snaked, snaking*) (45 instances).

Further investigation revealed that the CONTAINER metaphors were often coupled with ANIMAL metaphors, contributing to the idea that dangerous people or ideologies are spreading into/ across/ within the United States. The metaphors relating to the keywords *pour, flow, spread, unleash, swamp,* and *snake* related more readily to people and ideas which are considered 'other' to Americans. For example, in his address in Cleveland, Ohio on 8 September 2016, Trump stated: "Her policies unleashed ISIS, spread terrorism and put Iran on a path to nuclear weapons—not to mention the ransom payments—those ransom payments" (Brown). Trump's meshing of two metaphors is prominent throughout his speeches. For example, he again uses the *unleashing* and *spreading* metaphors: "We will become a rich nation again, but to be a rich nation, we must also be a safe nation. Hillary Clinton unleashed ISIS onto the world and it has now spread into our country" (Brown).

When Trump uses the words *pour* and *flow*, it usually correlates to people, refugees, immigrants, and, according to Trump, the subsequent crime and drugs they bring with them. His use of *spread* most readily correlates to his essentialist, monolithic categories: ISIS, cartels, terrorism, radical Islam, and Islamic terrorism. The assumption that these people and ideologies are pouring, flowing, or spreading creates the illusion through metaphor that these are catastrophic and unstoppable forces that Americans must constantly labor against or else be consumed by, which would therefore distort, destroy, and pillage the United States and its 'noble' and 'pure' values. The metaphors associated with the keyword *unleash* tie into this same narrative. Yet, his use of this metaphor appears contradictory at times. For example, he repeatedly compares ISIS or radical Islam to something that has been unleashed, something negative and damaging; yet he also uses the *unleashing* metaphor in relation to American energy production and job creation, evidently positive and hopeful. While both are forces, one cast as an evil that has been mistakenly released to cause terror, while the other is untapped potential that when released will help the American people and their society. American energy and job creation are

non-human entities, and this antihumanism does not immediately harm individuals or groups of people, whereas the comparison between ISIS still correlates to people, potentially conflating Muslims and a militant group with fundamentalist interpretations. This leads to the possibility that Muslims or refugees will be targeted politically and violently, as well as a misconception or omission of exploitative American imperialism, which exacerbates fundamentalist tendencies.

Trump also uses the *swamp* metaphor quite frequently. This catchy metaphor became recognized as a slogan by supporters and opponents alike. Most Americans and even non-Americans know of the *drain the swamp* metaphor. This metaphor became so effective for Trump during his campaign that he still capitalizes on it today as president. The *drain the swamp* metaphor alone appears 83 times in the corpus. This suggests that the metaphoric use of *swamp* is more frequent than might have been predicted using unaided intuition, and that Trump's use of the term *swamp,* or *drain the swamp,* is a particularly persuasive metaphor that collapses the complex idea of government corruption simplistically in a way that resonates with his supporters, transforming it into a pervasive campaign slogan. This highly effective metaphor casts Trump as if he exists outside of the political establishment. Once elected, he would supposedly not be blackmailed or corrupted by the political game because he is not a part of this institution. He claims he is a cut and dry businessman who can venture into the political arena and pull the drain plug on the nasty, undesirable, and corrupt dealings of politics. This image is highly effective for him because, ironically, it paints the picture of him having similarities to the average American worker and, simultaneously, as a businessman who has worked his way into success: he is on the people's side, not the politicians'. This metaphor helps set him apart from his opponents as a candidate untouched by political corruption, a person the average American can and should trust.

Trump's most blatant dehumanizing metaphor is the *snake* metaphor. In some of Trump's speeches, he recites the lyrics of the song titled "The Snake" performed by Al Wilson and written by American civil rights activist Oscar Brown:

> Take me in, oh, tender woman, sighed the broken snake. Now, she clutched him to her bosom, you're so beautiful, she cried…and then she kissed and held him tight. But instead of saying thank you, that snake gave her a vicious bite…I saved you, cried that woman…Oh, shut up, silly woman, said the reptile with a grin. You knew damn well I was a snake before you took me in. (Brown)

Inspired by the Aesop's fable called "The Farmer and The Viper," Trump reinvents the song by drawing comparisons between immigrants, refugees, and snakes, thereby dehumanizing and demonizing

these groups of people, specifically Mexican immigrants and Syrian refugees.

The most apparent words in the corpus are the keywords *win, deals,* and *fight.* Upon closer investigation, these words appear to inspire a feeling of togetherness or a team feeling, while simultaneously manifesting an "other." Additionally, when reviewing instances of *we* plus different verb forms of *to win* or *to fight,* there are more instances of *we* rather than *they*. For example, there are only 6 instances of *they* + *to win* whereas there exist 156 instances of *we* + *to win.* This same pattern can be observed with the words *fight* and *deals.* In the latter case, it is frequently observed that *we* make deals together vs *they* or *I* make deals. In regards to *win*, Trump frequently uses the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR. For example, he states: "And during the last debate, which you know look, I want to impartial and all, which I won big league, I mean that was not even close" (Brown). In this example he not only compares the debate to war but also intertwines sports into the statement; by using the keyword *big league*, he references a baseball metaphor familiar to many Americans. "For the most part, political professionals use baseball metaphors to denote status or assess performance [and] offer a way of characterizing politicians" (Howe 93). Here, Trump wants to accentuate the nature of his win. These metaphors help listeners to feel part of American life and to understand the latent ideas without having to think too long or critically about the subject.

While there appear to be two prominent and seemingly separate groups of metaphors in Trump's speeches—the dehumanizing metaphors which include *pour, flow, snake,* and *spread,* and the war, sports, and business metaphors, which include *fight, deals,* and *win*—they are nonetheless mutually constitutive to his overall narrative. The way in which Trump uses the latter group of metaphors revolves around the idea of an in-group, that group being predominantly American citizens of supposed European descent. These metaphors also create an "other," primarily consisting of immigrants and refugees. Trump's overall narrative is that the U.S. is in a volatile state and needs to be saved, rebuilt, and purged of sickness. He relies on fear tactics to encourage people to vote for him, lest the formerly 'great' country continue down a path of (self) destruction and chaos.

The dangerous implications of his metaphor use are that they involve an underlying premise of 'worthy' Americans. If the U.S. President encourages such abhorrent actions, then they can be systematically institutionalized in American society. For example, Donald Trump's administration has implemented Muslim bans and has additionally tried to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which is

governmental relief from deportation aimed at protecting eligible immigrant youth in the United States (East Bay Community Law Center). This then permits certain groups to be lawfully discriminated against, potentially leading to the authorization of forced removal or worse.

Trump's use of TEAM or togetherness elicits the ostracizing idea of "us" vs "them." This "they" therefore ties into dehumanizing metaphors, contributing to his narrative that the American people as the "us" or "we" combat the "they" or "other." Or worse, that "they" have already penetrated American society and therefore Americans need to not only "drain the swamp" in the political realm but also to drain the society of toxic ideologies and dangerous people.

This research has illustrated that through Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign speeches, he attempted to use metaphors to fabricate an 'other.' He created a sliding scale of humanity, where white Americans are at the top and non-white, non-Americans are at the bottom. Trump's underlying ideologies and beliefs based on his metaphor use are apparent, specifically those that dehumanize and demonize groups of people that do not fit the Western or American cultural norm. By using these metaphors, he fabricates a problem that requires a solution. The response to these dangers that Trump aims to elicit is that the American people must band together and fight against these "unnatural" forces unless they wish to see their country regress further into despair.

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Appendix

Table 1. CONTAINER

Keyword	Frequency
pour and the different verb forms (*pours, poured, pouring*) + *into/ in/ across/ out/ back*	255
drain and the different verb forms (*drains, drained, draining*) + *into/ in/ out/ out of*	88
flow and the different verb forms (*flows*, *flowed*, *flowing*) + *into/ in/ across / back/ out*	60
draw and the different verb forms (*draws, drew, drawing, drawn*) + *into/ in/ out/ out of*	9
contain and the different verb forms (*contains*, *contained*, *contaiining*)	9
flood gates	1

Table 2. DISEASE

Keyword	Frequency
Spread and the different verb forms (*spreads, spread, spreading*) + *into/ in/ across/ out/ out of*	36
cut(s) out/cutting out/cut(s) (it) off	3
cancer(s)	1
virus/viruses	0
bacteria	0
mutation/ mutate and the different verb forms (*mutates, mutated, mutating*) + *into/ in*	0
eradication/ eradicate and the different verb forms *(eradicates, eradicated, eradicating)*	0

cleanse and the different verb forms *(cleanses, cleansed, cleansing*)	0

Table 3. WAR

Keyword	Frequency
fight and the different verb forms (*fights*, *fought*, *fighting*)	160
war on	14
hit the ground running	1
casualty/ casualties	1
annihilation/ annihilate and the different verb forms (*annihilates, annihilated, annihilating)*	1
point man	0
search and destroy	0
trench/ trenches	0
guerrilla warfare	0
damage control	0
minefield	0
body count	0

Table 4. SPORTS

Keyword	Frequency
win and the verb forms (*wins*, *won*, *winning*)	1,208
big league(s)	42
team(-s)	21
quarterback	2
join my team	0
team player(s)	0
bad call	0
bad play	0
good call	0
good play	0
hardball	0
softball	0
blindsided	0
touchdown(s)	0
knockout	0
heavyweight	0

Table 5. BUSINESS

Keyword	Frequency
deal(s)	710
great deals	20
make a deal/ making a deal	12
make/making deals	9
broker and the verb forms (*brokers, brokered, brokering)*	1
cut/ cutting deals	0
cut a deal/ cutting a deal	0

Table 6. ANIMAL

Keyword	Frequency
swamp(s) and the verb forms (*swamps, swamped, swamping*)	85
unleash and the verb forms (*unleashes, unleashed, unleashing*)	70
snake(s) and the verb forms (*snakes, snaked, snaking*)	45
hunt and the verb forms (*hunts, hunted, hunting*)	5
animal(s)	4
breeding ground(s)	3
monster(s)	3
extermination/ exterminate and the verb forms (*exterminates, exterminated, exterminating*	3
viper(s)	0
hornet's nest	0
vermin	0
rat(s)	0
spider(s)	0
cockroach/ cockroaches	0
beast(s)	0
pest(s)	0
den(s)	0
nest(s)	0
weasel(s) and the verb forms (*weasels, weaseled, weaseling*)	0
spawn and the verb forms (*spawns, spawned, spawning*)	0
squish and the verb forms (*squishes, squished, squishing*)	0
squash and the verb forms (*squashes, squashed, squashing*)	0

Breaking Away From the Binary: Do Drag Queens Adopt a Female Style or a Distinct Drag Queen Speech?

Hannah Essing

RuPaul's Drag Race [RPDR] is an American reality TV show that aired for the first time in 2009. In typical *America's Next Top Model* demeanour contestants are competing for the title of America's next drag superstar, participating in various challenges from singing to acting to walking the runway. The contestants are performing Drag Queens. Although Rusty Barrett describes Drag Queens as "almost always gay men" (313), this erases the identity of many of the contestants. Many of them identify as gay men, however a number of contestants also find themselves on the trans-spectrum, identify as non-binary, genderqueer, or as transsexual, sometimes already in transition. Here lies one of the biggest issues with the analysis of Drag: it might be very easy to see the contestants as men dressing up as women, but that would adhere to a binary that doesn't always apply to Drag Queens.

The show gained a wider audience and more attention in mainstream media after it changed from being aired on LogoTV to the more mainstream station VH1. The host is RuPaul, an African-American Drag Queen and one of the most widely known Drag Queens in the media. He received several Emmy Awards for his show. He also released several music albums, even two books. He is often credited with being one of the most influential Drag Queens and making Drag more approachable for a wider audience.

In his essay "Indexing Polyphonous Identity in the Speech of African American Drag Queens", author Rusty Barrett argues, that African American Drag Queens adopt a "'white-woman' style of speaking" (413) as one of their voices utilised in their performances. But the question is: Do Drag Queens not necessarily adopt a "female" style, but a distinct "Drag Queen" way of speaking? Furthermore, what are the markers of this style? In the context of the show, the aim is not to sound like a woman, but to sound like a Drag Queen and to adhere to the rules and speech patterns used by Drag Queens, as this article further illustrates. In his essay "Speaking Like a Queen in RuPaul's Drag Race: Towards a Speech Code of American Drag Queens", Nathaniel Simmons argues that "drag queens use nonverbal aesthetics to communicate a coherent drag identity as

Queens blur gender lines and use performance as a space in which to bend the dominant American gender narrative binary" (631).

Drag Queens style themselves as female with the help of make-up, wigs, duct tape, fake nails and padding, but they also very often use an excessive amount of gesturing. In addition, Drag Queens also style their language to fit the idea of "linguistic drag". This particular way of speaking derives from Ball culture, which is an underground LGBT subculture in the United States. Their origin lies in cross dressing balls that white men hosted in the 1930s, often excluding black members. The Ball Culture in New York started as a counter movement to those problematic white dance events. Ball culture tried “to figure out how to respond to a society that devalued their lives and attempted to erase their presence” (Brathwaite).

This article focuses on Aja[1], a contestant of season 9. Aja is the stage name of Jay Rivera from Brooklyn, who is the youngest Queen to participate in season 9, as they were 22 during filming. When they are introduced to the other Queens in the first episode of season 9, fellow contestant Sasha Velour explains that Aja "is the number one name in Brooklyn that people are talking about right now", referring to their successful career in the Drag scene.

Drag is a way of blurring gender lines and expressing identity that cannot be limited to a gender binary, neither in identity nor in linguistic style. Claiming that Drag Queens are trying to impersonate female speech patterns therefore restricts the art form to a gender binary. The point in question is whether language should be looked at through a binary perspective at all. Drag Queens blur the lines of the gender binary, the performers themselves often do not fit in a binary system. To sort them in these binary categories is adhering to stereotypes and a traditional view of gender that is being reconsidered nowadays, for example by scholars like Judith Butler.

I look at four scenes where Aja's style of speech was particularly prominent and point out the markers of their performance and which resources they use to style themselves as a Drag Queen. This research is necessary to work against a prevailing binary thinking in academia and to motivate researchers to think outside these barriers.

Although there is some research on Drag and Drag Queens, a lot of it relies on Rusty Barrett's research. This poses quite a few problems. When analysing whether Drag Queens stylise their language after white women, Barrett bases

[1] Since Aja identifies as genderfluid I will use the pronouns "they/them" when referring to them.

his ideas on the criteria for female speech by Robin Lakoff (Lakoff, *Language and Woman's Place*, 1972).

> "using specialist vocabulary linked to women's supposed interest (using precise colour terms, the vocabulary of sewing, etc)", "'empty' adjectives like divine or cute", "using tag questions in declarative utterances", "using hedges and super polite forms", "avoiding telling jokes" and "'speaking in italics', which refers to speaking on the assumption that no attention is being paid to one's speech" (Lakoff 8 – 19)

Lakoff's ideas do not meet today's standard of linguistics and gender studies. It is very clear to see how outdated these assumptions about a female way of speaking are. Furthermore, talking of "women's language" in general insinuates that there is a category of "woman" that is universal and shares the same linguistic background, no matter what class, ethnicity, sexuality or age. This belief is rather general and essentialist. According to Judith Butler's thesis on gender performance, gender is "in no way a stable identity", but "an identity tenuously constituted in time" (Butler 519). In this respect, a "woman" is a fluid social construction not an object with essential common features.

Drag slang can also be seen as staged language, in terms of Bell and Gibson's sociolinguistics of performance. *Stage performance* is the "scheduled identification and elevation [...] of one or more people to perform, typically on a stage, or in a stage-like area such as a space in front of a camera or microphone" (557). Moreover, the "audience has an expectation of skill, and the performer is therefore subjected to an intense audience gaze" (557 - 558). This applies to a reality TV show. RPDR is targeted at a mainstream audience, however, there is a wide audience of Drag fans who expect their Queens to adhere to certain standards. Linguistic Drag is one of them; the audience is used to a particular speech behaviour of Drag Queens' performances. This points out that stylised speech needs "an acculturated audience able to read and predisposed to judge the semiotic value of a projected persona or genre" (Coupland 154). Also, the contestants have to prove themselves to a jury who is familiar with drag and its performance conventions. *Audience design* as Bell and Gibson call it, plays a part here, meaning that "speakers adapt their language style largely in response to their listeners", while *referee design i*s said to involve the "initiate use of linguistic features to index a targeted referee group" (Bell and Gibson 560). Both hold true for Drag performance on RPDR. The same applies to *the factor of indexicality*, the idea that "present acts of meaning-making depend upon the meanings of parallel past acts" (560). Drag slang is a very distinct way of speaking with its own system of meaning, vocabulary and catch phrases, which can be understood only if one is fa-

miliar with it. That points to the indexicality of Drag performance.

The following four scenes illustrate how Aja uses a specific way of speaking to underline their identity as a Drag Queen. While analysing the four scenes in aspects of the use of vocabulary, Drag Queen slang, Lakoff's criteria for female speech patterns will be considered as well, since various articles use it as an argument for female speech patterns in Drag slang. Therefore, this will serve as a way of comparing and refute these ideas.

The first scene is Aja's introduction in the first episode. The Drag Queens enter the room successively, introduce themselves in Drag and comment on it out of Drag. They meet the other contestants for the first time and get the chance to talk about their own and the others' style and perceived personality. When Aja enters the room, they call their own drag "vangy" (“Oh. My. Gaga!”, 09:50). Aja's use of vocabulary is often rather unusual and the word itself does not exist. It is, however, a slang word, defined by the Urban Dictionary as "a funny, amazing, loving, sweet, beautiful, and perfect girl that can be called a princess". Another remark Aja makes is: "Your edges are officially snatched" (“Oh. My. Gaga!”, 09:48). This is very explicitly Drag slang. When women of colour wear wigs or weaves, "edges" are the natural hair that is left out to blend in and make the wig look more natural. To "snatch" something is also a very prominent word in Drag culture and especially on RPDR, there is even a segment called "The Snatch Game". Therefore, this sentence explicitly calls to Drag culture and Drag slang. Considering this scene from the point of view of Lakoff's criteria for female speech pattern, it is clear that in this case, Aja is "using specialist vocabulary linked to women's supposed interest" (Barrett 222) and also speaking in italics, when they remark that they are "*so* happy" to see everyone.

In the next scene, the Queens are preparing for a challenge, where they have to act as different characters. Every role has an assigned adjective, like "snoozy" or "sassy". Aja explains it as following: "There's literally, like, an adjective for every single Queen" (“She Done Already Brought It On”, 07:13). When discussing the way to go on from there, they propose: "Should we, like, stand up and do it, just sort of like... give it a flavour?" (08:05). As one can see, Aja extensively uses the discourse marker "like". This discourse marker is often described as a part of "Valleyspeak", a sociolect originating in South California (Woo). Although this Valleyspeak is often associated with young girls and often stereotyped as "dumb" or "superficial", it is quite widespread through media, even outside of California. Therefore, even Aja, who is from Brooklyn, uses the typical discourse marker. A study shows

that discourse markers are more often used by women, but and younger people in general. The gender difference, however, vanished the older the participants of the study got (Laserna et al). Looking at Aja's vocabulary and Lakoff's criteria, this scene is not very telling, since Valleyspeak cannot be seen as a gender marker only.

The episode *Reunited* looks specifically at Aja and another Queen with whom they were in conflict. The audience gets to see a clip backstage that demonstrates Aja's reaction to another contestant's (Valentina) successful challenge. Aja says the jury "eat [her] up" ("Reunion", 18:47) every time she is on the stage. To eat someone up, as the Urban Dictionary defines it, means "to overwhelm someone with loving, but non-sexual, affection". Once again Aja uses vocabulary that is not necessarily representing their status as a Drag Queen, but rather their very young age and their belonging to a "cool", "hip" Brooklyn group. This scene is very interesting when comparing it to Lakoff's criteria. Although Aja mockingly asks Valentina if she did "stone those tights" – referring to gluing rhinestones on her clothes, commonly done in Drag – which is indeed again "linked to women's supposed interests" (Barrett 222) like the "vocabulary of sewing" it is more linked to Drag practises than anything else. Furthermore, Aja says that Valentina "could walk out in a fucking diaper" on that "damned stage" (18:52) and would still be seen as beautiful. Using curse words does not match Lakoff's criteria.

Talking about their outburst later on, Aja remarks that "if you're in the moment and you have some shit to say, say it" (19:16). This is one more instance of where Lakoff's "non-cursing" rule is broken. Drag Queens often do speak without minding curse words, so Lakoff's criteria for this instance are misguiding. Speaking about Valentina, Aja also uses the word "girl" (19:33) to address her. There are many instances of Aja referring to someone as "girl", just like other contestants do that. One could argue that this is to signify that they acknowledge them as their Drag personality and their performed femininity. However, "girl" can rather be understood as a discourse marker such as "dude". Scott F. Kiesling defines "dude" as "a discourse marker that need not identify an addressee, and more generally encodes the speaker's stance to his or her current addressee(s)" (281). He explains that it is used "mainly in situations in which a speaker takes a stance of solidarity or camaraderie, but crucially in a nonchalant, not-too-enthusiastic manner" (282). The same can be said for the use of "girl" in this context. It is often used when criticising someone or in astonishment. "Girl" does not refer to someone's gender, the same way "dude" does not, since "girl" is also used by the contestants when out of Drag.

Another instance of Drag slang is when Aja then says: "I don't want to say I read her, I just aggressively complimented her" (19:40). To "read someone" means to criticise them in a funny way, or to roast them. To read someone is typical in Drag slang. In a common instalment on RPDR, it is said that "the library is open" and "reading glasses" are given. Then the contestants ridicule each other in a joking way. In this context, critique of other Queens is often referred to as "being read" or "reading someone". How typical for Drag slang this is, is also shown by a song RuPaul released: "Read U, Wrote U".

These four scenes illustrate that Aja is not imitating female speech patterns but adhering to a very distinct Drag slang. Their use of swear words does not fit into Lakoff's categories of female speech patterns and therefore not to Barrett's theory of Drag Queens imitating female speech. Furthermore, Aja uses a distinct vocabulary that is typical for the Drag scene. Drag Queens do not just imitate female speech pattern but use a distinct vocabulary and speech pattern to stylise themselves as Drag Queens, not as women. Women as a category in itself could be considered as practically non-existent, since they are, according to Butler, not a group that shares essential values and traits.

Rather than seeing Drag slang as a high performance only, I would argue that it can be seen as a sociolect, since language is "the chief signal of both permanent and transient aspects of our social identity" (Crystal 364). Drag slang is a very prominent, distinct slang that is not only used when in Drag, but also out of Drag: because it shows the belonging to a certain group, that is not only limited to stage performances.

However, studying the idea of female speech patterns in Drag Queens and reading more about the idea of female and male speech patterns, it becomes clear that there is still a gender binary prevailing in linguistics. Yet Drag is a way of overcoming these categories and a lot of its performers do not fit into this binary, they often identify neither as female or male. For instance, the focus of this study, Aja, identifies as genderqueer. Can someone like this even fit into binary categories? Are these categories even necessary? I believe this analysis showed that academia should detach from the outdated binary system. This does not only give more freedom to people but also gives way to new grounds and new research in linguistics.

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BOOK STUDIES

Reading ~~the~~ Changes: Variance and Digital Tools

Ellen Barth

Textual variants are the differences found in one copy of a printed text to another. We all know the famous line: "To be or not to be, that is the question[,]" but few among us know the variant form: "To be, or not to be, I there's the point [.]" Both were printed and published as the work of Shakespeare, from the First Folio and First Quarto,[1] respectively, but only the first version is taught and performed, as it is thought to be closest to the author's original (Parsons 87). Out of variants like this grew the field of textual criticism, in which scholars compare copies of a single edition, often with the aim of uncovering the most authentic and authoritative version of the text to create critical editions (Tanselle 1). The Bible and the works of Shakespeare have traditionally been two common foci of the textual scholar's gaze.

But today, unless working in textual criticism, it is unlikely that anyone would notice or even think about variants in their printed reading material, and one may even question whether variants still occur. In fact, they do—sometimes in abundance. And when they occur, digital collation tools can assist in comprehensive textual comparisons and allow readers to see and read variants in ways that would have been impossible decades ago.

From Scribe to Press

In textual communication, there has always been variation from copy to copy and text to text. The scribe, when depicted visually, is often seen seated at a writing desk, quill in one hand, and knife in the other. If a mistake was made while copying, the scribe would use this knife to scrape away the top layer of parchment where the incorrect text was written, leaving it clean to be written on again (Biggs). The fact that scribes are so often depicted with this tool in hand gives some indication as to the frequency of its use.[2] In addition to accidental errors made when copying, scribes are known to have purposefully changed texts as well. Henry Notaker writes: "Many of the well-trained and educated *scriptores* in

[1] Anyone interested in exploring variance in Shakespeare can visit the British Library website, which offers an online comparison of Shakespeare Quartos: https://www.bl.uk/Treasures/SiqDiscovery/UI/search.aspx.

[2] The knife was also used to sharpen quills.

the Middle Ages consciously altered language and content. They skipped material they had no interest in or did not find worth copying and added comments that eventually became a part of the text" (30). Chaucer famously wrote a poem about this very scenario, warning his scribe, Adam, not to rewrite his texts anymore while copying them or be cursed to suffer from a scalp disease (Mize 352).

Printing offered a consistency in mass quantity that could not be achieved in scribal times, as it is "a process designed to make multiple copies of identical items" which is "both cheaper and more accurate than the work of a scribe copying a manuscript" (Feather 5). Identical copies were not always the reality, as the words of Hamlet show,[3] but there is no arguing that after the invention of the printing press, the number of variants present in texts decreased drastically. In the present day, readers have gained near total confidence in the accuracy and consistency of their reading materials. To quote Adrian Johns: "You may safely assume that the book you now hold will [...] be identical in all relevant aspects to one bought in the United States or in Great Britain" (255). However, the recent case of the bestselling novel *Cloud Atlas* and its version variants tells a very different story.

21st Century Variants

Cloud Atlas, an elaborate novel consisting of six nested stories, was written by British author David Mitchell. The book was published simultaneously in both the US and the UK in 2004, and it quickly became a bestseller, winning the British Book Awards Literary Fiction prize and later adapted into a feature film. For a book published in the US and the UK, a normal practice is for it to receive what is called 'trans-editing,' that is, small changes made to vocabulary and grammar to match the target reading group. This could include changing the word 'favor' to 'favour,' or 'row' to 'argument.' In the case of *Cloud Atlas*, however, the US and UK versions have been found to contain an "astonishing degree" of variants that go far beyond trans-editing (Flood).

Literary scholar Martin Paul Eve first noticed the differences. Eve was doing a close read of the novel when he found that one section in particular contained a large number of differences. The chapter in question is "An Orison on Sonmi~451," in which the narrative is organized as a series of questions and answers. Eve found several startling differences. First, the amount of material in each version is different, with the UK version containing more questions than

[3] The variance between two printed editions is perhaps not terribly surprising; however, as Charlton Hinman notes: "For more than two centuries the commonly employed methods of press correction were such that different copies of the same edition of a given text could not fail to be variant" (281).

the US version. There are structural differences, meaning that plot points occur at different periods in the story depending on the version (Eve 3–5). There are also many textual differences, which Eve notes as being substantial enough to impact literary critique (22).

For example, the UK version says:

> *No other version of the truth has ever mattered to me.*

In comparison to the US version:

> *TRUTH IS SINGULAR. ITS 'VERSIONS' ARE MISTRUTHS.* (Eve 20)

The words and typography vary to such a degree as to change the tone and reading, if not the function of the text. Moreover, Eve notes that nearly every sentence in the "An Orison on Sonmi~451" chapter contains differences across the US and UK versions (11). In contrast to Johns' assertion about the reliability of transatlantic published material, Eve states that: "[R]eaders of *Cloud Atlas* based in the US are likely to encounter a novel that stands starkly apart from that bearing the same title in the UK" (2).

Unlike the authors of most works examined for textual variants, David Mitchell is still alive; so Eve went directly to the source. In response, Mitchell stated that the differences were due to a "combination of chance and [...] inexperience" (23). The manuscript, his story goes, was passed to US and UK editors (the US version being briefly "orphaned" before being taken over by a new editor), and changes to one version were not always sent to the editors of the other. Being a relatively new author, Mitchell himself did not keep track of the changes he made or to whom he sent them (23–24). The result was two different *Cloud Atlas* manuscripts published in two different nations.

A fluke? Perhaps. But with *Cloud Atlas*, Eve showed that variants still exist in our modern reading materials.

Finding Variance

In the past, when looking to compare—or collate—texts, collation had to be done mechanically, such as with a machine like the Hinman collator. This machine was developed by Charlton Hinman for the purpose of collating Shakespeare's First Folio (Hinman 280). It uses mirrors and flashing lights, allowing the operator to see variants 'dance' on the page and thereby identify them. With the Hinman collator, comparison can only be done across a single imprint or pressing as the pages need to line up for visual comparison (281). For many textual scholars, this is adequate; however, digital technologies have expanded the possible scope of textual comparison.

The digital humanities have opened up new avenues for the intrepid researcher, and when it comes to textual collation, scholars can now choose from numerous collation software applications, such as *CollateX*[4], *Versioning Machine*, and *Juxta*, to name just a few. In each case, texts—or witnesses—are entered into the application and then digitally compared. There are still chances for human error when inputting the witnesses, and if texts were scanned before entry, the possibility for computer recognition error remains as well. Nevertheless, there are clear advantages to digital collation: when dealing with text alone, as these applications do, rather than with a physically printed page, texts across numerous versions and editions can be quickly and easily compared.

The main differences between these applications is their presentation of information after collation. Figure 1 shows two very short witnesses entered into *CollateX*. In this case, there is only one variant—the word 'easily' has been added in the second text. In *CollateX*, where there is a variant, the path diverges. Using *Juxta*, information is displayed differently. Figure 2 shows the first paragraph of John B. Thompson's section on digital added value from *Merchants of Culture* in *Juxta Commons*, a web-accessible version of the application. Variants are highlighted, and clicking on the variants shows the nature of the variant, whether it is an addition, deletion, or substitution. Here, the example shows the change from 'seven' added values in the first edition to 'nine' in the second edition. Additional features offered by *Juxta* include side-by-side comparison and histograms.

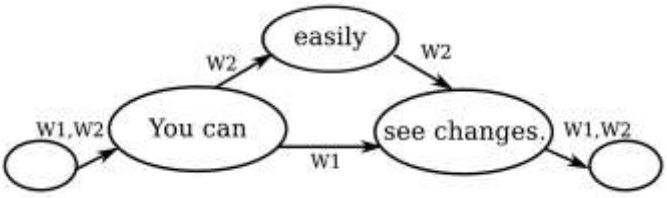

Figure 1: Two witnesses entered into *CollateX*.

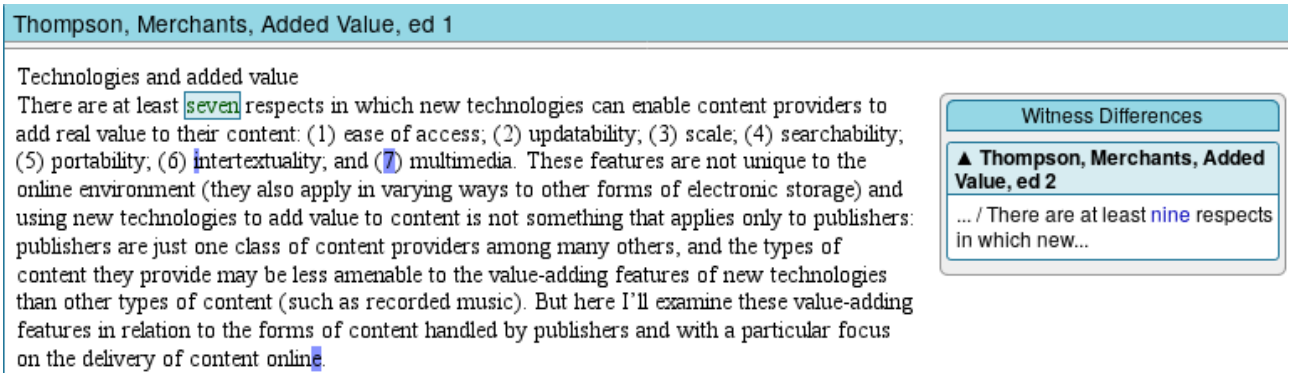

Figure 2: A comparison of text from the first and second editions of *Merchants of Culture* in *Juxta Commons*.

[4] The origins of CollateX, a collaboration between the Beckett Digital Manuscript Project (BDMP) of the University of Antwerp and Huygens ING in The Hague, are described in Dirk Van Hulle's "The Stuff of Fiction."

The resultant studies making use of digital tools have the potential to further affect the field of textual criticism, which, according to G. Thomas Tanselle, is already experiencing a shift away from authorial intention, promoting instead "the forms of texts that emerged from the social processes leading to public distribution" (1). Even the term 'variant' has fallen under scrutiny, as it implies an original 'pure' text from which variation occurs, with the term 'rewritings' having been suggested as a possible replacement (Van Hulle 23).

In a blog post about her work on African American abolitionist Martin R. Delany's serial novel *Blake*, published between 1859–1861, Stephanie Kingsley describes her process of collation using *Juxta.* She writes:

> I uploaded the texts chapter by chapter into Juxta Commons, collated them, and then used Juxta's Edition Starter feature to produce HTML files which I then linked together into a navigable website created through GitHub. […] The collations revealed many variants between the two serializations. Delany made scattered substantive changes to the work, usually changing one or two words or slightly […] rearranging a sentence for clarity. The many small changes reflect an author interested in smoothing out and correcting his work but not in altering its original meaning. (Kingsley)

Kingsley's collation takes a traditional approach, but benefits from the use of digital tools, which enabled her to collate texts from two separate magazines and one reprint. However, born-digital texts with multiple authors can also be collated using these applications, as a 2013 examination of the continuous changes and updates on a single collaboratively-written article on Wikipedia explores (Schlosser). As these examples show, digital collation applications can aid researchers to both expand the boundaries of established practices as well as branch out into entirely new directions.

Visualizing Variants

Collation software creates visualization that, while astonishing in its speed and flexibility, is more suited to the researcher than the reader. The longer the text, and the more editions put under the metaphorical microscope, the more intricate the web of mapped changes becomes.

For his study of *Cloud Atlas*, Eve chose to visualize only the structural variations, or *syuzhet*,[5] using a Sankey flow diagram. He worked with pre-existing models, using the free software tool D3.js.[6] His resulting diagram (Figure 3) is read top to bottom, with the UK version

[5] *Syuzhet*, as Eve defines it, is "the way that a particular text organises its presentation of [the] narrative" as opposed to the *fabula*, "the chronological content of the narrative" (7).

[6] Eve has made his visualization software freely available. Moreover, he has invited other scholars to use his data toward a linguistic and/or textual comparison of the two versions of *Cloud Atlas*. See Eve 29.

represented on the left side and the US version on the right. Blocks represent narrative, with a thicker block indicating a greater length of structural similarity between the two versions. White space indicates content that is present in one version but not the other, the crossing of lines represents re-ordered content, and "where a block-link splits, this represents cases where one question was broken into several in the other edition" (Eve 9). [see Figure 3]

His focus on the structural differences rather than the textual alone differs greatly from the practices and concerns of textual criticism, as does his focus on version variants, the "changes in different printings of the same work" (Dedner 15). Here, it is not important what words exactly were changed but how and to what extent material was re-ordered, added, and subtracted. Eve's visualization abstracts the version variants for the chapter in question, giving a macro view that makes it possible to take in the entire chapter across two versions in a single glance.

While Eve presents a thoroughly academic study and his visualization functions accordingly, others have taken a more inviting, reader-focused approach. In 2009, designer and author Ben Fry mapped the first appearance of every word in all seven editions of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*. Darwin's seminal work has a long publishing history, with the first edition published in 1859 and the last published in 1872 (Fry). Each edition has substantial differences, made visible by Fry's map of the findings (Figure 4), titled *On the Origin of Species: The Preservation of Favoured Traces*. [see Figure 4]

The map is free to access online at the data platform *Fathom.* It is also interactive. Each edition is color-assigned, so it becomes immediately evident, for example, that a substantial amount of material was added by Darwin in the seventh and final edition, indicated by a large red column. By moving one's cursor over the map, color-coded text from the book appears, letting readers explore and read all the individual textual changes that were made. One can discover, for example, that the phrase "survival of the fittest" was not added until the fifth edition, and "evolution" first appeared in the sixth (Fry). The map, to quote Fry, "enabl[es] users to see changes at both the macro level, and word-by-word" (Fry).

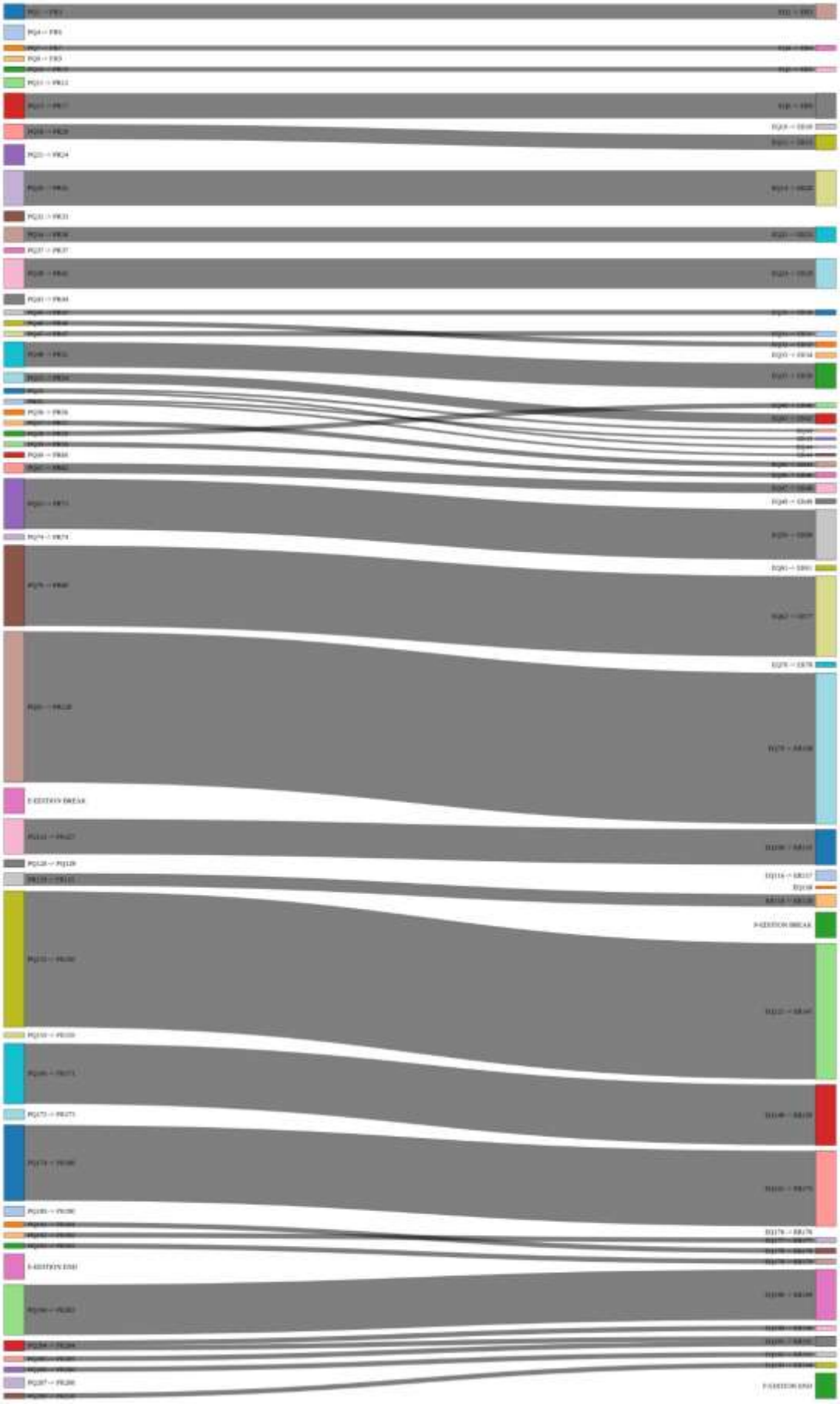

Figure 3: Martin Paul Eve's visualization of the version variants in *Cloud Atlas.*

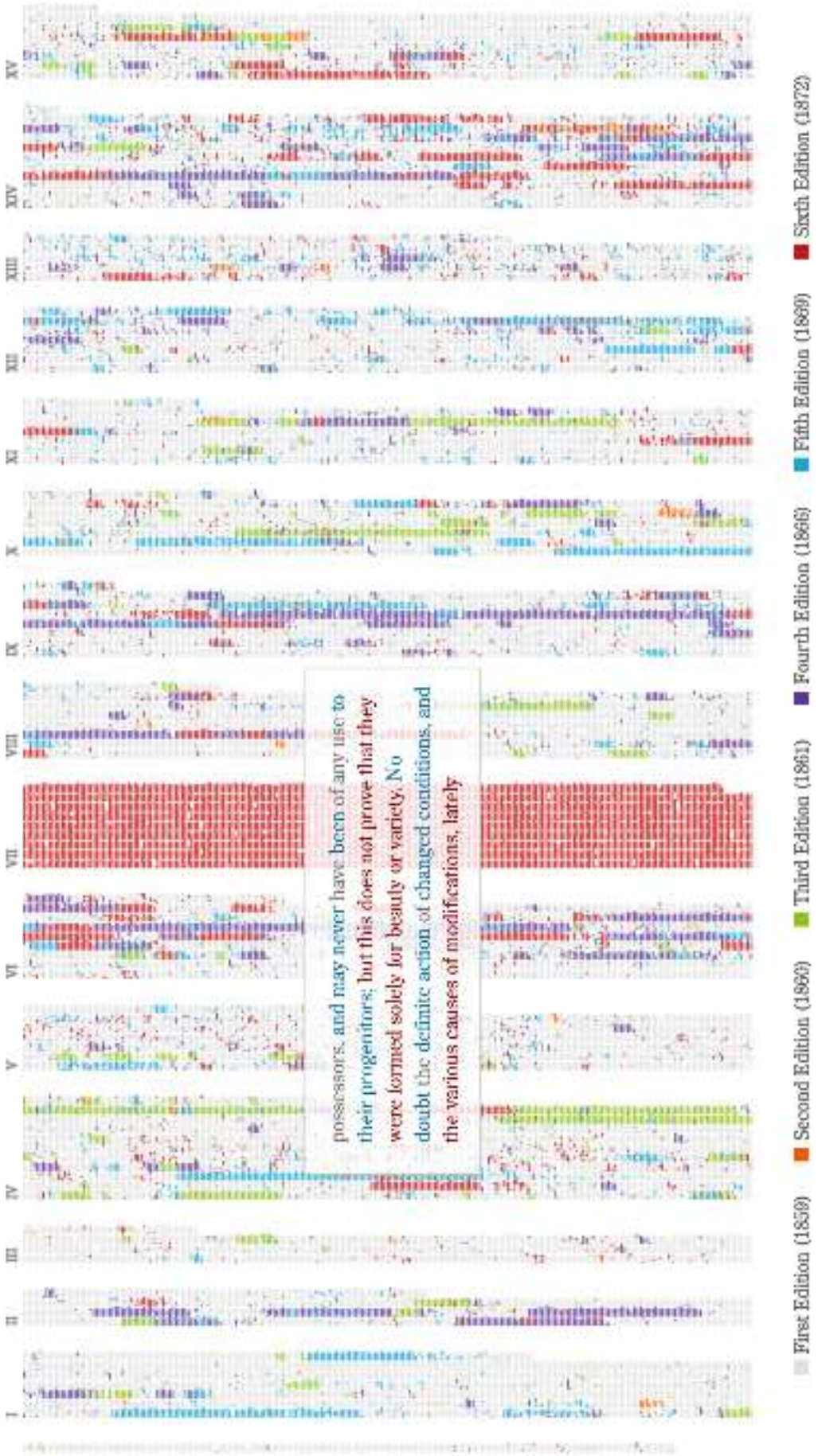

Figure 4: Ben Fry's interactive map of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*.

Reading the Changes

Both Eve and Fry's visualizations make evident the storied writing and publication histories books have. What we might easily think of as "a book" is in fact a multitude of books that may or may not be identical in a variety of ways. These visualizations help to present the enormous variations our books, old or new, can have within their pages. What this all means for readers is the possibility to read, experience, and engage with texts in new ways: reading the changes that occur from copy to copy, edition to edition, or version to version.

Yet, as with the digital humanities more generally, digital collation is a budding field, and not all questions have answers. Is there a way, for example, to present collation results to readers in a way that is not inherently inclusive of all variants, but which rather guides readers through changes step-by-step, either chronologically or according to other parameters, such as stylistic changes versus error corrections? How could paratextual elements such as illustrations be represented? And how are scholars to deal with issues of copyright when working with and collating newer materials?

Even with such questions lingering, digital tools offer researchers and readers new methods for exploring the sometimes messy histories of books. Digital tools make it possible to present digitally collated material in invigorating new ways—interactive, reader-focused, and openly accessible—enriching reading experiences and allowing readers to trace the changes of some of their favorite books.

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Mudie's *Select Library* and the Three-Decker Novel – A Mutual Failure?

Nina Kroesing

One of the most successful circulating libraries in 19th-century Britain was Charles Edward Mudie's *Select Library,* which opened in 1842. As an important cultural institution, it satisfied the demand of a people that were becoming increasingly literate. For an annual subscription fee of one guinea, readers could borrow one volume at a time. The three-decker[1], for which Mudie got a discount of up to fifty percent of the nominal price, was his preferred publication format. It allowed him to triple the number of subscribers he could serve with one title, while also tripling his intake. In contrast, one-volume first editions were, while stocked, rarely advertised (Griest 40).

In the mid-nineteenth century, three-deckers were set at a costly 31s 6d[2] and thus not announced for sale, but as available through circulating libraries. They were therefore first and foremost library editions. Publishers were dependent on large purchases of three-volume novels by libraries like Mudie's. Consequently, authors and publishers planned accordingly, and the length, plots, and subjects were attributed to Mudie's liking (Griest 35f.). Many writers, however, saw the three-decker as a "Procrustean bed on which novels were placed to be dragged out or broken into the statutory length" (Griest 41). The system of maintaining an artificially high price and small editions was indeed most beneficial to the circulating libraries who could profit from a brief monopoly on the availability of new novels (Bassett 61f.). The three-decker format was abandoned in 1894, at the libraries' instigation. Despite the dominance of the format in 19th-century British publishing, research on its eventual failure has been surprisingly limited. This article will thus take a closer look at the final stages of the three-decker novel in the 1890s. During the course of this article I will examine the failure of the three-decker system through the writing of contemporary author George Gissing, supported with the work of book historians. I will argue how the three-volume

[1] The three-volume novel is also known as the triple-decker or three-decker. This expression stems from eighteenth and nineteenth century war vessels having three gundecks. With over 200 feet in length they were costly vessels, but also had a distinct aura of class and dignity. Consequently, the term "three-decker" was used figuratively for something of great importance or size consisting of three divisions or three sections (Lauterbach and Lauterbach 267f.).

[2] This amounts to roughly £150 in today's money (Nesta 49).

novel that once proved so profitable for the *Select Library* resulted in Mudie's eventual business failure and that Mudie's deliberately decided to kill the format off entirely.

George Gissing and the "triple-headed monster"

The three-volume novel presented itself as an obstacle to many authors. With the establishment of the three-decker, authors began to think in terms of length. For instance, in order to meet their quota, they used certain padding techniques such as prolonged characterization, multiplying the number of chapters or resorting to the episode (Lauterbach and Lauterbach 272–274). The pressure to force a story into three volumes instead of allowing it to take on a natural shape is reflected in George Gissing's works.

Gissing was a British novelist who poses a perfect example of a serious writer in the 1880s and 90s who was forced to abide by Mudie's rules in order to make a living. He experienced how inconvenient the publishing format was to authors and how publishers succumbed to the pressure exerted by the circulating libraries. The three-decker system could thus only prevail as long as it suited the libraries which sustained it. After a failed attempt to convince his publisher to issue his work *A Life's Morning* in two volumes instead of three, Gissing realized that the time for change had not yet come (Griest 98f.). In 1891, Smith, Elder & Co. published another novel of his, once again in the typical three-volume format. It can be argued that *New Grub Street* is Gissing's autobiographical take on the three-decker situation. One of his characters labels the three-decker a "triple-headed monster, sucking the blood of English novelists" (Gissing), which demonstrates how the protagonist feels. Edwin Reardon is a struggling young author who is unwilling to compromise his artistic integrity and therefore unable to produce a three-decker in the allotted time. Reardon sums up the dilemma perfectly:

> "For anyone in my position (…) how is it possible to abandon the three volumes? It is a question of payment. (…) And here comes in the benefit of the libraries; from the commercial point of view the libraries are indispensable. Do you suppose the public would support the present number of novelists if each book had to be purchased? A sudden change to that system would throw three-fourths of the novelists out of work" (Gissing).

Nevertheless, Gissing's Reardon is overwhelmed by the task to put his story into the customary three volumes: "The three volumes lie before me like an interminable desert. Impossible to get through them" (Gissing). Other authors grew increasingly frustrated as well and expressed similar feelings. William Makepeace Thackeray in *Vanity Fair* satirized the three-decker: "This is what he pined after. Here it is—the summit, the

end—the last page of the third volume" (Lauterbach and Lauterbach 272). Three-volume novels were in many ways an obstacle to the author and could potentially damage the quality of the work. A flawed and restricting publication format such as the three-decker was doomed to fail from the very beginning and survived only until 1894 because the libraries and hence the publishers supported it. However, by the mid-1880s publishers did not have to rely on the circulating libraries as their major customers anymore.

The Unprofitable Three-Decker

Publishers profited from small editions and stable print runs which posed limited risk. Three-deckers typically had a print run of 500 to 1,500 copies, of which Mudie's bought a significant number. However, he never paid the full price of 31d 6s for the three-decker. Instead, he negotiated discounts and often received new novels for less than half the market price.[3] As the circulating libraries were the publishers' main customers, they bent to Mudie's terms. They still made a profit, however, despite the discounts (Bassett 62).

With its small print runs, the expensive three-decker proved to be a precarious system as it was unfit to cater to the ever-growing reading audience. The economic barrier was the main reason why readers turned to circulating libraries as the three-decker was not priced for direct sale to individual buyers. When publishers recognized the growing demand of the audience, they published their novels in cheaper one-volume editions making them thus available for sale to the general reading public. The profits they made from the circulating libraries became less economically viable than direct sales to the reading public (Nesta 57).

Beginning in the mid-1880s, cheaper formats began to dominate in fiction. With readers willing to buy books at an affordable rate, publishers felt less compelled to wait a year to issue the first cheap reprint of the three-decker (Basett 68). Since circulating libraries had running and labor costs in addition to the price of the books, a three-volume novel was only profitable for circulating libraries if it circulated for between nine months and a year (Eliot 129f.). Cheaper second editions that appeared before this time frame meant that the circulating libraries had to sell those titles off at a substantial discount (Eliot 298).[4] The reprints of three-deckers in one volume

[3] For instance, Mudie bought half of the first edition of Anthony Trollope's three-volume novel *The Three Clerks* (Bentley, 1857) and received the 500 copies for 11s. 6d. each. For then-unknown authors like Thomas Hardy discounts were even steeper. Mudie acquired 50 copies of his three-volume novel *Desperate Remedies* (Tinsley Brothers, 1871) at 6s. each (Bassett 62).

[4] By the late 1860s reprints were available less than a year after their original publication in three volumes. By the 1880s they could be issued just three months after their first edition. Prices for these reprints fell as

show that the publication format was artificial and that the whole three-volume system was created based on purely economic reasons (Lauterbach and Lauterbach 279f.).

A closer look at the production of three-volume novels reveals that while the *Select Library* based its main business model on the circulation of three-deckers, publishers did not. According to Bassett and his study on three-decker production,[5] an average number of 95 new three-volume novel titles were produced in the 1860s. This number declined to an average of 85 per year in the early 1870s. However, from 1876 to 1884, production increased to an average of near 140. The following years show similar fluctuation from a gradual decline in the late 1880s to an increase in the early 1890s. Most interesting for this article is the steep decline in three-decker production after 1894 when most publishers stopped issuing their novels in this format. G. H. Henty's three-volume novel *The Queens Cup* in 1897 marks the end of the three-decker format (Bassett 67). Taking these numbers into account, it seems that the three-decker stayed a consistent and viable publishing format until it was killed off by the circulating libraries in 1894. Bassett, however, shows that when compared to the overall production of fiction titles, the three-decker production does not even account for half of it. Three-deckers accounted for an average of 31.9 percent of new fiction titles from 1876–85. From 1886–1894, the data paints an even clearer picture of the situation with three-decker production, accounting for an average of 12.1 percent. Bassett's data clearly shows that the three-decker did not dominate British publishing at any period in time (Bassett 67f.). In reality, only a small cadre of publishers specialized in the production of three-deckers, whereas most other publishers issued only a few three-volume novels per year (Bassett 71).[6] With a narrow base like this, the three-decker format was never intended for the mass market and could not accommodate the growing readership. Rather surprisingly, the three-decker system proved quite durable and comparatively stable, for which Richard Menke offers an explanation. The circulating libraries created a closed system that purposely stifled

well which made them more affordable for the general reading public (Eliot 135f.).

[5] Bassett based his numbers on *The English Catalogue of Books* and the *Publishers' Circular*. Numerous other critics, including Guinevere L. Griest, quote Joseph Shaylor's statistics of three-volume novel production given in *The Fascination of Books* (1912). Shaylor had been working for distributors like Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, and Kent, and thus had extensive knowledge of the publishing industry. However, his data was compiled about fifteen years after the publication of the last three-volume novel and does not offer any source. Its accuracy is thus questionable (Bassett 63).

[6] From 1867 to 1897 thirty-seven out of over ninety publishers produced only one three-decker. On the other hand, another fifteen publishers account for 86 percent of all new three-volume novel titles and thus represent the great majority (Bassett 71).

technical and economic innovation in favor of their financial interests (Menke). But clinging to the three-decker system proved increasingly unprofitable as it did not adequately serve the authors' needs or a mass readership intent on owning books.

Killing the Three-Decker

With an increasing number of publishers issuing a quick reprint, profits for Mudie's business greatly reduced. Mudie's business strategy rested on two pillars: subscription fees on the one hand and second-hand book sales on the other. For instance, after succeeding his father as head of the firm, Arthur Mudie complained that he was left with 1,750 copies, or 5,250 volumes, of *Marcella* by Mrs. Humphry Ward because a 6s. edition had been issued only three months after the original three-decker edition (Griest, *A Victorian Leviathan* 122). Arthur Mudie also shared his sentiments with regards to the three-decker on a regular basis with publisher George Bentley. He claimed that "by careful analysis of figures extending over 2 or 3 years that not one in twelve of the 3 vol novels pa[id] its way" (Griest 168). In a letter to Bentley, Arthur Mudie explicitly stated his preference for the one-volume novel and his aversion against the three-decker as it had outlived its usefulness (Griest 173). In this respect he is in contradiction to his father, Charles Edward Mudie, who supported the three-decker and based his business on it. The *Select Library* had certainly stocked one-volume novels as well, but Charles Edward Mudie was reluctant to advertise these. Despite his death in 1890, the powerful impression he left was still molding policies and practices as the *Select Library* continued to rely on the three-decker (Griest, *Leviathan* 117).

27th June, 1894 marks the most important date for the history of the three-decker. Mudie's and W. H. Smith simultaneously issued a circular to the trade demanding future terms on which they would continue to buy novels from publishers. The libraries demanded to lower the cost for three-volume novels to no more than 4s. effectively calling for a further reduction to the substantial discount they already received on three-volume novels. Furthermore, they insisted that cheaper reprints appear no earlier than one year after the publication of their initial three-volume form. This would allow them enough time to properly circulate the novels to make a profit. Except for a few publishers who lowered their prices – though not to 4s.[7] – nearly every publisher either abandoned the format entirely or greatly reduced production as the terms were

[7] For instance, Bentley lowered his price to 18s., Chatto and Windus to 15s., and Hurst and Blackett to 21s. (Bassett 74).

simply unworkable (Bassett 73f.). While this step might appear like a desperate measure to save the three-decker, it was in practice the opposite. As Arthur Mudie confirms: "The Three Volume novel does not suit us *at any price* so well as the One Vol, and upon the old terms it is *no longer possible*." (Griest 174). According to Griest, the *Select Library* had little choice from an economic standpoint. In order to avoid having to raise their subscription rates which could lose them subscribers, they opted for the only other option, which was to cut expenses for fiction by killing off the expensive three-decker (Griest 171). It can be argued that Arthur Mudie realized the changing conditions in the literary market and acted accordingly. In August 1894, the *Select Library* openly advertised "Novels in One Volume" for the first time (Griest 197).

The three-volume form vanished completely and rapidly within three years after it received its death blow. It defined the British fiction market for nearly seventy-five years, despite the fact that three-volume novel production accounted only for an average of one-third of total novel production. The system of three-volume novel production with circulating libraries buying the bulk of it and thus sustaining and perpetuating it, could only be dispatched by them when it was no longer profitable enough. The three-decker system that had sustained Mudie's for decades was deliberately killed off by that same business. Scholars are divided over the issue of whether Mudie's was largely dependent on the three-decker novel or not. Simon Eliot argues that the *Select Library* did not close its doors until forty-three years after the death of the three-volume novel and can thus be "exonerated from the guilt of creating what many came to regard as a monster" (Eliot 135). While it is true that Charles Edward Mudie did not create the three-decker, he clung to it contentedly as it gave him a monopoly on the newest fiction titles, so that readers who could not afford the hefty price of 31s. 6d. had to subscribe to the *Select Library* in order gain access. Griest points out that the *Select Library* may have outlived the three-decker by forty-three years, but its glory days were a thing of the past. She argues that even though the *Select Library* survived in name until 1937, the three-decker and the circulating library were so closely intertwined that neither could prosper without the other. Thus, Mudie's was doomed with the extinction of the three-decker (Griest, *Leviathan* 104). The firm was not adapting adequately to new publishing strategies with larger print runs. Its orders remained small and soon the firm had to move to smaller premises in Kingsway (Griest, *Leviathan* 112).[8]

[8] Despite the fact that the demise of the three-decker format impacted W. H. Smith as well, the firm managed to survive in name until the present day. Where Mudie's primarily relied on the flourishing three-decker, W.

Conclusion

The system of small editions at high prices that catered primarily to circulating libraries was eventually replaced by one that catered to a mass readership relying on large, direct sales (Bassett 75). With reprints available at 6s. or lower a few months after the original issue in three-volume format, the library edition found its way into the second-hand catalogue without being able to have its full run. As a result, changing publishing practices revealed that the three-decker was never made for longevity. The three-volume novel was only economically viable when the reading public was small, and the circulating libraries could adequately sustain it with small editions. Because Mudie's relied so much on a system that could only serve a small reading public, which also proved difficult to work with for authors like George Gissing, the three-decker was doomed to fail his business eventually. As soon as Arthur Mudie realized that, he got rid of the three-volume novel, but failed to get rid of the business techniques that were designed specifically for triple-decker editions. This particular novel format would not have lasted an eternity, but its complete and abrupt demise can clearly be traced to the circulating libraries, particularly Mudie's. To quote Griest, "the end of the one spelled the doom of the other" (*Leviathan*, 104) and ultimately the *Select Library* and the three-decker failed each other.

H. Smith focused on railway stalls and thus preferred the cheap reprint in one volume which could conveniently be withdrawn at one station and be returned at another. The death of the three-volume novel thus mainly influenced its circulating library service which ran from 1860 to 1961 (Griest, Leviathan 112 and 117).

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DIDACTICS

The Influence of Polysemy When Teaching History Through Film – The Case of the *Amistad*

Hanna Ehnmark

Films or (recorded) theater plays have been part of language courses at school for quite some time. During the last couple of years though, the use of audiovisual materials for educational purposes has increased significantly (Stoddard & Marcus, "Tinsel Town" 305): Students use the internet, social or other media to gather information and complete their workload at school or university. This is also the case when it comes to history and teaching or learning about history. It is often easier and faster for a student to watch a movie than to read a book about a historical event. Additionally, history feature films are mostly more entertaining than reading said book. They can be loaded with emotion and tension in order to appeal to the masses—and could therefore transmit incorrect messages about the past. To counteract the possibility of misleading information, it makes sense to include historical movies in a teacher's curriculum. That way, students learn about history not only through a medium they know and enjoy, but also in an environment where mistakes are not overlooked. They gain the ability to analyze such movies considering the context of production and the historical event shown on screen and therefore manage to extract accurate information. This of course might not always work, as "different students can 'read' the same film and its historical messages differently" (Metzger 68). The feature being described here is that of polysemy, an essential part of any written, audiovisual or other text. It can greatly influence the way students understand a movie and think of the history it shows—and, if not properly managed by the teacher, it might transmit the wrong message or false information.

What is polysemy?

The Oxford Dictionary describes polysemy as "the coexistence of many possible meanings for a word or phrase" ("Polysemy" n.d.). It is not surprising that this concept is very often the source of misunderstandings as individuals understand words or phrases differently. A common example are diverging conceptions in the field of entertainment like poems, music or videos. In this case, polysemy can be considered one of the reasons why people discuss various interpretations of a poem or song for hours on

end; why this or that character from a series is one of the good or bad guys (one prominent example is Professor Severus Snape from the *Harry Potter* Series, as the fandom constantly debates whether his actions were fueled by love or self-centeredness), or why some films (such as *Amistad*) spark controversial debates and discussion.

To fully understand the concept of polysemy and its importance when it comes to movies and similar media, it is necessary to place it in the context of Cultural Studies' theory, and especially Stuart Hall's Encoding-Decoding model. The former sees a person not as part of a passive and uniform public, but understands a person's individuality and his or her personal history (Beck 191). Following that line of thought, individual people can read the same text very differently. Stuart Hall explains these varying perceptions with a person's social and cultural background. For him, already the production of any given text (written or audiovisual) means that certain information is encoded according to the encoder's contextual background (Hall 164-165). While this in itself implies that the same information can be encoded in contrasting ways by different people with varying backgrounds, it only makes sense to expect the same at the decoder's end. This does not mean, however, that every single person understands a text differently, as polysemy does not equal pluralism (169). Instead, the overlying culture of a person "tends, with varying degrees of closure, to impose its classifications of the social and cultural and political world" (169). Correspondingly, Hall identifies three types of ways to understand the same text: The "dominant-hegemonic position" (171) encompasses people reading the text the way the encoder intends them to, meaning they understand the underlying connotations as well as dominant and hegemonic definitions and accept them (171). The "negotiated position" (172) describes an underlying understanding of connotations and definitions, although not all of them are accepted by those reading the text (172). Lastly, the oppositional position outlines people who interpret the encoder's connotations and definitions contrary to the intended understanding (172).

When applying the concept of polysemy to any audiovisual product, many things allow for misunderstandings, as every decision made by those in charge influences the way the audience perceives and reacts to a scene. Adding to this, history feature films allow for a whole new set of possible mis- or just different interpretations as they deal with varying time frames. The most obvious and important time frame concerns the past, as in what is being represented. Because of this representation, the audience can gather information about the/its past. It should be any movie's aim to make those watching understand why people acted the way they

did and thereby create a "resonance between the past and the present" (Metzger 71). While movies establish this connection, it is up to the audience to understand it correctly and not read the happenings on screen with present-day associations and understandings as they would, for example, read the news. This though, is what mostly happens and explains how people from different cultures will understand the historical 'facts' adapted into a story (Hall 164) differently.

Secondly, the time the feature film was produced is equally as crucial, because it is decisive for how the past is represented. This encompasses the decisions made by directors, producers etc. who are in turn influenced by certain economic, political and ideological elements (Briley 4). At the economic level, this influence amounts to the basic need for profit of any Hollywood production (Metzger 68). To make a film a commercial success, those in charge make certain dramaturgical choices possibly leading to historical inaccuracies. This process is further reinforced as the producer's and/or studio's ideological or political values seep through to be embedded into the (his)story. They convey important concepts of our present-day lives, which makes movies not only "texts *about* the past, over time, they themselves become documents *of* the past" (70, emphasis in original) and can and should be analyzed as such.

This leads to the third time frame, namely that of the audience, as in how a movie is perceived. Producers or directors make specific choices while producing the movie to transmit, for example, certain values as described above. They encode historical facts and produce a story (Hall 164). Following Hall, this story will not necessarily be decoded by the audience in the way its encoders intended them to. This would already be the case shortly after the movie is released (as will be shown later in this essay) but will logically still be relevant many years later. In short, any history feature film has high polysemic potential: It represents something of the past and needs to make its audience understand it. All the while it is deeply influenced by values of the time of production, leading not only to historical inaccuracies but also the possible irritation of a later audience.

The Case of the *Amistad*

The movie *Amistad,* directed by Steven Spielberg and produced by Debbie Allen, was released in 1997 and is an eligible object of analysis because of both its content and reception. It tells the story of a slave revolt aboard a Spanish schooner, called "La Amistad*"*, in 1839. Most of its screen time focuses on the court trials following the capture of the privateered ship, determining whether those revolting were indeed rightfully

slaves or illegally sold into slavery. Furthermore, many teachers in the US show it to their students to explain concepts like freedom (Stoddard & Marcus, "Burden of Historical Representation" 27) and identity, as the historical event and movie alike focus on it (Osagie xi). Additionally, already before but notably after its release, the movie sparked much controversy and discussion (124–126). While some thought it full of historical inaccuracies and wrong depictions (Foner), others appreciated the director's choices and the movie's messages (Fontenot).

Polysemy in *Amistad?*

When looking at the movie as a whole, the most relevant and obvious time frame is that concerning the audience: *Amistad* covers a story from the nineteenth century but represents US-American values from the end of the twentieth century. This already caused controversy after the movie's release but could obviously also irritate today's viewers. They have their own social and cultural backgrounds which do not always coincide with the values transmitted in the movie, and could therefore misunderstand what is shown on-screen. The other two time frames are best portrayed when analyzing specific scenes, though the movie's polysemic quality is already obvious when looking at the first two scenes. The opening scene focuses on one of the captives and later protagonist named Cinque. He manages to loosen a nail in the bulk of the Amistad and opens his shackles with it to later also free the other captives. The second scene shows the mutiny aboard the Amistad in gory detail. The Africans kill most of the crew very aggressively and violently, showing no mercy.

The time frame of the past is mostly illustrated by the movie's alteration of a few proven historical facts. In the opening scene, for example, most sources do not explain how Cinque opened his shackles (e.g. Osagie 5). This makes the nail a fabrication set to aid the actual focus of the scene: transmitting Cinque's emotions. While this does not necessarily impact a viewer's perspective when watching the movie, in the second scene, the movie's screenplay excludes the real reason for the Africans' brutality during the mutiny: Apparently, the cook aboard of the Amistad had taunted the captives by telling them that they were to be killed and eaten. The kidnapped Africans believed this story (5), which is why they in turn killed the crew so viciously. Of course, already the horrid voyage across the Atlantic Ocean and being sold off to the highest bidder (shown in a later scene) could be considered reason enough for many to kill for their freedom, but the savagery illustrated during the mutiny is better explained by the actual historical account. An audience that does not know the real reason behind this violence would look for other explanations and could, for example,

simply attribute it to the Africans' way of being—hence the offence taken by some critics.

Similarly, several choices made while producing the movie add to its polysemic feature: The opening scene begins with a plaintive melody, already telling the audience how to feel (sad, longing for something that was taken—the slaves' freedom) about what is to come. Then Cinque's face appears, but the picture is very dark, a mixture of black and blue, so that it takes a while to realize what is being shown on screen. The audience hears panting but does not know where it comes from. When Cinque finds the nail, the camera focuses on his mouth which is distorted in an aggressive and feral way—probably to show his need to loosen the nail and growing hope while succeeding. This, nonetheless, creates the impression of someone violent and uncontrollable. While the audience still tries to understand what is happening, they only see something dark, glittering with sweat, panting loudly. This description makes it easy to understand how some viewers were offended by the introduction of the most important African in the Amistad case: "The facial features of the Amistad hero are presented as, and appear to be, animal-like" (Osagie 126). According to Osagie, this presentation plays into an old westernized racial image Americans have of Africans (126): Of the latter living like savages in the dark jungle or melting into the dark (because of their skin color), or just generally being associated with darkness and therefore other negative things (22). This stereotype is reinforced in the second scene: The violence with which the captives attack and kill everybody while a storm is raging in the middle of the night connect violence once more with darkness and a dark skin color. This impression is emphasized by most of the Africans wearing nothing but a loincloth and being far superior when in battle. Especially Cinque's fight with the Amistad's captain fuels this stereotype and invokes another: That of the violent big black brute (Ferber 15), "a stereotype that is staged repeatedly and therefore resonates as 'natural identity'" (Osagie 127). However, an audience with a different point of view might not realize these associations and might simply be engaged by the emotions transmitted through the scene.

Impact of Polysemy in a Classroom

When thinking about the possible impact of the polysemic quality of *Amistad* or any historical feature film in a classroom, most arguments lead up to Hall's Encoding-Decoding Model and eventually the capability of the teacher. To produce a history feature film, the historical event it pictures needs to be transformed into a story (Hall 164). It is being encoded according to the production's cultural and social background and

therefore influenced greatly by it. Because of this, many criticized producer Debbie Allen's choice of director as they saw Steven Spielberg, a white man with a lot of Hollywood history, unfit to accurately portray the happenings of the Amistad case and therefore the concept and issue of slavery (Osagie 122). Whether Spielberg succeeded in doing so or not is not the focal point of this discussion, but he definitely inserted a few typically American stereotypes that Africans can be offended by—all in the first few minutes of the movie. An inattentive student might on the one hand not realize this and be either influenced or offended without knowing the reason behind it. On the other hand, these inserted stereotypes allow for a discussion in the classroom where historical but also contemporary "attitudes towards race" (Briley 3) could be reviewed. *Amistad* shows different stereotypes, all of which should be spelled out when watching the movie in class. Otherwise, students might take on these stereotypes unconsciously — maybe not from watching only one movie, but with the increased consumption of history feature films in the general population (Stoddard & Marcus, "Burden of Historical Representation" 28), such stereotypes might get adopted. It is an essential part when watching any kind of movie, but especially a history feature film to carefully keep in mind the cultural context of production (Briley 4). Furthermore, the transformation of an historical event into an encoded story also means that certain historical facts will be left out or changed to suit a more entertaining screenplay, as was done dramatizing, for example, the mutiny in *Amistad*. Any teacher using this movie in a classroom would have to disentangle fact from fiction, and explain these differences to his/her students. To successfully extract historical facts from the movie, the latter need to know about the cultural, social, political and economic context of the time of production but also today.

Concerning the facts shown on screen, the subject of slavery itself is not an easy one, but the way Spielberg chose to present certain events (like the mutiny or Cinque's story about them crossing the Atlantic Ocean during one of the trials) toughens it up even more. As Chester J. Fontenot (1999) writes in his review, even grown-ups were visibly shaken after watching *Amistad*. Some because they were racked with guilt, some because they were identifying themselves with the misery shown in a few scenes (243). *Amistad* is not the only historical movie featuring difficult scenes about past events—almost all of them do. Because of this, a teacher must, for one, manage potentially shocked students, but on the other hand use such movies to pass on central concepts presented in these movies—such as "the black misery signified by the torturous ordeal that Cinque and his fellow Africans sustained and the white guilt symbolized by the Supreme Court victory"

(243) in *Amistad*. As Spielberg chose to emotionalize many scenes, the movie might be better suited to convey the relevant emotions concerning the topic of slavery than a history book. While this makes the movie interesting, it could, however, become dangerous as it envelops the historical event with emotions that are not always called for but should be anticipated by any teacher showing such a movie in class.

Furthermore, it is rather unlikely that all the students sitting in one class will 'read' the movie the same way. According to their own cultural, social, and personal contexts, they will decode and understand various scenes or stereotypes differently. Someone decoding the movie from a dominant-hegemonic position will for example be shaken by the violence of the mutiny but accept the brutality because of Cinque's pain shown in the opening scene. Another student might only see the savagery, be appalled by it and therefore also distrust the revolting Africans in the coming scenes — that is until they reach the visualization of the slaves' crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, which seems to justify any kind of violence. The list describing different ways to decode the same scene could go on and on. Taken all together in a classroom, they could for one generate a lively discussion and widen the horizon of the students participating. However, when not channeled well enough by a competent teacher, this might deteriorate into verbal fights between the students — provided they care enough about what they see on screen to talk about it.

Lastly, when considering all of the above, students can take a lot from understanding the principle of polysemy in historical feature films. For one, being able to differentiate between actual historical fact and a producer or director's choice of interpretation (encoding) indicates not only knowledge on the various time periods or a director's style but "abstract thought" (Briley 4) and important analytical skills (Metzger 67). Adding to this, because movies have become an important part of most students' lives (68), learning how to analyze an audiovisual document could give them an impulse to critically reflect on other things they see on screen. In today's digitalized and globalized day and age, this has become more and more important. To, for example, outsmart possible Fake News or be able to distinguish between different people's points of view and ways of encoding and decoding is crucial. But even when not considering this current example, learning how to analyze texts, such as movies, and thinking about other people's perceptions are skills needed in one's day-to-day life and even more surely in the future.

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Modern Family and Modern Approaches to ICC – Developing Cultural Knowledge with TV Series at *Berufskolleg*

Rosalie Wiechmann

This essay is the result of realizing that the curricula of *Gymnasium* and *Berufskolleg* differ tremendously. Whereas the *Gymnasium* focuses on topics like postcolonialism and Shakespeare, the *Berufskolleg's* curriculum demands knowledge about "the experience of work" and "personal identities and social relationships" (MSB 9). Simultaneously, it lacks cultural topics like India and Nigeria. Considering the topic of social relationships, the television series *Modern Family* would be well suited as an introduction and at the same time support the obligatory examination of "family in literature and film" (13). As intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is one of today's main aims in the English language classroom, it would be interesting to see how teachers at *Berufskolleg* can comply with the guidelines of the *Bildungsplan*[1] and still achieve ICC. This, and the medium of TV series, leads to the question of whether *Modern Family* offers modern ways of developing ICC. This paper will focus on how ICC can be developed through less cultural topics but through a mandatory topic like 'family'. Firstly, the paper will outline what ICC in general denotes and discuss the use of TV series in the English classroom. Secondly, the pilot episode of *Modern Family* will be analyzed in three steps according to knowledge, skills and attitude. Thirdly, the usefulness and suitability of *Modern Family* for developing ICC will be discussed.

ICC and TV Series

The *Kultusministerkonferenz* (KMK) determines the *Bildungsstandards*, which specify the competences students have to reach at certain points in their school education. For English as a Foreign Language for *Allgemeine Hochschulreife* students must, besides other competences, have learned intercultural communicative competence (KMK 19). This means they can understand and act in foreign language contexts and grasp information and meaning from a foreign language text. Furthermore, they can reflect upon these with regard to their own cultural and so-

[1] In this paper the *Bildungsplan Englisch* will only refer to students at *Berufskolleg Soziales und Gesundheit* who are studying to reach *Allgemeine Hochschulreife*.

cietal context (19). ICC denotes "the ability to interact effectively with other people from cultures that we recognize as being different from our own" (Guilherme 297). For this, students have to become intercultural speakers, who are able to mediate between cultures and negotiate between their own social and political identifications and those of others (298). ICC in general consists of critical awareness and reflexivity of one's own and others' cultural knowledge as well as tolerance, openness and willingness to accept members of other cultures on their own terms (Grimm 159). ICC builds on three key components, namely knowledge, skills and attitudes (Anton and Hammer 136). The *Bildungsstandards* also focus on them ("Wissen, Einstellungen und Bewusstheit", KMK 19). Knowledge is defined as knowledge about one's own and foreign cultures and awareness of culture-dependence in human thinking (Anton and Hammer 136). Skills consist of the ability to interpret and compare issues whereas attitude is concerned with multi-perspective perception and the development of critical tolerance (136). Adelaide Hu describes ICC as the key qualification and most important aim of the foreign language classroom (77). Daniela Anton and Julia Hammer go even further by saying that ICC has a special authorization in the English language class because English, as a lingua franca, offers worldwide contact with other cultures (135). Therefore, students should learn how to be interculturally competent.

Regarding today's globalized and digitized world, learners encounter multimodal compositions daily (Viebrock 13), for instance advertisements, Instagram and YouTube. Even the *Bildungsplan Englisch* recommends using films to develop intercultural learning, because they offer an easy access to different perspectives (MSB 8). Concluding, not only is it mandatory to teach film in the English language classroom at *Berufskolleg*, but also film is close to the learners' world, which means a step towards learner-centered materials. Roswitha Henseler, Stefan Möller and Carola Suhrkamp name several reasons for teaching films: firstly, they are good to enhance learners' motivation and encourage them to think, react and comment on things they come across in films (15). They offer authentic speech and support the affective-emotional side of foreign language learning, as well as helping to develop imagination (15). Furthermore, films offer insights into other cultures and opportunities to change perspectives (15). And lastly, they foster audiovisual competence as required in the curriculum. They help to develop intercultural competence, especially in terms of empathy and change of perspective, because they make differences between one's own and foreign-culture ways of life visual and comprehensible.

Besides this, films offer opportunities to develop other competences like film literacy, which partly consists of ICC as well. Film analysis can be broken down into four individual competences, where inter-cultural competence means the ability to reflect upon one's own and foreign cultural phenomena (Blell and Lütge 37). In addition to this, many popular films are produced in English. The *Bildungsplan Englisch* has recognized this and names it as a reason why it is important for students at *Berufskolleg* to learn English. It emphasizes the importance of English for international communication as the English-speaking entertainment-industry has a huge influence. In this entertainment-industry, TV series play an important role as they are part of student life (Henseler and Möller 3). The medium underwent an enormous development in the last 25 years (2) and series like *House of Cards*, *Downton Abbey*, *Sherlock*, *How I Met Your Mother* and *Game of Thrones* illustrate how different genres are popular in society. Although TV series play an enormous role in students' lives, teachers often restrict themselves to feature films, documentaries or short films (Henseler and Möller 3). But with their length of 25 to 45 minutes, TV series would be well-suited for lessons. Moreover, they offer any advantage films provide as well. Current research focuses little on this topic. Marja Zibelius's article *Developing "Intercultural Communicative Competence" with Ae Fond Kiss* offers insight into the development of ICC through film, and *Fremdsprachlicher Unterricht* focuses on teaching activities with *Modern Family*, but not on its adequacy for developing ICC. In the following section it will be illustrated how *Modern Family* can be used in the English classroom to work with the compulsory topic of 'family' and simultaneously to develop ICC.

Examination of *Modern Family*

To learn about knowledge is not as easy as discussing the other two key components, attitudes and skills, because *Modern Family* is set in a Western culture, which is comparable to Germany to a certain degree. Therefore, there is no obvious foreign culture featured like in *Whale Rider* or *Ae Fond Kiss*. Nonetheless, there are scenes through which knowledge can be developed in the sense of cultural knowledge. Michael Byram deals with knowledge about social groups and their products and processes as well as knowledge of general processes of societal and individual interaction (Grimm 166). The pilot episode displays many scenes in which knowledge can be acquired.

Firstly, the episode deals with different types of family, family structures and their problems. This represents one of the *Bildungsplan's* topics, "personal identities and social relationships" (MSB 13). Through this topic, students should

learn about types of family, different cultures and different times, and the family in literature and the media (13). In the pilot episode students are directly confronted with three different types of family: the traditional one with Claire and Phil who have been married for sixteen years and are parents to Haley, Alex and Luke, the modern same-sex partnership between Cameron and Mitchell and their newly adopted daughter Lily, and also the modern family of Jay with his younger wife Gloria and her son Manny. Already at first glance, the TV series displays knowledge about different types of family which could be used as the foundation for further tasks.

Furthermore, the pilot episode offers insight into prejudices towards same-sex partnerships in America. Mitchell and Cameron have difficulties with people's prejudice that a couple who is adopting a child must be a traditional couple consisting of a mother and a father. If students recognize this prejudice, they have acquired the ability to have knowledge about people's cultural products (Bredella 121), in this case prejudices, and have taken a step towards ICC.

Thirdly, Volkmann states that knowledge also entails students learning about culturally significant elements which are dealt with in the piece of literature (59). Concerning this, *Modern Family* offers knowledge about Spanish accents in the English language and misunderstandings resulting thereof. Students must gain the knowledge that phrases in a language other than English cannot be translated word by word and therefore may lead to misunderstandings: For example, when Gloria tells Jay "You be the wind in his back, not the spit in his face" which is the word for word translation of a Spanish saying "Voy a ser la brisa en tu espalda, no quien te escupa en la frente". This situation helps students to gain knowledge about the fact that there can be misunderstandings in translating sayings word for word.

This whole aspect of knowledge about misunderstandings is closely connected to skills of discovery. For example, students must have discovered that Gloria has an accent and then identify her accent as a Spanish one. In this regard, students learn about the cultural phenomenon of foreign accents in the English language and how they differ from the Standard American English, which relates to Nancy Grimm's "students know of social background and possible solutions of cultural phenomena" (167). As mentioned above, this is already connected to skills, which will be analyzed further.

One way to develop skills for intercultural competence is through critical incidents, which are mini events offering an illustrative example of an intercultural conflict (Volkmann 56). A critical incident in terms of behavior

could be detected when Mitchell reacts angrily to a woman's comment about "the baby with the cream puffs" (Loyd and Levitan, 00:03:41-00:03:88). Students could be asked to identify why Mitchell is reacting in that way and what the woman meant by saying "cream puffs". The critical incident is that Mitchell misunderstands cream puffs for an insult, as it describes a gay white man, and hence holds a speech to defend him and Cameron, although the woman really meant the cream puffs which Cameron was holding for Lily. By analyzing this scene, students would become aware of people's stereotypical thinking about gay relationships and through this, students would learn to recognize people's ethnocentric views (Bredella 59). This leads to another point Lothar Bredella mentions regarding skills, in that it helps students to develop the ability to discover new knowledge about a culture (122), as cream puff is in the English language a homonym and can either denote a white gay man or a French pastry with sweet filling. Students could think about creative ways or interventions (Bredella 122) to deal with the misunderstanding that cream puffs are not meant as an insult against Mitchell and Cameron.

Furthermore, Grimm describes skills in terms of students being able to relate to problems and challenges presented to them and handling them creatively and by considering several perspectives (167). Mitchell has a problem with telling his family the important news that he and Cameron adopted a baby (Loyd and Levitan, 00:17:06-00:21:91). Concerning this, students could be asked how they would have acted in Mitchell's situation and how they would have shared the news. Students could also share their own experiences from similar situations and how they handled them. By doing this, they accomplish Grimm's aim of developing creative and cooperative ways to tackle problems and take a step towards becoming an intercultural communicative learner.

Attitude as the third aspect of ICC has an enormous impact on students. Grimm describes attitude in terms of ICC as follows: students are motivated to find out more about the target culture and the issues presented and they are consciously aware of their own and other approaches to defining the cultural phenomenon and ready to compare them (167). He also states that students are open to other cultures and show respect to diversity and ambiguity; they also develop empathy (167). In *Modern Family,* students can develop empathy by empathizing with Manny and his passionate way of doing things he is convinced of, like declaring his love to an older girl. In contrast to this stands Jay's sober mind of being realistic about Manni's odds. Here students have a possibility to compare the two approaches. They could formulate their own opinion about why they

would rather agree with Manni's or Jay's way and explain their reasons for their opinion. In this way, students would formulate their attitude towards this topic and simultaneously their product would be made measurable. Furthermore, students should be aware of approaches, their own and those of others, to defining culture and be ready to compare them as well as to develop a critical awareness of their own cultural conditioning (Volkmann 59). Students could develop this by comparing Gloria's way of cheering, which is exuberant, emotional and noisy, and their own way of cheering to realize differences and learn something about their own way of behaving and how this could be influenced through them living in Germany. Concluding, the TV series offers many opportunities to discuss students' attitudes, knowledge and skills.

Modern Family's Suitability to Develop ICC in the Classroom

The overall outcome of the analysis is that the TV series *Modern Family* certainly offers many scenes through which aspects of ICC can be developed. It offers opportunities to develop the basic principles of ICC, while complying with the *Bildungsplan* although cultural topics are hardly represented. Therefore, *Modern Family* offers a new way of dealing with intercultural competence and serves as helpful for students at *Berufskolleg*, who otherwise would not have the same chances to develop ICC like students from *Gymnasium*. Simultaneously, material which deals with TV series would be close to students' world and therefore student-oriented and motivational.

Besides those advantages of TV series, *Modern Family* also offers several opportunities to develop and foster ICC. Concerning attitude, TV series can increase motivation and as they are supporting the affective-emotional side of learning (Henseler, Möller and Suhrkamp 15), it is easier to develop an attitude towards the TV series and its topic than towards a factual text. Furthermore, it fosters the imaginative competence and students' competence for the "suspension of disbelief" (Diehr and Suhrkamp 29) and helps students to empathize with characters and to draw a comparison to their own life. In *Modern Family*, students can for example develop empathy by comparing different ways of dealing with issues, by realizing that TV series offer situations in which they can learn to deal with people's prejudices and by developing a critical awareness of their own cultural conditioning. *Modern Family* also offers scenes in which knowledge can be developed, for example knowledge about family types, people's prejudices, people's dealing with prejudices and about culturally significant elements like, for instance, the Spanish accent. Skills are rather easy to develop with *Modern Family* because due to its nature of being a

mockumentary and comedy program, it offers many situational misunderstandings. Although these are for the purpose of comedy, they help students to detect critical incidents because they are more obvious and striking.

However, one has to keep in mind that although TV series can indeed give examples of foreign cultures, they are not an illustration of reality (Henseler, Möller and Suhrkamp 19), as they are fiction and a piece of art. Therefore, teachers must raise students' awareness of TV series' manipulative aspect and promote their critical awareness. Secondly, although *Modern Family* is certainly a good example to develop cultural knowledge, it draws a very stereotypical picture. For example, Gloria and Manni seem to serve only for a comparison between cultures. Moreover, Cameron and Mitchell are reduced to their gay relationship and serve for comedy aspects like Mitchell's speech on the airplane. Summarizing, one can say, that *Modern Family* is suitable for teaching when only interculturality is regarded. But due to its stereotypical aspects it lacks opportunities to develop transculturality. Werner Delanoy, who supports the idea of transculturality, rejects the idea of binary cultures and emphasizes the interconnectedness of cultures in a globalized world (233). As *Modern Family* rather portrays binary cultures, for example through juxtaposition of Colombian and American character traits or gay and traditional families, it is not perfectly suited for teaching in today's world.

Nonetheless, one must say that, despite those disadvantages, the TV series offers many benefits for students. Taking both sides into account, one can say that working with TV series in a classroom can foster the competence to resist the influence and suggestive power of films, so that students can become critical and competent viewers. Furthermore, it is very helpful to develop cultural knowledge at a school where cultural topics are rarely represented in the *Bildungsplan*. One should not overlook the downsides of *Modern Family's* intercultural potential but be creative in ways of analyzing the TV series. Transculturality could also be made the subject of discussion, for example by analyzing Manni and the different Colombian aspects he displays and simultaneously his American attitude.

Modern Family certainly offers modern ways to achieve ICC, because the medium of TV series is rather new and little current research focuses on it, such as *Fremdsprachlicher Unterricht* (vol. 147, 2017). Most research on audio-visual competence is focused on feature films, although their length of 90 minutes is a huge disadvantage for teaching in class. Moreover, TV series focus on current societal and political issues and as they offer easy access to current topics and are still student-centered

materials, they are well suited for teaching. The second reason why *Modern Family* provides modern ways to learn ICC, is that it offers ways of developing intercultural knowledge without focusing on culturally heavy topics (in a *Ae Fond Kiss* or *Bend it Like Beckham* style) and rather deals with topics students are interested in. The topic of family will certainly interest students at *Berufskolleg Gesundheit und Soziales*, because they deliberately chose this track of education with its focus on social and health issues. Therefore, one can conclude that *Modern Family* is suitable for the English classroom and functions as a modern way to develop ICC.

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LITERATURE
// CULTURE

Monstrous Gender Performances in *Macbeth*

Felicitas van Laak

Macbeth is considered one of Shakespeare's most accessible tragedies and has been an integral part of international school curricula for several years. It seems that Macbeth took Hamlet's place as the nation's favourite Shakespearean hero in 2018, given the nineteen productions staged in the UK alone (Rear). Christie Carson names the #MeToo movement as one of the reasons for the play's sudden popularity because many productions "depend on an assumed misogyny which wants to absolve Macbeth of responsibility for his actions," and expects the 2018 productions to "challeng[e] that misogyny in a world of sexual misconduct scandals" (Rear). Indeed, the Weird Sisters and Lady Macbeth have generated their very own discourse of critical reception and are often dismissed as an incarnation of 'demonic femininity.' This misogynist discourse can be traced back to the link between femininity and monstrosity established in ancient Greek conceptions of gender. Aristotle famously writes:

> Just as it sometimes happens that deformed offspring are produced by deformed parents, and sometimes not, so the offspring produced by a female are sometimes female, sometimes not, but male. The reason is that the female is as it were a deformed male. (II 737a)

Aristotle not only assumes an inherent otherness of women but also a physical deformity derived from the premise that they are not male. The notion of gender deformity invites and easily mingles with other discriminatory practices that render women monstrous. One example is the method of victim-blaming in rape cases that attempts to justify sexual abuse by accrediting women with a seductive, monstrous power that men cannot resist. Similarly, Shakespeare forms a steady connection between femininity and monstrosity in Hamlet's dialogue with Ophelia, where he claims that "wise men know well enough what monsters you make / of them" (*Ham.* 3.1.138-39). Similarly, Antony scorns Cleopatra: "of all thy sex; most monster-like be shown" (*Ant.* 4.12.36), when he falsely accuses her of betrayal, referencing the etymology of 'monster.'

In his essay "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)," Jeffrey J. Cohen defines and deconstructs textual monsters, his base assumption being that each monster helps understand the culture it is born into. Derived from the Latin *monstrare*, which means 'to show,' a monster indirectly points to the deeply rooted

fears and anxieties of a society at a certain point in time. Cohen elaborates:

> The monster is born only at this metaphoric crossroads [of subject and body], as an embodiment of a certain cultural moment—of a time, a feeling, and a place. The monster's body quite literally incorporates fear, desire, anxiety, and fantasy (ataractic or incendiary), giving them life and an uncanny independence. The monstrous body is pure culture. A construct and a projection, the monster exists only to be read. (4)

The monstrous is a shapeshifter, depending on constant reinterpretation. Consequently, I aim at deconstructing monstrous physicality to reveal the cultural anxieties it embodies.

Just like some monsters stem from gender anxiety, gender theory complements Cohen's theses. Not unlike the monster, "gender is a complexity whose totality is permanently deferred, never fully what it is at any given juncture in time" (Butler 16). Thus, gender constructions and monstrous creations are related in their ability to shift and change throughout time and culture. Moreover, Judith Butler argues that "one is one's gender to the extent that one is not the other gender, a formulation that presupposes and enforces the restriction of gender within that binary pair" (22). In the same way that the binary perception of gender limits certain gender performances, "the monster prevents mobility…delimiting the social spaces through which private bodies may move" (Cohen 12). Binary gender constructs and monsters both reinforce social borders and prohibit individual mobility. According to Jack Halberstam, masculinity "becomes legible as masculinity where and when it leaves the white male middle-class body" (2). To become legible means to cross the borders that separate the normative from the Other, or hegemonic masculinity from fluid gender expressions. Thus, the monstrous guards the fine line between socially acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, whereby gender non-conformity becomes monstrous as soon as it becomes visible. Thus, social mobility—the ability to cross borders—and monstrosity are inseparably linked: both theories formulate separate spaces and a line that cannot be crossed—it is the transgression of said line, however, that subverts the integrity of seemingly stable constructs like gender. Misogyny already contains this association of femininity with monstrosity, which this article seeks to expose and deconstruct.

While Shakespeare inflationarily uses various forms of the term 'monster' when referring to Caliban in *The Tempest*, it appears only twice in *Macbeth*. Nevertheless, the performance history of Lady Macbeth and the witches evokes a strong association with monstrosity. This essay follows the proposition that "the body in play bears continuous meaning onstage, and always exceeds the play text it inhabits" (Rutter xiii), as well as Butler's premise that

gender is a performance. I will use Cohen's theory to illustrate the sexualising and othering strategies that support misogynist representations of Lady Macbeth and the witches. This article covers two 2018 productions of *Macbeth* starting with the live recording of the performance from the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) directed by Polly Findlay. Then, I will discuss Kit Monkman's "radical new adaptation," which claims to "amplify[ ] the theatrical context of the original whilst creating truly innovative and thrilling cinematic vistas."

The Royal Shakespeare Company's *Macbeth* (2019)

Polly Findlay's production of *Macbeth* has a modern approach to the play, the setting being the foyer of a spartan public building with a glazed balustrade that allows characters to observe and be observed by one another. In the centre of the stage is a digital clock whose red digits start to count down from the moment Duncan is murdered until Macbeth's own death, whereby time becomes the leitmotif of the play. The casting of Niamh Cusack as Lady Macbeth surprised critics, who describe her as "unusually likeable if scamperingly neurotic" (Cavendish) and invested "with a febrile energy" (Billington). Even more unconventional is the portrayal of the three witches as young girls, described as "a sinister parody of motherhood" (Cavendish) and dismissed as a horror film trope that makes "the witches' ominous words go for little" (Billington).

Seated on the floor in a triangle, the witches open the play. Each of the young girls is dressed in red pyjamas and fleece socks, clutching a baby doll. Their artificially distorted voices form an eerie echo, while dissonant sound effects stress the impact of their words. During the "fair is foul, and foul is fair" couplet (*Mac*.1.1.9–10), they stand up and throw the dolls on the ground before exiting the stage hastily. Throughout the production, they reappear as scene shifters who move props onstage, establishing their metadramatic power over the outcome of the story.

In the third scene of Act 1, the witches approach Macbeth speaking and moving simultaneously. For the sake of casting, Banquo's lines are cut to omit "You seem to understand me, / By each at once her choppy finger laying / Upon her skinny lips. You should be women, / And yet your beards forbid me to interpret / That you are so" (1.3.42–47). Moreover, the girls giggle at Macbeth's confusion about the prophecy with childlike glee that forms a harsh contrast to the original text, where they are referred to as "hags" (4.1.47, 4.1.114), a term defined by the *OED* as "an ugly, repulsive old woman: often with implication of viciousness or maliciousness." Old age in women often aroused suspicion in Jacobean contemporaries as it discards the

feminine traits that render women 'useful' to patriarchy: old women have passed the age of nobility and fertility, are often widowed, and thereby defy male control. In the RSC production, this association is reversed. The young girls are not yet fertile, not yet marriageable and still they wield power over the men of the play. The production's obsession with the countdown that is reset at the end of the play, moreover, suggests that the witches are stuck in a time lapse, forever caught in their state of 'imperfect' femininity.

As mentioned by critics, the witches' representation as children is a common trope in horror films. Dominic Lennard argues that "horror's persistent representation of children with the means to resist adult power has made the iconography of childish fun ironically synonymous with adult fear" and is "related to the implied presence of the child as an undesirable, active subject—rather than the subject of ideology impressed upon it by adults" (134). Thus, the witches' subversive power comes from the adult fear that children are not controllable and do not invoke their moral code. Indeed, the sisters seem to have no empathy with the baby dolls that they constantly carry with them, alternating between caring and cruel gestures towards the props. When Macbeth confronts the Weird Sisters in Act 4, they sing the "double, double, toil and trouble" rhyme as a children's lullaby (4.1.10–11), cradling the dolls lovingly. In between, however, they hold the dolls by their arms, letting them dangle carelessly around their knees and even throw them to the ground. Thus, the lack of motherly compassion and child-like innocence renders the witches monstrous. Eventually, "monsters are our children" and "ask us why we created them" (Cohen 20). The young girls, witches or not, are a mere product of our society and ask the audience to re-evaluate their assumptions on gender and infancy.

With regard to the representation of Lady Macbeth, Niamh Cusack's portrayal is unusual as she plays a middle-aged wife who is selflessly rooting for her husband's success. When she enters the stage towards the end of Act 1, her joy at the prophecy seems genuine and the lines "Hie thee hither, / that I may pour my spirits in thine ear" (1.5.25–26) are nothing but well-meaning. Even her "unsex me" speech (1.5.40–54) shows her kneeling humbly on an empty stage, cautiously asking for those murdering ministers to take her milk for gall. Before Lady Macbeth receives Duncan as her guest with a beaming smile, she cordially hugs Banquo and his son, both of whom appear to like her. One cannot help but wonder whether this Lady Macbeth gets more than she bargained for, as her uneasy gestures convey a sense of insecurity throughout the play.

Lady Macbeth's accidental 'wickedness' plays into King James I.'s assumptions about witches, published in his *Daemonologie*, a dialogical text listing all kinds of devil worship. He replies to the question why there are more female than male witches as follows:

> The reason is easie, for as that sexe is frailer then man is, so is it easier to be intrapped in these grosse snares of the Deuill, as was ouer well proued to be true, by the Serpents deceiuing of Eua at the beginning, which makes him the homelier with that sexe sensine. (35)

According to James, women are more likely to be "entrapped" by the devil for they are prone to seduction of any kind. The misogynistic attitude that women lack constancy of character resembles Hamlet's accusation of Gertrude—"Frailty, thy name is Woman" (*Ham.* 1.2.146)—and suggests that Lady Macbeth is easily corruptible by 'wickedness' as well.

Furthermore, Cusack's erratic performance plays into Lady Macbeth's childlessness that is repeatedly stressed throughout the production. When she confronts Macbeth with her plan to kill Duncan and he tells her to "bring forth men-children only" (*Mac.* 1.7.73), she sinks into his arms and starts to cry. Indeed, on a stage where the witches are played by children and Macduff carries his newborn in a baby sling around his chest, Lady Macbeth's childlessness becomes an all but subtle issue. Carol Chillington Rutter reads Lady Macbeth's apparent inability to have children as "another form of infanticide, rendering Macbeth's patrilineal future non-existent" (85). Her inability to carry on Macbeth's bloodline is embodied by the red countdown on the wall that represents the literal ticking of her biological clock. Lady Macbeth's time to have children is running out and with it the allegiance to her husband, who shames her for the "barren sceptre" she placed in his grip (3.1.160-61). Her lack of mothering ultimately results in her othering: both the loss of Macbeth's patrilineage and the unfulfilled role of motherhood accumulate in her character to embody early modern patriarchal fears. However, Lady Macbeth also represents contemporary anxieties about motherhood in a society that both limits reproductive rights and criticises the choice not to have children. Like a monster, this "unusually likable" (Cavendish) Lady Macbeth breaks with the discourse of misogynist representation and asks us why we expect her to be unlikable in the first place.

Kit Monkman's *Macbeth* (2018)

Kit Monkman's adaption of *Macbeth* was filmed in front of a green screen, presenting the actors in a stage-like space that utilises minimal set design. Instead, the audience is led by deconstructing camera movements that reveal the stage's construction as a globe. The play text is cut drastically and yet the film is about two hours long, its textual recesses filled with heavy silence.

Most critics applaud the adaption's visual artistry, but all of them stress Akiya Henry's performance "as a fierce and formidable Lady Macbeth" (Felperin). Moreover, "the added dimension of a real sexual charge to the power play between Macbeth and his wife" (Beasley) is mentioned bar none. Several reviews thus conclude that "the film is a timely and deeply compelling intervention in the screen history of Shakespeare" (Findlay and Wray).

As stressed by various critics, the Macbeths' relationship is sexually charged. The physical aspect of the young couple's marriage is essential to Lady Macbeth's character, whose highly sexualised representation provides a new meaning to the "unsex me" speech. Her shortened monologue—the last eight lines are cut—is spoken calmly, yet intensely as a voiceover to choral music and is followed by the couple's passionate reunion. The dialogue of 1.5 is exchanged between heated kisses, establishing Lady Macbeth as an irresistible seductress. Underlining her instructive words "bear welcome in your eye, / Your hand, your tongue" (1.5.64-65) she leads his hand to her breast and kisses him, before he abruptly turns her around, dominantly holding her hands over her head. Here, the process of 'unsexing' seems to stand in stark contrast to the sex scene enacted on screen.

Although the uncensored portrayal of female sexuality can be empowering, the sexualised performance is also problematic. When Macbeth is watching the banquet from afar, the audience becomes complicit in the voyeuristic gaze on Lady Macbeth, who is offensively flirting with Duncan. This reproduces the misogynist assumption that women use their 'feminine wiles' to corrupt and manipulate men. While Duncan is completely taken in by her charms, the dramatic irony of the situation shows her flirtation as the ruthless exploitation of the king's trust. Cohen remarks that monsters embody "sexual practices that must not be committed, or that may be committed only through the body of the monster" (14). Additionally, King James insinuates that witches engage in 'deviant' sexual practices with the devil: "Witches oft times confesses not only his [the devil's] conueening in the Church with them, but his occupying of the Pulpit: Yea, their forme of adoration, to be the kissing of his hinder partes" (31). Stephanie Irene Spoto confirms that "promiscuity was perhaps the most dangerous and subversive activity for women to engage in during the witch-hunts, as the most common attribute in portrayals of witches is their exaggerated sexuality, and perhaps more dangerously, their power over male-sexuality" (58). Lady Macbeth's sexual openness, thus, could be equated with monstrosity—a notion that is still present in Western societies today and often takes the form of 'slut

shaming.' Additionally, Cohen argues that "the linking of monstrosity with the forbidden makes the monster all the more appealing as a temporary egress from constraint" (17). As much as Lady Macbeth's self-determined sexuality intimidates the men in the play, it also attracts and threatens to consume them.

Furthermore, the concurrence of gender, sexuality and race brings another nuance to the performance. In popular culture, black women are often portrayed as exotic and sexually aggressive. This filmic convention and the tradition of demonising Lady Macbeth come together in Monkman's directing of the character. Lady Macbeth's call for unsexing, then, could be read as a metadramatic request for being 'un-sexualised' by the (white) men surrounding her. After all, the leading witch and Lady Macbeth are the only black female characters in the adaption, which indicates a correlation between race, gender and otherness.

Eventually, the monstrous objectification of Lady Macbeth's body peaks in her suicide. Having thrown herself from the banister, her sprawled out body is zoomed in on from an aerial perspective. While her face remains in the shadows, she blends in with the pool of blood around her, the black feathers of her costume widely scattered. Mauro Spicci observes that "*Macbeth* revolves around the horrible sight of profaned human bodies" (20), whose "blood is always outside of the body, profanely manipulated, obsessively shown, made visible, looked at, and touched by alien hands" (25). By showing her corpse, Monkman attempts to match the alleged monstrosity of Lady Macbeth's character to her now visibly disfigured body.

Surprisingly, both productions of *Macbeth* use entirely different 'monsterising' strategies to present the Weird Sisters and Lady Macbeth. While the witches in the RSC production embody premature womanhood that challenges adult perceptions of children, Lady Macbeth is portrayed as a childless woman struggling to find her place in a society that revolves around parenthood. Her inability to have (male) children embodies the fear of patrilineal extinction and marks her as the monstrous Other. Monkman's Lady Macbeth, on the other hand, is heavily exoticised and sexualised. Her promiscuous behaviour is presented through a voyeuristic gaze that treats her naked figure with the same curiosity as her dead body. With her physical integrity destroyed, Lady Macbeth's body becomes monstrous, yet beautiful—both repelling and attracting. Eventually, Shakespeare's texts entail a plenitude of monsterising, misogynist discourses and it is important to engage with the problematic assumptions of the play texts before loading them with modern assumptions about gender and otherness on stage. After all, performance is a powerful means of represen-

tation that ought to be exercised carefully, especially regarding the intersectionality of race, gender and sexuality. Further discussion could centre around the question of how problematic gender discourses can be adapted and subverted on stage for contemporary audiences without sexualising, victimising and othering femininity.

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#wegmit219a : Governmental Restrictions and the Importance of Online Hashtags in Feminist Movements

Anne Laura Penning

"The personal is political"—this slogan, that became popular by U.S. American feminist movements in the 1960s to highlight the connection between individual experiences and political structures (McCann and Seung-Kyung 191), appears to be gaining momentum again, this time in the context of online movements. With social media widely accessible, the personal becomes not only political but also something to post about, as seen with recent hashtag movements like *#metoo*. A similar feminist protest movement started in Germany in 2017, introducing the hashtag *#wegmit219a* to voice discontent regarding Germany's Abortion Act. Almost 30 years after Germany's reunification, the debate regarding the abortion legislation in the German Penal Code thus resurfaces.

Similar to former debates between East and West Germany around 1990 focusing particularly on §219a that prohibits the "promotion" of abortions, therefore e.g. banning any information on websites indicating even the possibility of an abortion, current protests and social media movements also centre on said paragraph and aim at abolishing it with the help of internet campaigns ("Weg Mit §219a"). This paper will primarily focus on *#wegmit219a* movement and discuss whether its online discourse presents a useful tool to provoke change within the German legal system. Drawing on the origin and the development of the §219a, I argue that the Abortion Act exemplifies Germany's antiquated stance on womanhood in opposition to Germany's image as a self-proclaimed progressive and liberal state.

Historical Background

Since 1871, §218 of the German Penal Code has been regulating the termination of pregnancy, deeming it a criminal act (Schmid). Until 1927, women getting abortions could be imprisoned for at least six months—afterwards, abortions for medical reasons were legally permitted (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung). During the Nazi regime, the legislation in Germany was tightened drastically; in addition to wanting more *Lebensraum*, one of the fundamental aims of Nazi Germany was the preservation of the "Aryan" race. German women needed to provide children for the sake of the German family and nation, whereas

"non-Aryans" were forcibly sterilized or had to abort (Tuomala 289-305). Under Nazi rule, the original §218 was re-introduced to the German Penal Code, stating that German women getting abortions could be imprisoned for up to two years. In 1934, this law was exacerbated even further: abortion was punished with the death penalty so as not to demolish the "life force" of the German nation (Notz). In 1933, §219a was introduced, which prohibited doctors and institutions to actively "promote" abortions.

After the Nazi regime and during the division of Germany, the amendment of the penal code was repealed through efforts from the occupying nations (Notz). The abortion legislation changed in the two respective states: in West Germany, abortion remained a criminal offence but was allowed in special cases, such as for medical reasons (Fisher 24). East Germany introduced its so-called "Muttipolitik" ("Mother politics") in 1972, which was "aimed at improving the compatibility of employment and motherhood" (24). It introduced more permissive abortion and contraception laws according to which access to abortions within the first 13 weeks of pregnancy and free contraception was granted (24). It is noteworthy that the socialist government in East Germany opted for a more permissive approach, undoubtedly linking labour force and reproductive freedom with each other, "defining women as both producers and reproducers" (22). In its neighbouring capitalist state, West Germany, the abortion law remained more restrictive and closer to the former Nazi legislations. Abortion here was defined as "a statement against the West German family model, and thus, in a way, precluded one from taking up membership in the national community" (Frankfurth 58). Bearing children was once again synonymous with providing for the nation.

The reunification process eventually also addressed the demand for a united abortion legislation, quickly leading to a heated debate between West and East German legislators and activists. The two different laws were initially left in place until the parliament passed a new abortion law or, rather, an amended version of West Germany's legislation, permitting abortions after an obligatory pro-life counselling in the first twelve weeks (Wuerth 601-02; Frankfurth 61). This decision of simply overwriting East German legislations with West German laws illustrates the reunification process in its entirety: West Germany as the "winner of the global contestation of liberal capitalism against Soviet socialism… shape[d] the discourse of reunification and transition in Germany… [and] gave expression to the hierarchical relationship between East and West" (Frankfurth 52). The inclusion of the mandatory pro-life counselling in particular appears like a very stealthy way of incorporating West Germany's original

stance on abortion, in which "the embryo became… a future member of the national community" (59). Hence, the dominant discourse centred around the protection of the embryo, ergo putting the preservation of the German nuclear family and the continuity of the nation before women's welfare (60). West Germany was understood as the epitome of a modern European state, "defin[ing] Germanness in terms of a purely West German understanding… [leaving] the citizens of East Germany… to abandon their political and social past and conform entirely to Western norms" (Fisher 22).

"§219a still defines abortions as (non-punishable) criminal acts nowadays and thus forbids health insurances to pay for the service" (Ferree 313). Even though the state supposedly supports pregnant women this way (313), the wording of the paragraph suggests otherwise ("§219a Werbung Für Den Abbruch Der Schwangerschaft"). The Abortion Act makes abortions more accessible for women from former West Germany, but still poses several obstacles for women to overcome in general: financial demands, a mandatory pro-life oriented counselling session and the need to find a doctor or clinic where abortions are being carried out. The mandatory counselling session illustrates the state's reluctance to grant women autonomy. Furthermore, the necessity to attend a counselling session seems to suggest that women from former East Germany acted immorally when getting abortions without having to seek counselling (Frankfurth 61).

According to Yvonne Frankfurth, it is evident that "progressiveness was being defined in terms of the West German ideal of the breadwinner-housewife structure, in which women featured primarily as social and biological reproducers" (62). This highly gendered model that dominated the abortion discourse and gender politics in the 1990s will provide the framework for a comparison with the current debate surrounding §219a. Since the Abortion Act has not been modified yet again, it seems that the notion of women's main role as biological reproducers, even in a time where gender equality is being promoted in politics to a certain extent (e.g. with the women's quota), remains the predominant discourse today.

The Pro-Choice Movement

Debates surrounding the Abortion Act have been numerous since its introduction; as early as in 1905, the "Alliance for Protection of Mothers and Sexual Reforms" demanded free access to contraceptives, more information and education services as well the abolishment of §218 (Notz). New feminist movements were found in West Germany after WWII and in a united Germany after the reunification process, demanding similar if not equal reforms with the slogan "My

belly belongs to me" (Schmid). Similar to prior protest movements, the current social media outcry and protest movement also demands the total abolishment of §218, but focuses primarily on the repeal of §219a.

The protest started after media reports revealed the indictment of a doctor from Giessen, Hänel. She was sentenced to a 6,000 Euro fine for publicly promoting abortions on her website (Hild), meaning that Hänel openly used the term "Schwangerschaftsabbruch" ("Abortion") on her website and allowed patients to request more information. It is debatable whether this can already be perceived as a promotion of abortions and not simply as providing information about the services being offered at her office. Hänel's very public case caused the German *Bündnis für Sexuelle Selbstbestimmung* ("Alliance for Sexual Self-Determination") to start an online campaign in support of Hänel and other doctors in similar positions. The alliance argues that sexual self-determination is a human right and thus demands "the immediate repeal of §219a of the German [Penal] Code and free access to information about abortion" ("Weg mit §219a"). Before Hänel's sentence, the alliance published Hänel's petition on *chance.org* and triggered a social media storm by introducing the internet campaign *Weg mit §219a* (*Repeal §219a*) at the beginning of 2018. At the heart of the campaign was a call for photos, mainly portraits with a tape labelled "§219a" covering the (photographed) person's mouth, shared on all social media platforms using the hashtag *#wegmit219a*. After the initial photo campaign, the hashtag stuck and was then used for problematizing the debate surrounding the paragraph and abortion rights online. As of June 2019, the hashtag has been used 2,808 times on Instagram alone ("#wegmit219a").

However, the movement did not remain an online phenomenon, but numerous magazines and newspapers (e.g. *Spiegel* and *Zeit*) kept track of the story and the campaign. In addition to this print coverage, the *Bündnis für Sexuelle Selbstbestimmung* organized two offline campaign days in Berlin in 2018 and 2019—the second one sparking nationwide protests in 28 cities all over Germany, challenging the government's so-called compromise and demanding an immediate repeal of the paragraph. This transition from a movement confined to the capital of Germany to a nation-wide movement illustrates the growing significance of the movement's cause within the public sphere. Moreover, it demonstrates how the movement cannot simply be described as an online-hashtag movement. It seems to be relevant in both online and offline spaces, indeed, its online presence helps spreading the word, documents new developments and achievements, and brings people together for protests that take place outside of the online world. Hence, it appears as if the introduction of the hash-

tag and internet campaign as a starting point of the movement helped further the cause significantly, both by using an important case that was already covered by news media as a stepping stone to promote its interests, and in bringing people to the streets.

Governmental Restriction and Censorship

The government's persistence to keep §219a in the German Penal Code can be viewed critically in several ways. Banning the promotion of abortions suggests that abortions might be promoted by doctors in the first place — even though doctors are generally not allowed to promote any sort of service for their own financial gain (Bundesärztekammer)—and thus creates an almost apocalyptic image of a drastically increasing abortion rate after the possible lift of the ban. The term promotion itself describes an "activity that supports or encourages a cause, venture, or aim [and/or] the publicizing of a product, organization, or venture so as to increase sales or public awareness" ("Promotion"). From an economic perspective, this suggests that doctors would actively promote their abortion services to make more profit. It further insinuates that a heightened public awareness and unrestricted, easier access to information would automatically bias women towards a pro-abortion decision and therefore cause an increase in abortions. This scenario illustrates a rather antiquated view of women, removes their agency and undermines their autonomy. It implies that choices need to be made *for* women instead of *by* them.

Similarly, the term promotion evokes associations with advertisements promoting e.g. fashion trends or holiday vacations. Equating these aspects turns a medical procedure like an abortion into a mere luxury rather than a right for all women, regardless of their economic status, and furthermore disregards the fact that abortions can constitute a necessity for women. Frankfurth highlights this problematic view in the following excerpt:

> Placing abortion in this. . . framework seems to suggest that the penal code serves as a national anchor of moral ideas and that, consequently, it is a woman's moral responsibility to cherish the advent of a pregnancy, regardless of whether it is (un)wanted. Moreover, [this idea] acutely fails to acknowledge that abortion is not *per se* a statement against motherhood. Rather, such a view disregards the multitude of reasons that may count towards a woman's decision for choosing to have an abortion. It further ignores that some women wanting an abortion may already be mothers, who decide against having *another* child. (Frankfurth 61)

The fact that the paragraph remains a relic from Nazi Germany seems even more problematic. Other legislations from this time have been nullified due to

their segregating, racist notions and oppressive nature (Beck 25-100). It can be argued that the Abortion Act does oppress women since it restricts their free choice in regard to this particular decision by imposing obstacles on the possibility of an abortion. Nonetheless, the German government has only recently, in February, 2019 decided to merely reform §219a in reply to the protest movement. The reform consists of what both the federal government and German media outlets have titled "a compromise" (see e.g. "Paragraf 219a"). The paragraph itself remains intact and within the German Penal Code. However, doctors are now allowed to publicly inform their patients about their abortion services, e.g. by stating it on their websites. They are permitted to refer them to other authorities for further information on the topic, e.g. by linking specific websites authorized by the state ("Paragraf 219a"). The government also decided to provide young women up to the age of 22 years with the birth control pill for free (the expenses must be paid by their respective health insurance). Additionally, the German Medical Association is instructed to maintain a register with doctors, clinics etc. carrying out abortions ("Paragraf 219a"). The register is supposed to contain information regarding the applied methods and is scheduled to be updated monthly and published online by the Federal Agency for Civic Education.

Yet, this compromise still does not grant women unlimited and quick access to information. Furthermore, doctors, supposed authorities in their fields, are still not allowed to freely provide more detailed information about their services—the state apparatus decides which information to provide, and where to make it accessible. This approach of withholding information or regulating the distribution of information can be interpreted as censorship. Even though censorship is traditionally thought of as "a device for protecting official beliefs and ideologies and for suppressing those that are opposed to them," it could also "be used to withhold facts or to prevent their dissemination" (Matthews 21). It is possible to argue that the government *does* provide the necessary information. However, if access to information was the main reason for the reform to be introduced, it seems inconsistent that doctors are still not allowed to provide the relevant information on their own websites—a step that would make the relevant information much more easily accessible to women. Instead, it seems that the state wants to maintain its control and power over the information on abortions. This can be interpreted not only as the state exerting power over women but also as spreading and legitimizing the state's dominant ideology on the matter. The personal remains political since reproduction politics are still very much used to place women within societal power structures. In fact, the so-called

compromise that was reached politically highlights how non-violent protests and hashtag movements are only able to accomplish small reforms. This reform seems like a silencing of the protestors—but can or should this tiny improvement in the legislation stop them from demanding more?

The Personal Remains Political

The analysis of both historical and recent abortion debates in Germany highlights how an "ultra-saturated media and communication environment provides ample opportunities for activists to resist, to exert their agency, to self-represent themselves and to defy the structural constraints" (Cammaerts 120). The protest movement led by the *Bündnis für Sexuelle Selbstbestimmung* became publicly known in a short time due to the introduction of an online hashtag. As the internet campaign shows, the statement "the personal is political" is still valid today. Indeed, nowadays it seems to be a successful strategy to become visible and share one's own stories online in order to form a larger movement.

In this light, I argue that the current debate in Germany can be described as a resurfacing discourse from the 1990s. To be precise, the recent demand for a reform of the Abortion Act appears to be similar to the debates between the two former states of Germany: the hashtag movement's demands and East Germany's more liberal abortion law on one side and its opponents and West Germany's more restrictive approach on the other side. It can be said that feminist movements' ongoing quest, either for the complete abolishment of the Abortion Act or the repeal of the "promotion ban," has not been met. Instead, the preservation of Christian values seems to dominate the state's decision in keeping the paragraph. This becomes highly transparent when analysing arguments from political parties and organizations (e.g. the Catholic Church and the March for Life) supporting (the exacerbation of) §219a. Thus, the paragraph is used as a tool to undermine women's bodily self-determination and autonomy, which ultimately leads to the solidification of patriarchal structures in society.

It is not possible to unpack and discuss all intricacies of the abortion rights discourse in Germany in the scope of one paper. Further political repercussions and consequences need to be analysed in the frame of the online and offline protest movement "Weg mit §219a" to determine the success of a protest movement that acts on these two scales. It is also necessary for this analysis to include other legislations concerning womanhood, such as childcare and the health care system, in order to create a holistic understanding of women's rights in society

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The Culture of Mental Illness: *Better Call Saul* and American Psychiatry

Kara Callahan

Psychiatry has not always been a science which relies on cultural heritage. In fact, in many practices across the world, psychiatry is seen as medicinal and broken down into symptoms, labels, and treatments. For instance, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition (DSM-5), is a tool used by medical professionals to define and classify mental disorders in order to improve diagnoses, treatment, and research. Although including contributions from an international community, this tool is framed by a US-American view on mental illness. It often neglects the patients' emotions and experience with the disease and may lead to an incomplete picture of the patient's illness with problematic consequences regarding both the diagnosis and treatment (Gray 1). There has been an increased effort on the part of many anthropologists and psychiatrists alike to work toward a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural influences on mental illness. These influences are depicted in the filmic work *Better Call Saul* (2015 & 2017) which takes place within the US and strongly represent how mental illness is popularly viewed there. This popular view of mental illness dictates how the character called Chuck develops throughout the program, thus giving a valuable perspective on the cultural influence on psychiatric treatment in the US.

Cultural aspects of mental illness are rooted in implications of specific terminology that are used to describe mental illnesses and their symptoms. The terms used to describe a mental medical condition—for example, illness, sickness, or disease—already imply discussions of distinct features from the beginning of treatment seeking. The choice of one term over another has different implications of meaning: (1) illness is the human experience of symptoms and suffering in general, (2) sickness is the concern a medical practitioner would address to treat, and (3) disease is a term denoting feeling unwell without any local or medical connotations (Kleinman 3-6). The understandings of the terms and the associations individuals have with them are based on our individual cultural backgrounds. The way symptoms are discussed is influenced by culture because their meanings be-

come truths and natural occurrences through a cultural system projecting them onto the world (Kleinman 10). For example, if I wake up with a headache I may contribute that symptom to be the result of dehydration and drink some water, whereas someone who grew up in a culture where a headache was a symptom of poor circulation may address the symptom with a heart medication instead.

These conventional terms and associations we have for illnesses manifest themselves in certain idioms of distress which are also culturally influenced and demonstrate knowledge of the body and self in relation to each other in our lifeworlds (Kleinman 11). In addition to the symptoms, emotions are also cultural knowledge, and the way a person interprets their body is culturally influenced because our bodily experiences are informed and molded by social meanings which then become internalized; therefore, culture is a part of the mental faculties which may be altered due to a physical or mental illness. Health care professionals, specifically Dr. Samrat (2016) and Dr. Jadhav (2016), who have taken these cultural facets into account, have found that addressing them and including them in the diagnosis and treatment of mentally ill patients can impact the patient-doctor relationship and improve the treatment and experience of the patient. Not only is culture relevant to the practice of diagnosing and treating patients in a healthcare environment, but it is also essential to forming the social interpretation and representation of mental illnesses. To elaborate on this point, a discussion of how the portrayal of mental illness in popular media contributes to psychiatry's dependence on cultural influence is of the utmost importance.

For such a discussion, selected scenes are taken from the American Movie Classics (AMC) series titled *Better Call Saul*, which follows the life of lawyer Jimmy McGill. Mental illness in this series is presented through the character Chuck, who, at the beginning of the series, is deemed to be of sound mind as his illness is purely physical, but whose reception is transformed as a result of his illness being irrefutably categorized as mental, a dichotomy common in the US (Mehta 14). The shift in his reception among other characters in the series brings out essential facets of the US-American psychiatric view.

Better Call Saul takes place in New Mexico, US. Next to James (Jimmy) McGill, many other of its main characters are lawyers, such as his brother Charles (Chuck) McGill and Chuck's law partner Howard Hamlin. Chuck suffers from electromagnetic hypersensitivity (EHS), which increasingly impacts his life throughout

the series. He lives in a house with no electrical components or batteries, all visitors must remove their watches and other battery-powered devices when visiting him, and he seldom leaves his house. Chuck is accommodated at work by all lights and electrical devices being turned off and removed from colleagues and offices where he will be working. He also has tailor-made suits which are lined with so-called "space blankets"; their use being to insulate Chuck from the electromagnetic waves interfering with his body. In one of the first scenes of the series in which his condition is discussed, Season 1 Episode 5: *Alpine Shepherd Boy*, Chuck has been admitted to the hospital after a neighborhood altercation. He is surrounded by and attached to electric devices, as is normal in an emergency setting, and unresponsive to all external stimuli. His eyes and mouth remain open; he is 'locked in' his body. Jimmy begins shutting things off and tries to explain his brother's condition to the doctor who comes into the room with a security officer:

> "He's allergic to electricity!. . . All these lights and machines, you might as well throw him into a microwave. . . Look, I know how it sounds. It's real. . . anything with a battery in it, he can't have it near him." ("Alpine Shepherd Boy" 00:21:04-00:21:50).

Jimmy is successful in removing or turning off all electric devices in Chuck's room. The doctor, Dr. Cruz, wants to commit Chuck to the hospital for 30 days of psychiatric observation. Because Jimmy is Chuck's brother, she claims that Jimmy can make that decision on behalf of his brother, with or without Chuck's consent. At that point in the conversation, Chuck emerges from his unresponsive state by reacting to the doctor's suggestion. He then proceeds to explain his condition to Dr. Cruz stating that "it's not a situation, it's a condition" (00:23:45-00:23:48). When prompted about the symptoms he experiences, Chuck lists a burning sensation on his skin, sharp cold pain in his bones, muscle fatigue, blurred vision, and nausea, among others. He also explains that his first experience of the symptoms took place about two years ago, which leads to the following conversation:

> **Dr. Cruz**: "Two years, that's a long time to live with discomfort."
>
> **Chuck**: "Oh, there it is. You think I'm crazy."
>
> **Dr. Cruz**: "I never said that."
>
> **Chuck**: "No, you didn't, because you're very polite. But you think it, otherwise you wouldn't be talking about commitment."
>
> **Dr. Cruz**: "You find that idea distressing."
>
> **Jimmy**: "Who the hell wouldn't."
>
> **Chuck**: "I find it inappropriate for a person suffering from a physical condition. Anyone who's spent more than a few minutes with me knows that this isn't some sort of delusion. . . Have you ever seen me exhibit any

> sign, any sign whatsoever, of mental illness? (She shakes her head, no) See? If I thought for one second that you could cure me, believe me, I'd jump at the chance. But, with all due respect, psychiatry doesn't have the answers."
>
> (00:24:47-00:25:43)

Meanwhile, Dr. Cruz walks to the foot end of Chuck's bed and turns on an electric panel. Both she and Jimmy see it, but Chuck does not, nor does he react to the electric stimulus in any way. She asks to speak with Jimmy outside the room and attempts to convince him to have Chuck admitted for psychiatric evaluation by trying to prove that Chuck is a danger to himself and/or others. Jimmy refuses Dr. Cruz's pleas, saying "untie him, I'm getting him out of here" (00:28:47-00:28:50). The scene concludes when Chuck's partner at the law firm, Howard Hamlin shows up at the hospital. He tells Jimmy, with whom he does not have a good relationship, that he has "talked to the D.A. [Defense Attorney for the firm], and he absolutely will not sign off on any commitment papers. This is a physical condition, not a mental one. Chuck is of sound mind, I think we can all agree on that" (00:29:26-00:29:36).

This scene brings up two essential points when considering mental illness from a US-American societal, medical, and legal perspective. Firstly, and most obviously, it points to the mind-body dualism: Chuck is adamant from the start that his condition is purely physical. To consider his mental state as relevant to or influencing the situation he finds himself in is a misguided assumption. Indeed, this view is put forth by Jimmy, who remains unconvinced after Dr. Cruz re-starts the bed's electricity and also by Howard and the D.A. for their firm. They have even gone so far as to refuse Chuck's commitment without visiting him first because they know his condition is purely physical. Within this scene, all of these individuals act within the mind-body dichotomy, presupposing that the mind and the body are two separate entities with different principle natures—the body to control physical manifestations and the mind to remain independent of the physical (Mehta 14). This dichotomy is also practiced in medicine, particularly in the US, where disease is seen as a biological change or deviation caused by a physical or chemical event and with physical and/or chemical manifestations (Mehta 14). The portrayal of the characters in this scene and their adherence to this process of thought is reflective of the culture it is meant to display: US-American. This mind-body dualism is perpetuated through the use of the DSM-5, which prescribes to this notion (Raese 1), and is also extended to the US-American medical consciousness through many media outlets, such as

AMC, which portray characters who believe in this dichotomy as the norm. Furthermore, it is important to indicate that EHS is not an illness recognized by the American Psychiatric Association, and therefore does not appear in the DSM-5. Additionally, several investigations into proving that the symptoms sufferers of EHS experience are triggered by exposure to electromagnetic fields have been unsuccessful (Rubin et al. 1). This could be a reason why Dr. Cruz repeatedly pushes Jimmy to reconsider committing his brother for further tests.

A second essential point of interest is the association of EHS as an illness with danger, fear, and stress. This scene establishes that Chuck has been out of the office for 18 months, yet he is reluctant to admit the reason for his absence. The reluctance of Chuck, Jimmy, and Howard to discuss mental illness as a possibility results from the cultural belief in harsh consequences for those labeled mentally ill. People who are mentally ill are often thought to be unstable and dangerous by those who are not, and the majority of the US has adopted a "not in my backyard" response to attempt to keep the mentally ill far away, both physically and socially (Link et al. 1328). This scene thus exposes many features of American views on mental illness, including popular causes, preferred treatments, and a general overview to how mental illness takes place inside the mind and not within the body. It also illustrates the cultural context, similar to US-American psychiatric tradition, without changing Chuck's own interpretation of what he is himself experiencing and feeling, both physically and emotionally.

The second scene takes place when most of the characters still maintain that Chuck's illness is a physical one; they believe that his mind has not been affected other than by having to cope with the manifestation of physical symptoms. Jimmy, on the other hand, has since adopted the opinion that his brother's illness is a mental one with additional physical symptoms which Chuck only believes to be in his mind, and which he intends to prove in court, by calling his brother as a witness in his own disbarment hearing. The scene begins with everyone in the courtroom turning over their electronic and battery-powered devices to the court clerk to accommodate Chuck as he appears on the witness stand. Chuck arrives with Howard and collides with a man, Huell Babineaux, in the stairwell. Chuck enters the courtroom and is sworn in, after which the questions begin with the attorney representing the state of New Mexico's Bar association, Mr. Allen. He asks Chuck about his mental faculties because he sounded "unhinged"

on the recording presented as evidence. Chuck responds that he was play-acting and had exaggerated his illness to make it sound believable. He continues to explain his illness, EHS, and describes it as an illness that only affects him physically, in the form of discomfort and pain ("Chicanery" 00:15:06-00:32:25).

When the time comes for Jimmy to cross-examine him, he asks Chuck about the illness and Mr. Allen objects to his line of questioning, arguing that: "We discussed the physical allergy, not a mental disability" (00:40:14-00:40:17). Jimmy is allowed to continue his questioning and proceeds to gather details from Chuck about the symptoms he experiences due to his EHS as well as the reasons for and forms of his reaction to certain objects. Chuck explains that "[t]he farther away it is, the stronger the source needs to be to have an effect" (00:44:07-00:44:11) and concludes that if something electronic got close to his skin he would feel it. Jimmy continues to question him about his sense of electricity and requests that he points out the spot where he senses the highest level of electricity inside the room. Chuck inquires as to whether Jimmy has something in his pocket, which he does. Jimmy takes out his cell phone and shows the courtroom that it is without a battery and merely meant as a trick. The scene continues with Chuck pleading with Jimmy as to how he can prove to him that his illness is "a physical response to stimuli. It's not a quirk" (00:45:35-00:45:40). Jimmy then lets the entire courtroom in on his real trick. He had paid a pickpocket to plant a fully charged battery on Chuck over an hour and a half previous to his testimony and all along Chuck had felt nothing. When this is proven to be true to the courtroom by Jimmy inserting the battery into his phone and the display reading a full charge, Chuck stammers no, and his lawyer moves to submit "that Mr. McGill's mental illness is a non-issue. If he were schizophrenic, it wouldn't take away from the fact—" which Chuck interrupts, chuckling "I am not crazy!" (00:46:27-00:00:46:35). At this stage, he begins ranting to himself, raging on about Jimmy ruining different points of his life in excruciating detail for about five minutes before he looks to all those present in the courtroom and realizes, in silent shock, that they are staring at him in disbelief for having finally seen that it was, in fact, a mental illness all along ("Chicanery").

This second scene illustrates several important concepts of mental illness in American society. Again, we see that the head-body dichotomy holds strong significance to many of Chuck's supporters. They seem to feel, so long as the illness manifests itself in physical symptoms, that his mental

health remains unaffected and therefore he maintains full mental capacities regarding work and personal life. Chuck having no reaction to a battery in close contact with his body until he is made aware of it is enough to prove to those in the courtroom that his illness is, indeed, mental in nature. This assumption that there are characteristics of physical illnesses entirely separate from mental illnesses is incorrect and helps perpetuate the stigma associated with mental illnesses (Kendell 492). Another stigmatized mental illness pulled into the conversation is schizophrenia, and only after it is mentioned by Mr. Allen does Chuck appear to become "unhinged." The stigmatization of schizophrenia is highly prevalent in American and Western schools of thought (van Zelst 295); it immediately relabels the individual within the preconceived notions of the disease, such as odd speech or paranoid reactions, throughout all aspects of their professional and social life, whether or not the patient has been officially diagnosed (van Zelst 293). We see this stigmatization in the digression of Mr. Allen's references to Chuck's condition. In the beginning, he refers to it as a "physical allergy," then surrenders to the mounting evidence, calling it "Mr. McGill's mental illness," before attempting to distance it from schizophrenia. In the end, it makes no difference to the audience, as they end up convinced that it is, indeed, all inside his head.

To conclude, *Better Call Saul* exemplifies that many stigmatizations and dichotomies permeate US-American culture within filmic portrayals of mental illness. These elements have grown out of Western schools of thought and remain relevant today through the perpetuation of stereotypes in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with mental and physical illnesses. The artificial separation of mind and body, which is consistently demonstrated to be false throughout the series, remains a powerful assumption by many in American society (Raese 1) and plays a strong role in the reception of mental illnesses in every-day life (5), as can be seen in the two scenes of the AMC series *Better Call Saul*. These observations are important when considering how culture influences mental illness, as the two cannot be separated without disregarding a patient, their embodiment, and their experience of the illness they face which are tied to their socialization and cultural background. Acknowledging their experience can greatly increase the psychiatric treatment of a mentally ill patient and lead to a psychiatric system which recognizes the cultural influences illness has on patients, their experience, treatment, and overall health.

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CREATIVE WRITING

Mister Peep

An excerpt from Mister Peep *by Olufunmi Alao*

It was a Monday morning in May. Moni sat confidently in Dr. Ajala's class. The test was simpler than she had imagined. It would be 38 degrees Celsius at noon. "Place your handouts beside your answer sheets," Dr. Ajala announced, swaying a pen in his hand. Moni stopped writing. She had only four sachets of *Indomie Noodles* left in the hostel and Dad had not sent money for May because the government owed him six month's salary. The last time Dad had called, she had told him not to worry about her – she would be fine. She had applied for jobs, but they were incompatible with her schedule. For three consecutive days she had buried her head in the dusty books of the central library, studying for this test. She looked at her watch and picked up her pen to round off. Dr. Ajala came around and signed the answer sheets of the students who had the handouts.

"Sir, you haven't signed mine."

"Your handout?"

"I don't have it, Sir."

Dr. Ajala walked away to the next student. After he had gone around the class, he announced "pens up!" He collected the answer sheets and sorted them into two separate groups – the goats and the sheep. Finally, he said, "if I didn't sign your paper, you have not written the test. Come and redeem yourselves in my office before it's too late. Good day." An unhealthy murmur went round the class and grew to a lousy swearing after Dr. Ajala had left the class.

Moni picked up her bag and met Chika at the door. "Do you have the handout?"

"No," Chika said. "I'm broke."

"Me too," Moni replied. They found their way out of the busy class area, bumping into students who were in a hurry to get to their lecture venues. Moni lived in a room of four in Moremi Hostel with Chika, Lola and Eunice. Chika poured the last *gari* she

had inside a dish. They ate *soak and travel* with groundnut and went for the last lecture.

The class ended at 6 p.m. on the dot. The evening sun cast an orange glow on the campus. Moni and Chika walked to the hostel humming to the *Kegites* band playing music at Goofey's Spot. In the room, Eunice sat on the floor filing her nails while Lola rubbed on a face mask. Afterwards, they sat cross-legged on their faded oriental carpet and ate the *Jollof-rice* a friend had brought from the next room. Moni feared they might not be able to sleep that night when she glimpsed a swarm of mosquitoes flying across the room. The last content of the insecticide was used yesterday. "I can't afford to fail Dr. Ajala's course", Chika lamented in between mouthfuls. Sadness suddenly settled on her face. "In fact, I can't afford not to have a second-class upper, otherwise I won't qualify for the banking job my uncle promised when I graduate. Oceanic Bank does not hire graduates with less than a second-class upper credit."

"So you even have a job waiting for you?" Moni asked, "I have none, and on top of that, I have missing grades." They laughed.

"Go and see the Faculty Officer," Eunice cut in.

"I already have an appointment with the F.O."

The rest of the evening was quiet. Moni's radio played Tracy Chapman's *Fast Car* as she read *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*. Her head ached from deep thoughts, *why has the F.O. fixed an appointment with me on a Sunday? When is Dad going to send money? Will it make sense to go and beg Dr. Ajala in the private?* She dropped the book, sighed, and slept off. *Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

****

Tuesday was ruined by an impromptu change of venues and extreme heat. By noon Moni had wiped her face countless times such that her makeup was gone. When she ran into the F.O. at the main entrance of the Faculty of Art, there was a happy smile on his face as he said, "don't forget our appointment on Sunday."

The girls went for the Linguistics tutorials a doctoral student had volunteered to give in the night class. They returned at 11:00 p.m. to the hostel and went straight to bed. Moni woke up at about 2 a.m. and walked, half awake, to the toilet, her path illuminated by her torchlight. After placing the torchlight on the sink facing the ceiling, she headed straight into one of the five cubicles. She rubbed her eyes, yawned and peed. Just as she pressed the push button, darkness enveloped everywhere. She opened her eyes wide but she could not see a thing. *If the torchlight had fallen, it should have made some noise*. She wobbled through the darkness, guiding her steps by swaying both hands in front of her. Something rumbled somewhere, she stopped- *perhaps a rat*. She stretched out her hand when she thought she had reached the door. Two powerful hands grabbed her, and before she could shout, a hand covered her mouth from behind. She struggled and elbowed to no avail. She grunted, and prayed that someone would come around. After her vain struggle, she began to feel his body pressed against her. She groaned and elbowed him, but nothing happened. He dragged her to the sink, yanked off her G-string, and bent her over, but she turned around and clawed the invisible face with her whole strength. "Mr. Peep! Mr. Peep!!, wake up girlssss!!!"

It was too late for Mr. Peep to recover. Moni was already on the balcony, shouting. In about three minutes, the long balcony was full of girls in all sorts of sleeping dresses. A couple of them carried clubs. Chika covered Moni's nakedness with her Hollandaise wrapper.

"Are you okay?....what happened?....what has he done to you?" Chika panted, asking too many questions at once.

"I'm okay. Nothing happened," Moni said, turning her neck hither and thither.

"*Chai, na God go punish this Mr. Peep.*" Chika hissed. Not long afterwards, Mr. Bashir emerged from god-knows-where. From his face alone one could tell that he had just woken up from sleep. He yawned and bent down in front of Moni.

"What happened?"

"It's Mister. Peep! It's Mister Peep!!"Angry voices said.

"Hey! No chorus answers." He reached out his hand to inspect the bruises on Moni's neck. "Don't touch me!" Moni hissed. "We're reporting you to the Student Union Government." She knotted the Hollandaise wrapper underarm and left the crowd.

Wednesday morning came with interrogations from the Hostel chief of security, a stern looking woman who spoke Yoruba with Hausa accent. "Until now, I have always believed that this Mister Peep is a fable, but I can see you have bruises around your neck." Ms. Akande wrote some god-knows-what in her report book. She always wrote reports and nothing ever happened thereafter.

"I have a lecture at 10 o'clock Ma."

"No, you can't have classes today; you're going to the school clinic with me…we will have you taken care of."

That evening Moni called home and spoke to her mother. "Eh, Holy Ghost fire!" Mom screamed. Despite having said that she was okay, Mom still kept asking Moni, "I hope he didn't touch you sha? Read psalm 21 seven times every night into a bowl of water and sprinkle it around your room for divine protection. I will call Pastor Sam and ask him to conduct a special prayer for you-"

Moni laughed, "I'll be okay Mom."

That week, Moni was famous on campus. Students turned around and stared at her. On Friday afternoon at the Dean of Students' Affairs' Office, she struggled to express herself to Professor Odole.

"Who is this Mister Peep? You people have come again with imaginary stories. Look, exam time is approaching, we have no time for nonsense talks"

"Sir, Mister Peep is not imaginary, he hurt me. I have bruises-"

"Well, maybe he is one of your secret admirers-"

"Sir?-"

"We always warn you girls seriously about bringing hooligans to the hostels." He wrote something on a jotter and dismissed Moni with a wave of his hand. She choked with tears for she felt as though she were a piece rag, unworthy, unmournable. "Young woman, be careful with the company you keep, don't bring trouble to us. You may leave."

Moni managed to find her way among a litter of *Sugar-Daddies* who had come to pick up *Aristo-girls* for the weekend. She hurried up the stairs into the hostel through a conglomeration of perfumes. There were quite a number of familiar faces among these girls. Monalisa and Shekinat stood beside a Silver Porsche car with an

elderly man dressed in embroidered *Agbada*. Moni shared the same room with Monalisa and Shekina last year. She had always feared that Monalisa would initiate Shekina into *Aristo* business and it has happened. One time, when Moni attempted to borrow some money from Monalisa, she had been told in the most callous way, "Stop doing *borrow-borrow* from room to room, use what you have to get what you want." Monalisa brought pictures of men for Moni to pick. "This guy is a senator in Abuja…this one is the Perm. Sec. to Lagos State Governor. He has houses in London and Las Vegas, he will pamper you with money."

"No, thank you," Moni had replied. "I'll pay you back as soon as I get money from home."

****

In the evening on Saturday, Moni bathed in the company of eight girls on the meadow behind the hostel called the Pigeon Hole. She returned to the room, alone - her roommates had gone to town for the weekend. The Student Union Government was planning a protest. Rumor had it that the vice chancellor had embezzled the hostel maintenance fund. The toilets and bathrooms remained unused day and night for fear of Mister Peep.

After the Sunday service at the Christian Students Fellowship, Moni cleaned the room - it was her turn that week. She stood in front of the kettle of boiling water in the kitchenette, watching the vapour disappear into the air. Her Motorola rang- the F.O! She left her hot cup of tea and walked briskly to the Faculty Office. The only sounds in the entire building were her own steps. Her nerves felt so odd, as though she was going to an executioner. Even the hallway that usually buzzed with queuing students observed the Sabbath in quiet, still darkness. The only illumination came from the partial opening of the door to the F.O's office. Moni stopped at the door.

"Are you afraid? …come on in", he said.

He sat at the edge of his secretary's table with his hands folded in front of him in the most gentlemanly manner. As soon as Moni stepped in, his smile revealed a golden tooth he had bought on his Hajj. His skin color was cream-bleached sepia and his belly bulged slightly, but his shoulders were broad and menacing.

"I'm not gonna eat you up."

His voice was towering and lofty. He stood up from the table and led her into his office. He closed the door behind him. Moni's heart skipped. His office was roomy and finished with mahogany furniture. A small Daewoo fridge stood beside his large table and the ceiling fan swirled above. The curtains were tightly drawn together behind him. He offered her a seat and brought out a bottle of Malta Guinness from the fridge. Moni looked around and cracked her fingers. After offering her a glass cup he sat at his desk, relaxed his chair, hummed a song, and swayed the chair to the rhythm. His eyes were piercing and satisfied. Moni looked away.

"Sweet and shy little angel…I read your articles every time on the Feminist Editorial Board. Your write-ups are too radical for a woman. But I like them nevertheless." He smiled. He stopped rocking when his chair creaked.

"So you've been spying on me, Sir?"

He smiled. "Do I look like the FBI? I just like you."

He stood up, opened the drink for her and poured it into the glass. Then he went down on his knee and held the glass forward. Moni hated him. *I shouldn't have come here, this is self-sabotage*. His breath was tainted with beer. Moni imagined the ceiling fan fall and chop his head off. She took the glass, and waited to be free from his breath. When she had secured a little breathing space she drank a little before placing the cup on the table. He fondled a few strands of her million-braids.

"You've got a nicely coiffed hair. How much do you spend on your braids?" Moni brushed his hands away. She knew that he was going to invade her personal space, *shameless man*. He smiled and said, "let me take care of you, baby, you will never have problem in this school."

"I have no problem Sir."

"Oh…C'mon, I hope you know it's not about your bookishness, nobody is interested in that. Don't kill yourself with books like Aristotle, the *arithmetic* is very simple." Moni digested these words slowly, they were like bile to her soul.

"So my grades are deliberately missing, is that the case?"

"No, I will solve that for you, but you must cooperate with me first."

"How do you mean?"

"Awgrrrh… are you a baby?"

"When are you going to do that, Sir?"

"When you are ready for me."

"Ready…what…Sir…?-"

"Don't call me sir again, call me the sweet names you call your boyfriend." Moni swallowed hard, her head bowed. "Drop your name and Matric. Number. I'll do that for my Angel."

"I beg you in the name of God, I want to have my grades as soon as possible."

He placed his hands on her lap and whispered, "You will have them." She snapped and pushed him away. "I want to go now!"

"I'm sorry…but you know, a journey of hundred miles starts with a step, let's start from somewhere today."

She stormed out of the Faculty Office, embittered and enraged with the world around her. She walked straight to the football field where the campus fellowships held their morning devotion and sat on the field weeping profusely into the green grass. When she belched she remembered his beer tainted smell. She imagined him laying on top of her on a pink bed sheet thrusting pleasurably. She screamed. Goosepimples covered her body. She cried and gnashed her teeth. With blurred eyes she looked up to the grey sky and said, "God, You know You aren't fair." Her Motorola beeped, she checked the message box:

Babe, we don kom back-o, where you dey?

She walked back to the hostel waving absentmindedly to friends who greeted her. She flung herself dejectedly on the bed and faced the wall. She refused to talk to her roommates, not even when Lola tapped her saying *I brought groceries from home*. How was she supposed to tell her friends that that pot-bellied frog wanted her in bed? She had never felt this belittled before. She brought out a Post-It pad she had kept under her pillow and wrote on it: *I want to be alone, please*. She dropped it on the other side of the bed for them to see and slept off in her sea of thought.

****

At 2:15 a.m. heavy bangs woke everyone up. "We have caught Mister Peep!" *We don catch am!!* Sleep vanished instantly in jubilation. What an awesome night! Girls raced outside.

"Where is the bastard?"

"Na today we go kill am!

Before the security men could get to the crowd of angry girls, Mister Peep was already covered in the pool of his own blood, fighting for his life. Moni hit him on the head with a club she had picked from behind the flowers. The central security men came to shoo the girls away and took Mister Peep to the University Teaching Hospital.

After the morning lecture that day, the campus went sour with the revelation that the person taken for Mister Peep the previous night was not Mister Peep. He was the amputee student of the Sociology Department who had become mentally ill after surviving a ghastly car accident in which he lost both his parents and his right arm. He had been referred to the Intensive Care Unit because of the severity of his head injury. An unquantifiable burden rested on Moni's chest as she stood transfixed at the gathering of girls at the hostel corridor. Chika, always unable to hold her lips for too long said, "Thank God I didn't touch him."

"Oh God, I know him, I know him," tears rolled down Moni's cheeks, "I once helped him pick a book that fell from a shelf in the library but last night…oh my God…" guilt struck her throat, "I did not see his face."

There was neither lunch nor dinner in Moremi Hall and The Pigeon Hole that day. The girls were struck with fear and guilt; they converged in front of Goofey's Spot to pray for his recovery. At about 10 'o clock on Tuesday morning, news came from the I.C.U. that he had passed away. All lectures were unofficially cancelled. The Moremi and Pigeon Hole girls wailed. At nightfall, a candlelight procession was held in his honor, after which Moni went to the University Chapel. She knelt at the pulpit, and picked slowly from her heavy heart, "Taiye Shonibare, wherever you may be, I pray that your soul finds repose." She let her tears run wild. *I'm eternally sorry that I hit you. Please…FOR-GIVE me.*

Enough

Alisa Preusser

And she wonders
when did it start?

When words
you shouldn't hear
hovered behind doors
seeping through keyholes
tentacles with paper-thin edges
cutting others in your stead

When seeing them walk away
became a daily lie that
made alien what
had been taken for granted

When there was no place for
conversation because this space
existed in your head
alone and they were no more
home to your ideas

When tolerance took the place of what
might have once been love when
love was still between two people
unshaken

When did it stop?

When fear and ignorance were no longer
enough to pass for an excuse
for how to treat others
in imperatives

When their excuses
ran dry and you realised
there's no love left
in you to make excuses for them

She stares at the door
her empty stomach now
filled with words swallowed
leaving acid traces
etching harsh lines into
the softness of her entrails

In the vacuum of sound
that her body becomes
she forgets how
to protect herself
from imploding

If you can love someone
without liking them
can you love someone
without respecting them?

Body

Gesine Heger

I needed to get rid of this body.
It had been lying there and nobody noticed, but I knew it would only be a matter of time until someone became aware of it, and things would undoubtedly only get worse from there.
I began to think.
This was not an easy thing, starting from a premise that had not presented itself to me before, and thus felt unconnected to all sorts of decisions and conclusions that were stored in my memory. I started by collecting the facts:
There was a body.
It lay on the ground.
It looked stiff, though I could not tell for sure because I had not touched it.
I might be able to touch it.
I might just as well not.
It looked heavy.
It looked pale.
It looked somehow twisted, though it failed to occur me why that would be so.
I sat down. I remembered this, from somewhere. Sometimes we sit and think and sometimes we just sit. I remembered that sometimes I just thought. I wondered if that counted as well
I might even wonder still.
I closed my eyes, but the body wouldn't vanish. When I looked again, it was still there.
I tried to remember everything I had seen on TV. On bodies. On bodies found. On bodies found somewhere. On bodies found somewhere outside. On bodies found somewhere outside of
me
and then I realized that I had absolutely no clue.

The sun started to rise, far in the east. I covered my face with both bare hands and felt like I was six again. But the sun crept through my spread fingers and I couldn't hold the darkness for a long time.

I got up. I scratched the dust off me. I clenched my teeth and felt the foam coming up. I spat. I looked at it and grinned and bore it.
I went to work and was just as bored as I had been the day before.

It only dawned on me a few hours later that I could have started by looking at the ground the body lay on. Not started as in ground before body. But started as in body before ground before dawn. Somebody had once told me that dawn translated as morgengrauen in German, and that the literal translation of this was morning horror. I think I should have started with ground.
I had never been grounded, maybe that's why. If I had been more attached, maybe, who knows. But all I knew was all I knew, and that was as far as I could go attacking that problem right in front of me. I couldn't let go. I couldn't lift it, but I carried it with me the whole day.
Then I went back.

It was so heavy. I wished for a smaller body.
I had seen people do this. I had seen them drag their bodies along, and they all looked so much lighter, so much easier to lift up. I had watched them, their muscles, their triceps brachii, their gastrocnemius and their rectus abdominis. I had imagined their gluteus maximus, their pectineus, and I had stopped
aching.

In the morning I felt sore. Apparently, I didn't sleep well, at least that's what they told me. I wouldn't know. Nobody monitored my sleep. And things were okay in the night, when I finally could allow myself to sink into the cushions. Rest was good, when the work was done. Going to bed wasn't the problem. The problem was the mornings. The problem was waking up in the middle of the sunrise and feeling a heavy cramp in the stomach. The problem was wondering why I got up and getting up anyway and looking at the color emerging from behind the rooftops of the childhood's far-a-way and then remembering how the thought of unrealizability was impossible. I tried to recall the moment when it first struck me, but I got stuck again and again somewhere along the way.

I returned to the return, and I didn't know how I had gotten there but didn't manage to get anywhere else. I did a run and the sun would blind me and then I feared I would stumble over the body and I stopped
running
I started walking instead

I walked away from the body, but someone had once told me that the earth wasn't flat and no matter how much I tried to fall into space I would never. Space was the only place I would not fall into. In
stead
y steps
I continued to resume
knowing that I would end I where I left off
because of Galilei.

My teeth hurt in the morning, and then they started hurting in the day, too. They never hurt in the night, but my dentist handed me a splint that I was to wear at night.

I went back to the body, wearing my splint.

The next day I had broken my arm. I went to the doctor, but he was not the same. He told me I needed a cast and told me to come back as soon as I had gotten one. I didn't know where to look. I went onstage and someone painted my face and told me how much better I looked, and I looked for much better but couldn't find him.

I went back to the body, wearing the face.

My skin started itching. I didn't go and see a doctor. I didn't trust doctors when it came to hides. A woman told me to use cream. Another told me to use water. Someone told me that cream wasn't good in winter when it got too cold, and that water would be better when one started freezing. I didn't feel free, so I got myself two rules: Never trust a doctor. And Never trust a non-doctor.
I covered myself in paste and then I painted myself on a canvas. When it had dried, I looked at myself and wondered how I could be so colorful.

The body was still there.

I couldn't tell. What would I say? I got this body to dispose of? Who would understand?
It was not the body itself that left me mute. It was this inexplicable urge to get rid of it, although I couldn't explain how I'd gotten related to it in the first place. It just wouldn't leave me alone. It haunted me, and it kept reappearing before my eyes, again and again, and would only leave me alone when I was determined and decided

on how my next step would be. As soon as this got dubious again, there it'd be, white and stiff and open-mouthed, until I'd have a new plan, only to surface again with the next uncertainty.

At one point it would start to smell, that much I was sure of.

I wanted nobody "official" involved.
Why bother with the officials when the most they would do is to follow the official routine, and somehow bury that body, bury or burn it. It was only when I thought this that I wondered how peculiar it was, that bury and burn, both official ways to deal with a body, started with the same three letters, and only differed in their ending. This was so weird, because the measures themselves were the complete opposite: they differed in their implementation. In the end, though, they all came up to one thing: dust. And after that, maybe more. Eventually meaning less, dust reduced to even smaller particles, and completely dissolved, not resembling a body anymore. Not that dust would, but at least it has this relation, as in, and all will be dust, or something like that. Thinking about it like that, this song, another one bites the dust, it was peculiar, to say the least. If that expression, as I am told, refers to the process of doing your last breath, that is, starting the way to become dust, then another one bites the dust is actually quite the same as you are what you eat, which, admittedly, sounds better in German: du bist was du isst.
Frank Zappa said you are what you is. I think I like this even more.

This really got me thinking. There was something intriguing about it.
Handsome is what handsome does. If that was true, I felt pretty messed up. I must have looked horrifying. I wondered how I'd come from dawn to dusk.
A wolf in sheep's clothing. Or was it a sheep in sheep's clothing? The latter sounded somehow redundant, but then why would a wolf dress up as a sheep? Why would one want to be sheep, if one could be wolf? And I'd never heard of wolves doing carnival, but then this might be because I've never lived with wolves. I had my own teeth to sharpen.
I got rid of the splint.

I stayed up at night turning and turning and turning
– no rest no sleep no dream no plan no clock no must no need no go no went no gone no come no came no come no darkness apart from the back of the lamp –
page after page after page

I got rid of the splinter that had been in my foot from the day I went onstage. It didn't bleed. I knew that when it finally would, I would be happy.

I couldn't tell what had come first: the body or the need to get rid of it. From a logical viewpoint the second option was out of question. Why want something to be gone when it is not there anyway? But to me, both options seemed equally viable.
Later I couldn't tell what had come first: the turning or the dawn.

When I went back, the body wasn't gone. I knew it was still there. I could feel it. But I turned and turned and turned and I saw none. I thought I lacked something

I tried to trace it. Somewhere along the lines, the marks, the grazes, the scratches, the scar beginning to build.

I fiddled quite a long time with the ink. I had blue, but this didn't feel blue. It felt like color, but although that was a necessary condition for blue, the conditional when color then blue didn't work out from a logical point of view. When blue then color, that was fine, but one had to be careful in mixing things up. Maybe it was blue because of a want for color. But this got me really confused, so I decided to stick to my feeling, and that told me, blue wasn't the right color.
I had red, which would fit, somehow, being the color of blood and such. But this looked too much like corrections. I had hated corrections in school. More precisely, I had hated mistakes that needed correcting. I think I still hated corrections, only that nobody did them for me anymore.
I went for green. I went away.
I went to buy a slim, elegant, grey pencil. It had the look of a senile old man who had once been a lord, or an earl, or the mayor of a small city close to the Dutch border. It lacked a rubber.
I went to the store again. I wanted a pencil with a rubber on top. A pencil that could erase itself as soon as it had appeared on the page. A pencil that looked like it could be there and not be there at the same time. A pencil that was what it looked like.
Nobody understood what I wanted. I hadn't said a thing.
I went home. I searched through my old pencases. I found pencils with horses, pencils with the pattern of a giraffe's neck, pencils with mathematical formulas, pencils with stripes and pencils that had once been green, pencils that lacked a coating, pencils that were no pencils and pencils that were used to sharpen pencils, pencils that I had seen on TV and never seen again and pencils I mistook for sandwiches, pencils that felt hot and told me I had fever, and pencils that would never see the

light. I felt dizzy. I felt like I couldn’t hold the pen. I was right. Somehow, they got hold of me. But who was I to judge
who wrote and who read
for some to quote and some to forget.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Olufunmi Alao

Olufunmi Alao was born on 24th October 1978 in Nigeria. She was educated at St. Louis Girls' Grammar School, Akure, Nigeria. In 2006, she graduated from the University of Ilorin, Nigeria with honors in English language and literature. *Mister Peep* is adapted from her unpublished novel of the same title, which she wrote in Portugal in 2013. Six years later the central theme of *Mister Peep* would be the subject of the famous *Sex For Grades*, an October 2019 BBC Docufilm. She is presently in the third semester of BAPS Master's Program. Her areas of research are Feminism and Postcolonial Studies. She is currently writing a historical novel set in 1862 Oyo Empire which focuses on the travails of enslaved women and children during war time, a topic which conventionally lacks the female presence. Olufunmi Alao lives in Münster.

Gesine Heger

Gesine Heger was born close to the fuss of the Ruhrgebiet, and could have created an urban legend background. Instead, she moved to the village. She started writing early to create in the words what wasn't there in the world, and then left off to study law because she didn't understand the world. She then left law to study texts. They made more sense. She works in the field of law and literature, where she focuses on rhetoric. In the meantime, she writes her own texts to distort sense because it means something to her.

Alisa Preusser

Alisa Preusser is a final-year M.Ed. and M.A. student of British, American and Postcolonial Studies at the University of Münster from which she holds a B.A. in English Literary and Cultural Studies and Mathematics. Her research focuses on representations of spatiality and history in contemporary postcolonial and Indigenous liter-

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