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"Modernity is the *transient*, the *fleeting*, the *contingent*."
- Charles Baudelaire

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Introduction

Warwick Uncanny was first created when I should have been revising in the third term of my second year. When I first tell people about *WUJ*, their initial reaction is often a state of confusion. Are we a psychoanalytic journal? Do we just accept submissions about literature? Although the title of the journal came about when I was studying Freud's *Art and Literature*, I cannot answer yes to either question.

I was inspired by an undergraduate journal entitled *Constellations* that existed in Warwick University a few years ago. I would like to stress, however, that *Warwick Uncanny* isn't just for Literature students. Andrew and I once had a conversation in which we discussed the temptation to see the first issue of a journal as definitive.

Indeed, at least when I get asked what *Warwick Uncanny* is I can place a copy in a person's hands as my explanation. We want to avoid, however, insinuating that the first issue is the *only* thing that *WUJ* is. Every paper in here bar one directly deals with literature, from plays to poems. Whilst we want to encourage those inclined towards the literary side of life, we don't want to put off those who would rather talk about political theory or fashion in the modern world.

By all means, you could use this issue to judge whether you have an idea that you could submit to our journal, but do not judge this issue to be the only measuring stick. I am lucky to have a team that represent different subject areas and have particularly enjoyed comparing notes with those more versed in history and philosophy than myself. Sometimes it's good to tread beyond the confines of your department's boundaries. You soon learn more about your subject through the eyes of those with other academic interests.

In this issue we have Dominic Nah's 'Sacrificing the Meaning of Death'. Nah explores the intersection of death and modernity in Brecht's *Mother Courage* and Kafka's *Metamorphosis.* With a conclusion that falls outside of politics, Dominic explores a meaninglessness in the texts that is reminiscent of Adorno.

In a similar vein, Evie McDermott's essay explores the experience of the meaningless of

language when confronted with heteroglossia. Interestingly, rather than being a linguistic experience that leads to unity, McDermott explores a concept of heteroglossiac fragmentation in Ginsberg's *Howl* and Eliot's *The Wasteland*.

Carmen Thong's 'Transcending the Anti-Anti' signals a transition to cold, hard theory. Thong maps the subtleties of Weeks' position in relation to the arguments cantered about Utopia (with particular reference to Jameson) and finds its own position amongst the twists and turns of negations and anti-anti arguments.

We then suddenly find ourselves in the Early Modern period with James Handy's 'Machiavelli's *Andria* and *Clizia*.' Integrally, James' paper is a perfect example of how one of *Uncanny's* themes, such as modernity, can be played with; it is a historical analysis that explores the modernity of Machivelli's plays in their content and context.

We end the first issue with Isabelle Milton's 'An Exploration of Gender as Perfomance' which also considers the relation of texts to their contexts, but more specifically in their reactions against their contemporary societies. Milton first uses Judith Bulter's performativity to examine the texts' representation of gender. However, she then goes on her own path to propose an individual self-navigation separate from societal constructions.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow *WUJ* team for their help, ideas and enthusiasm in putting this together. Alex and Helly always provide solid editorial decisions and witty comments throughout the process, Steph has been an absolute sub-editing star, Andrew and Dominic wrote extensive notes that helped to form great feedback to our writers and James and Georgina have always kept up to date despite being in Venice for a term. Thank you so much for helping me create something weird and wonderful. To issue two!

Lillian Hingley.
Co-Editor.

Abstracts

'Sacrificing the meaning of death in Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and Bertolt Brecht's *Morther Courage and Her Children.'*
Dominic Nah, English Literature.

This essay considers how the meaning of death in Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* and Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* is continually deferred and postponed as a result of the lack of any definite final words. As Walter Benjamin notes, both writers' works whose meaning is consistently open to revision. This essay thus encourages us to sacrifice a particularly political reading of their deaths in favour of refocusing a more family-centric reading and experience of the deaths outside of a wider political agenda which the characters themselves are unlikely to be consciously participating in. Yet finally this sacrifice of any definitive meaning seems to be the only possible reading - even while glimpses and grasps of significance can be extrapolated - it is lastly the "inevitable inexpressibility of one's significance to another", compounded by the definitive silence of death that prevails.

'Transcending the Anti-Anti in Weeks' Utopian Demand.'
Carmen Thong, English Literature.

The critical potential of Weeks' utopian demand in *The Problem with Work* comes from a reinvigoration of revolutionary ideas in the past, like the Wages for Housework movement. However, its entrenchment in Jameson's "anti-anti-utopianism" hinders the reach of the utopian demand. In this article, I interrogate Kathi Weeks' deployment of utopia and her conceptual basis that is Jameson, Bloch, Nietzche and Federici to seek the place of the proposition in her 'reformist project with revolutionary aspirations' (Weeks 2011, p. 136). When subjected under scrutiny, Weeks' utopianism, which is in alliance with the "anti-anti", results in the banishment of utopia. Despite bringing critical attention to the importance of utopian thinking for any social movement, she is merely rallying and 'activating agents' (Weeks 2011, p. 222) while infinitely deferring the goal of the demand. Weeks makes the act of demanding a sort of performative utopia, unsettling utopia from its placehood. The ou-topos looms over eu-topos. I propose the utopian expectation as an act that goes beyond, transcends, the "anti-anti" in Weeks' utopian demand. The continuous expectation for utopia

to be 'now' both maintains the place-hood of utopia and validates a political process. Contemporary utopian thinkers and actors should put an end to eternal postponement and take up the gauntlet of expectation, the expectation of an already late utopia.

'How far does the use of heteroglossia in Allen Ginsberg's Howl and T.S.Eliot's The Wasteland present society as fragmented?'
Evie McDermott, English Literature.

Heteroglossia is understood to be the multi-voicedness of a narrative that reflects different social or historical contexts. In Ginsberg's *Howl* and Eliot's *The Waste Land*, these concepts manifest themselves through the fractured voices woven into the poetry. Despite speaking together, the voices and their societies are in a state of disunity. This essay will examine the interaction between fragmented voices, censored and foreign language and religious imagery in the poems. It will then question whether they unify humanity through their *lack* of pollution by other semantics or if the layering of voices presents a fractured society, torn between ideas.

'Machiavelli's *Andria* and *Clizia*: Civic Comedy and the Early Modern Family.'
James Handy, History.

Niccolò Machiavelli's comedies have been consistently neglected as part of his wider canon of civic works. Both *Clizia* and *Andria* concern themselves with the conduct of the ideal citizen in accordance with Machiavelli's civic perspectives. What is most significant is that the comedies frame Machiavelli's conception of civic *virtù* within settings, which were socially and culturally accessible to Florentine contemporaries. By engaging with the didactic nature of the plays it is possible to gauge some of the social and cultural constructions present in the comedic and civic aspects of Machiavelli's literary work: masculinity, honour and duty through the didactic device of the family.

'An examination of the notion of gender as performance in *The Magic Toyshop and Howl.'*
Isabelle Milton, Film and Literature.

This essay looks at two texts, the poem 'Howl' by Allen Ginsberg, and the novel 'The Magic Toyshop' by Angela Carter. This essay deconstructs the contexts of the works in order to

elucidate the extent to which they are products of their time. The texts are explored in relation to a theoretical concept by Judith Butler, who believes that, behind society's construction of gender identity, there is no true self. The essay aims to explore whether this is true for the texts, or whether there is evidence in the writing of a deeper self behind the construction, which can be found through self-discovery and rejection of social norms.

Sacrificing the meaning of death in Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and her Children*

"'If only he understood us,' the father repeated, by closing his eyes accepting the sister's conviction of the impossibility of it, 'then we might come to some sort of settlement with him. But as it is…'"

(Kafka, 139)

"THE CHAPLAIN: And what shall we tell your mother?

EILIF: Tell her it wasn't any different, tell her it was the same thing. Or tell her nowt. *The soldiers propel him away.*"

(Brecht, 69)

What both quotes reflect about the futility of salvaging and ascribing any definite meaning to the deaths of the individuals is centered around: the indefinite nature of sacrifice, the ambivalent responses to discovering the deaths, the necessity to forget the deaths in moving on, as well as the incommunicability and inexpressibility of the victim's relation to the family. In Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*, the lack of any precise last words prevents their lives being honoured in memory and their deaths from being purposefully and personally lamented, resulting in definitions of legacy being deferred and indefinitely postponed. However, instead of attempting to interpret the sacrificed lives of the individual children as part of a symbolic absorption into a larger social order, as Marx suggests: "death seems to be a harsh victory of the species over the definite individual and to contradict their unity" (Marx, 86). This essay intends to recover and recognise the need to resist and sacrifice an interpretative search for closure and definite meaning to their deaths through a depoliticised reading of the experience of death in the

family, considering how the visual presentations of these characters, and consequently their deaths, are not underpinned by a structure of decipherable, fixed meanings: "Like Kafka's characters, these Brechtian figures are not so much characters at all, but empty, formal positionings, pure exteriorities, a series of poses or postures without a centre, a disjointed arrangement of gests." (Carney, 63). It is precisely in the "disjointed arrangement of gests" that we can locate the necessity of sacrificing a definitive assignment of meaning to the deaths that are central to the plot of both texts, as the simultaneous refraction and fragmentation of meaning disrupts and opens up new possibilities of meaning even as it consistently postpones any conclusive reading.

At this juncture, it is worth remarking how Walter Benjamin notes that both writers can be refocused to accommodate consistent revisions of meaning. On one hand, Brecht's theatre is dialectic rather than didactic, where "all the recognitions achieved by epic theatre have a directly educative effect; at the same time, the educative effect of epic theatre is immediately translated into recognitions" (Benjamin, 25), hence showing how a revelation is not necessarily an end in itself, but proceeds to be the basis of future reinterpretations. Elsewhere in Kafka, Benjamin notes how Kafka self-consciously refuses to be conclusively pinned down, as "his parables are never exhausted by what is explainable; on the contrary, he took all conceivable precautions against the interpretation of his writings" (Benjamin, 120). As such, it is prudent to consider the significance of the sacrificial deaths as fugitive sites of deferring and postponing of meaning, even as it opens possibilities for interpretation.

To begin any consideration of the deaths' significance, one must review the nature of sacrifice present in their deaths. Instead of easily capitulating to altruistic notions of sacrifice as necessary and urgent for the greater good, one must recognise the conflict between external and personal attempts to impose meaning on the deaths. In Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, Gregor's death can be construed as one that is duly and dutifully enacted, using his own willpower to

convince himself to be sacrificed for his family: "He thought back on his family with devotion and love. His conviction that he needed to disappear was, if anything, still firmer than his sister's" (Kafka, 141). The altruistic nature of the sacrifice with "devotion and love" suggests that Gregor's will is inextricably bound and subservient to the wishes of the family rather than an autonomous one, in which he is mentally driven by the desire to fulfil "the death sentence on himself that his sister, as the representative of the family and of life, has pronounced against him" (Sokel, 226). Yet, while the primary motivation for his death is centrally located outside Gregor in his family, Gregor has begun to thoroughly internalise the need to sacrifice himself and passes it off as his own "conviction". Gregor's personal and unconscious clinging to the last semblances of sovereignty in defining the meaning of his death thus complicates the simplistic and superficial imposition of his death's significance to the family, that of alleviating their current condition of "complete and utter despair" (Kafka, 129).

Moreover, the children in Mother Courage are established as being tragically fated to die after her pretense at prophecy results in the blatant divination of her own childrens' death with black crosses. The prematurity prefigured in their imminent deaths, where "in the springtime of life he is doomed" (Brecht, 11), carries a similar death sentence as Gregor in that Mother Courage ironically, but indefinitely, sentences her own children to death. Whereas Gregor's family consigns the external significance of the sacrifice within the family, Mother Courage's invocation of prophecy, although false, invokes a higher order of will, one that eludes substantiation and affirmation, "as if there existed a malign knowledge of the Event, as if some superhuman power decided to take at their word the lies of men and to make truths out of them" (Barthes and Bernays, 52). Following the paradoxical logic of determinism which their death sentences were passed in, the very act of preservation tragically calls forth its oppositional act of destruction. After Mother Courage's attempt to preserve her children by fate, Eilif, Swiss Cheese and Kattrin proceed to die by consistently

upholding the virtues they signify: that of bravery, honesty and goodwill, thus making it tempting to read their deaths as a symbolic loss of these virtues. However in the case of Kattrin's death, she curiously garners more autonomy than her brothers in enacting her own demise: "Kattrin, in tears, drums as loud as she can. Fire! The soldiers fire, Kattrin is hit, gives a few more drumbeats and then slowly crumples" (Brecht, 86). Unlike their respective executions, Kattrin is shown defiant to the very last, unyielding in her last moments even after being hit. Similar to Gregor's altruistic sacrifice to the family, she persists in drumming to warn and save the community of Halle from an impending attack, but unlike him, her selflessness is not a private sense of duty, rather her complete exposure on the roof extends her sacrifice into the public realm. In this respect, Kattrin can be seen as the most conscious of her own death as a deliberate act of sacrifice, exemplified in her proceeding despite seeing the rifle set up by the soldiers right before her. Yet, to eulogise Kattrin's sacrifice as worthy of martyrdom blurs the distinction between her death as one possibly but inconclusively determined by fate, and whether she autonomously and knowingly chose to sacrifice herself. Denied a voice to articulate themselves, both Gregor and Kattrin are thus unable to definitely reconcile and resolve the contesting external and personal attempts to define their deaths.

Furthermore, the discoveries of the deaths provoke ambivalent responses that disrupt our desire to definitively assign meaning to them. This is particularly characterized by the reluctance of the surviving family to explicitly pronounce and affirm the finality of the individuals' deaths: "'Dead?' said Mrs Samsa, and looked questioningly up at the charwoman, even though she was in a position to check it all herself, and in fact could have seen it without needing to check." (Kafka, 142); "MOTHER COURAGE: Now she's asleep. THE PEASANT'S WIFE: She ain't asleep. Can't you see she's passed over?" (Brecht, 87). While this affirmation is first articulated by an outsider to the family, this must not be read purely as a sentimental denial of loss. Rather, an immediate yet incompatible set of responses

arises, one characterized by the dual presence of astonishment and empathy in the process of mourning. In *Metamorphosis*, the scene of pity and bereavement is presented by Kafka as a tableau, framed by the open door: "The door from the bedroom opened, and Mr Samsa appeared in his uniform, with his wife on one arm and his daughter on the other. All were a little teary; from time to time Grete pressed her face against her father's arm." (Kafka, 143). This presentation of the condition of bereavement is duly interrupted by the strangers' contrasting show of sardonic gaiety, "as if in the happy expectation of a great scene, which was sure to end well for them" (Kafka, 143). Here, Kafka's scene of bereavement broaches the Brechtian task of the "uncovering (making strange, or alienating) of conditions" by the process of "interruption". (Benjamin, 18) By sharply contrasting the strangers' incongruent jauntiness with the tableau of the grieving family, a sense of astonishment arises, previously foregrounded by the charwoman's schadenfreude in her uninhibited announcement of his death. Curiously, this response runs parallel but does not annul the sense of pity and empathy aroused by Gregor's trivialized death. Caught between simultaneously contradicting responses, the tragicomic presentation of discovering Gregor's death thus injects a position of uncertainty that troubles the reader's response, and consequently his definition of Gregor's death.

Such a simultaneous contradiction of responses is similarly reflected in Mother Courage's heartrending but essential refusal to identify Swiss Cheese's dead body at the end of Scene 3, having just been primed by Yvette to maintain a wilful ignorance, "else you'll all be for it" (Brecht, 42). This brief but grave injunction to self-preservation is the basis for both the arousal of astonishment and empathy as Courage represses her guilt at having lost her son for having "bargained too long" (Brecht, 42) for his ransom. This antagonising and agonising conflict of emotions in her inability and refusal to reveal or verbalise her guilt and bereavement culminates in her speechless shaking of her head during the sergeant's

questioning, leaving us with neither commentary nor eulogy from her to provide closure and meaning for his demise within the play itself.

The subsequent silent scream of Mother Courage after the body is taken away exponentially heightens and constricts this conflict, such that "the sound that came out was raw and terrible [...] total silence." (Steiner, 354) While Steiner considers this crescendo of silence in a tragic vein, one that characterizes "the same wild and pure lament over man's inhumanity and waste of man" (Steiner, 354), Mother Courage's complete reduction to silence rather typifies the painful restraint that Brecht exercises in his play to resist imposing any desired response within the contradiction, refusing the audience an inclined view of how to interpret the unfortunate and ostensibly unnecessary sacrifice of Swiss Cheese for eighty florin, preferring instead to "energize the spectator to continue the text outside the theatre" (Smith, 493) with Steiner's extension one of the multifarious possibilities available for consideration.

Despite not sentimentalizing the deaths of the family members, the surviving family's project of moving on and salvation can only be effectuated with sacrificing the memory and knowledge of the death itself. This necessary blindness about the death creates a taboo space that closes any definitive discussion about the meaning of the deaths, yet in its very silence it opens up a space to contest multiple plausible readings against one another. For one, the sense of liberation that Gregor's family experiences from his death as the sacrificial scapegoat highlights how this newfound liberty is necessarily upheld by the erasure from consciousness of the sacrificed family member: "The greatest alleviation of the situation must be produced by moving house; they would take a smaller, cheaper, but also better situated and more practical apartment than their present one, which Gregor had found for them." (Kafka, 146). To have Gregor's body deceased and even disposed of is insufficient for the deliverance of the family; for the full redemptive qualities of Gregor's sacrificial death can only be claimed

by the removing themselves from the sites of memory and past interaction with him. The deliberate desire to calculatedly choose their new home, away from the "present one, which Gregor had found for them" simultaneously dissolves any physical and spatial trace of Gregor from the family and also concentrates the salvation of the family in their emancipation from the past "complete and utter despair, the thought that they in all the circle of relatives and acquaintances had been singled out for such a calamity" (Kafka, 129). What the move affords the family is a freed space from this incarcerating sense of fatality, but even as Sokel notes "they remain guilty, but they can now enjoy the fruits of this guilt without being held accountable" (Sokel, 227), it is necessarily predicated on the calculated and wilful amnesia of Gregor's sacrifice, thereby leaving room for further interpretation of this inconclusive dismissal of Gregor's death.

If Kafka's "outlook is that of a man caught under the wheels" (Benjamin, 111) and necessarily forgotten, Mother Courage's outlook must be one caught in the rotation of her cart's wheels, requiring a necessary oblivion to the stark tragedy of losing Eilif. In her final gesture of paying off the peasants to settle Kattrin's funeral without her presence, one can identify in Mother Courage an indomitable will to persist, or even the Marxist reading that "motherhood […] is embedded in economics" (Smith, 493). Whichever reading we choose to assign to the final moment of the play, in her tugging the cart off-stage it is necessary to bear in mind that the forward motion of her hope rests on her tragic blindness that she will have the opportunity to meet her favourite son again.

Returning to the initial two quotations in this essay, there is a discernible rupture in the possibility of ascribing meaning to the deaths, particularly acute due to the very oversight or denial of the opportunity for salvaging a reconnection to the family. While the seemingly irreconcilable nature between Gregor and his family carries a disconcerting sense of finality as expressed in the father's lament, the key tragedy lies not so much in the 'impossibility' of

understanding, but rather in the perspective the father adopts. In wishing that "if only he understood us" (Kafka, 139), the father (and the family) crucially and regrettably overlooks an opportunity for the family to empathically understand Gregor's condition.

Elsewhere, Eilif's wish to defer or deny the communication of the truth of his impending execution should not be taken as indicative of a communication breakdown, but rather his individual inability to express or condense any personal meaning to his absent mother. As Eilif in his last words settles for vague sentiments of "wasn't any different" and "the same thing" (Brecht, 69), even self-negating the opportunity for meaning by suggesting Mother Courage be told "nowt" (Brecht, 69), he sacrifices his last opportunity to input any significance to his mother, even if the message can be passed on to her, thus infinitely postponing any conclusive effort to define his own demise.

It is precisely when the opportunity for the last words of the deceased to clarify and seek a compromise with their surviving family members over their deaths is denied or lost that the inevitable inexpressibility of one's significance to another in the modern predicament crucially surfaces. Despite the multiple readings available that attempt to relate these deaths toward a larger social context and significance, the constant slippage of meaning that is found in the presentation of the deaths in both texts leaves us with no definitive closure in our modern insatiable quest to locate meaning in life. Yet while we ought not to resort to easy interpretations of these deaths, we find it impossible to see none. It is as though by sacrificing the meaning of death, we would be left like Gregor in his last hours, lost and "[remaining] in this condition of empty and peaceful reflection", where "the last thing he saw was the sky gradually lightening outside his window" (Kafka, 141), only able to catch a glimpse of illumination of meaning, yet afterwards forever dark to it.

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Evie McDermott.

"Languages do not exclude each other, but rather intersect with each other in many different ways… as such these languages live a real life, they struggle and evolve in an environment of social heteroglossia" (Bakhtin, 292-93)

How far does the use of heteroglossia in Allen Ginsberg's *Howl* and T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* present society as fragmented?

In his simplest description, Bakhtin defines heteroglossia as "another's speech in another's language" (Bakhtin, 324), however this assertion requires unpicking. As the "internal stratification of any single national language" (262), heteroglossia is understood to be the multi-voicedness of a narrative. Indeed, heteroglossia is the notion that all language is polluted by previous usage, and so it reflects different social or historical contexts. In Ginsberg's *Howl* and Eliot's *The Waste Land*, these concepts manifest themselves through the fractured voices woven into the poetry. As the title quotation suggests, when discourse becomes disjointed a "struggle" occurs, where the fractured voices, despite speaking together, are in a state of disunity; something which rings true of Marshall Berman's argument in *All That Is Solid Melts into Air* that modernity is a paradoxical struggle (15), with societal unity being torn apart by contradiction. This essay will begin by looking at how the interplay of voices interact with one another in Eliot's and Ginsberg's poems to present fragmentation, then analyse censored and foreign language, along with religious imagery in the poems, questioning whether they unify humanity through their *lack* of pollution by other semantics (if that is possible). Overall, whilst the heteroglossiac injection of other perspectives in both poems can be interpreted as demonstrating a sense of togetherness, as society is all fighting the same struggle, this unification is short lived. Indeed, the layering of voices and perspectives presents a fractured society, torn between ideas.

Through the way they are embedded, the interplay of voices in *Howl* and *The Waste Land* seamlessly intersect one another with a fluidity that forces the reader to lose track of who is speaking. The lack of punctuation in both poems removes any indication of new speech, and so the heteroglossia is in "concealed form" (Bakhtin, 303). This form is more obvious in Eliot's poem where speech is blatantly missing quotation marks: "He said, Marie, Marie, hold on tight. And down we went" (Eliot, lines 14-5), whilst in Ginsberg's *Howl*, different perspectives of New York are signalled by the anaphora of "who", symbolising a new perspective in the poem where each of these stanzas act as a mini narrative for individual lives in the city: "who hiccuped…" (Ginsberg, line 124), "who lost…" (line 128) and "who copulated…" (line 134). The presentation of this heteroglossia without punctuation could be said to convey a sense of unity amongst people, as the dipping in and out of others' voices creates a sense of togetherness, reminding readers that everyone in society experiences turmoil. However, particularly in *The Waste Land*, the injection of new voices completely undercuts previous speech, such as "HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME" (Eliot, lines 141, 152, 166, 169, 170) conveying the sense of a radio dial tuning in and out of stations. With a radio, tuning in and out means that one will undoubtedly miss parts of conversations from each station, hence, similarly to radio, the jumping between voices in *The Waste Land* means that readers lose coherency with previous voices. The jumping between voices can become dizzying, as it conveys a mind torn between thoughts and ideas, thus displaying not only a fractured poem but a fractured society too. The interplay of voices acts as a reminder that there are other perspectives in the world, and so this heteroglossiac style of writing presents a disunited society; fragmented and torn.

Furthermore, the concept of "Moloch" (Ginsberg, line 308) in *Howl* is greatly contradictory, evoking multiple images that present different experiences of modernity in the city. To begin, Moloch is presented as a person: "Moloch the loveless" (line 312-13) and

"Moloch the heavy judger of men" (lines 313-14). Here, Moloch is described using an epithet common in Epic poetry, perhaps implying that, just like the heroes in Homeric epic, Moloch's legacy is just as important as Moloch itself - or in other words, interpretations of Moloch are just as important as the 'real' definition of Moloch. Later, however, Moloch is located as a place: "Moloch in whom I sit lonely" (line 335), with its "robot apartments [and] invisible suburbs" (line 343). Moloch is defined in more symbolic ways as *Howl* develops, from claiming that "Moloch whose love is endless oil and stone" (line 330), suggesting that Moloch is heavily concerned with protecting its resources, an idea many would link to the world's governments, to claiming "Moloch in whom I am consciousness without a body" (lines 338-9), where the sense of an empty shell of a human can be mapped onto the feeling of depression. Whilst it might not seem so at first glance, perhaps the way that Moloch represents all of these things at once implies it is a concept that can be universally acknowledged, thus uniting readers through this all-encompassing lexeme. This idea is mirrored in *The Waste Land* with the "Unreal City" (Eliot, lines 60, 207), where the 'City' could represent anywhere in the world, just as Moloch can represent any experience of modernity. Eliot cements this idea by later claiming that "Jerusalem Athens Alexandria Vienna London [are] Unreal" (lines 375-7). By placing "unreal" after the list of cities, Eliot implies that any one of the listed cities could be this 'Unreal City' and as such the heteroglossiac element unifies society through its ambiguity.

However, can this really be the case? As Bakhtin observes, a word "serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions" (Bakhtin, 324), or, in other words, although a word can serve two separate bodies, it will not mean the same thing; looking back at Moloch and the 'Unreal City' this seems to be true. Each description of Moloch ends in an exclamation mark, indicating where one interpretation ends and another begins, where, perhaps, the exclamation marks depict individuals shouting over

each other to try to ensure that their version of Moloch is heard. This interpretation is further evidenced by the exclamations of "Moloch! Moloch!" (Ginsberg, line 312) suggesting that so many voices are desperate to be heard that the only word to clearly come through is Moloch. Indeed, rather than working together to present a unit against Moloch, these alternate perspectives create friction by contradicting one another. Similarly with the 'Unreal City' in *The Waste Land*, by using a lexeme that can stand for any place at any time, Eliot fragments any sense of togetherness. Thus, whilst the heteroglossia initially inspires some unity, the overwhelming disparity between how each voice perceives the world is too different to do anything other than convey a broken society.

Perhaps then, the abundance of heteroglossia in the two poems is Eliot's and Ginsberg's way of demonstrating how society will only mend if there is a meaningless language, untainted by usage by others. Indeed, this manifests itself in the poems through language we cannot understand: foreign languages in *The Waste Land* like "[y]ou! hypocrite lecteur! – mon semblable, - mon frère" (Eliot, line 76) and "Frisch weht der Wind" (line 31), and censoring, "******" (Ginsberg, line 261), in *Howl*. Assuming that readers have no knowledge of any other language presents Eliot's injection of foreign languages as the chance for a clean slate, as people will not understand it and so cannot attach any meaning to it. Similarly, the censored word in "Howl" has a lack of meaning, due to the impossibility of attaching semantics to a word which is ultimately an abstract concept. Indeed, this sense of not understanding can be said to unify the world, as everyone is in the same state of ignorance. Whilst this seems like a promising theory, it is likely that these 'untainted' languages, in fact, actually demonstrate society as fractured, as human nature dictates that we search for meaning in everything. Further to this, it is myopic to believe that readers will not understand other languages or even be able to identify from where they originate. Indeed, by identifying the origins of speech, like France in the first example from Eliot, or Germany, as

in the latter example, these words lose their sense of meaningless. For example, readers might assume that anything written in French is emotive or compassionate as French is considered to be the language of love. This further translates to the censorship in *Howl*, as whilst we cannot know for sure which word has been removed, connotations attached to censorship imply that the word was dangerous or crude. Limiting access to certain speech and dialects in an attempt to remove the pollution of semantics conveys how even when words supposedly have no meaning, there is still a heteroglossiac element to them where individuals will disagree over what words *could* mean, thus presenting a world torn apart by contrasting opinions. Indeed, whilst these words seem untainted by previous usage, in fact, they are burdened with an array of connotations, presenting a society where no one understands or listens to anyone. Readers feel isolated by a lack of connotation and as such these desperate attempts to find some meaning in censored speech is a classic example of paradoxical unity championed by modernity.

Additionally, religious imagery is omnipresent in both poems, and this dialect, just like the censored language, should be an exception to the assertion that dialect is "another's speech in another's language" as religious imagery should signify the undisputable word of God. Indeed, there are multiple religions made note of in the two poems: Eliot mentions Christianity, referring to the famous weeping at the River of Babylon in Psalms by claiming "[b]y the waters of Leman I sat down and wept…" (Eliot, line 182), along with nodding to Hinduism by closing the poem with words derived from the spiritual text *Upanishads*: "Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata" (line 433), meaning 'giving', 'compassion' and 'self-control' respectively. Ginsberg also makes reference to Christianity: "Holy peter… holy Soloman" (Ginsberg, line 443), as well as to Islam: "Mohammedan angels" (line 13) and to the Ancient Ammonite deity "Moloch" (line 308). Calvin Bedient comments that "heteroglossia is Babel; God, or the Absolute, is silence" (Bedient, 9), and this can be mapped onto the religious

imagery in the poems, where Bedient is suggesting that we are to view the intrusion of God through religion as silencing the heteroglot, finally mending the fractured disunity. However this abundance of imagery from world religions can demonstrate how, once again, the poets are using heteroglossia to present society as fragmented, as it reminds readers how disunited the world is. Religion should represent the one thing that individuals can refer to in order to unite them in a message of hope, yet the different branches of religion touched upon convey the different voices in society with their diverse views. Moreover, it seems like this message of hope and unity in society is completely missed anyway. Indeed, the diverse religions, with their specific jargon, portray how man's association with God is split, where diverse religious dialect aids the segregation of society, or as Tim Beasley-Murray observes: "language itself has been fractured in the same way that Man's association with God… has been fractured" (Beasley-Murray, 118). This point is supported by the final lines of *The Waste Land* as, although the poem concludes with religious life advice, it is given in another language, alienating those who do not prescribe to the Hindu religion and are unable to understand these words. This external voice segregates society based on religion, and messages of hope become messages of disunity. Hence, Ginsberg's and Eliot's religious language in the poems is presented in a heteroglossiac way where the disunity from something supposedly universal presents an entirely fractured society.

In conclusion, heteroglossia is used in both "Howl" and 'The Waste Land' as a way to present society as torn between perceptions and ideologies. Different voices penetrate the poems in order to show the disunity in society, presenting it as fractured through diverse ideas. Whilst it can be argued that the fluidity of the interception of voices, such as the concealed form of speech, teamed with diverse ideas juxtaposing one another, like the juxtaposition of world religions, can be claimed to present a united front where all perceptions merge into one great text, even this claim can be inversed. The use of

heteroglossia acts as a reminder that there are *other* perspectives and voices in life, many of which can be paradoxically deduced from preconceived 'universal' or 'meaningless' language. Ultimately, the heteroglossiac layering of connotations and voices presents a society torn between ideas and perspectives they cannot agree on.

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Carmen Thong.

Transcending the Anti-Anti in Weeks' Utopian Demand.

Since Thomas More's inception of *Utopia* in 1516, utopian thinking has undergone a vast array of permutations. The initial excitement for the possibility of such a εὖ or 'good' place has given way to the anti-utopian cynicism of the οὐ or 'not' place. *The Brave New World* morphs from utopia to dystopia, Margaret Thatcher introduces "There Is No Alternative", Fukuyama in *The End of History* declares that the 'goal-image' of a 'perfect world' (Bloch, "The Principle of Hope", Introduction) is no longer relevant, and Isaiah Berlin is glad to see the end of utopianism because he believes it encourages totalitarianism. The element of idealism requires utopia to be a 'complete alternative… society' (Johnson, 29). In the attempted construction of such a society, blueprints of exact and measurable details were drawn, and they gave off the unsavory smell of didacticism, exclusivity and abstraction.

A decade or so after Fukuyama, utopian thinking started to warily resurface in the political arena in the form of the feminist movement. The imagining of an alternative society resonated with the anti-hegemonic goals of feminists, and thinkers began to see that utopianism is inextricable from feminism. Toril Moi explains that 'to deprive feminism of its utopias is to depoliticize it at a stroke: without a political vision to sustain it, feminist theory will hit a dead end. The result will be a loss of purpose, a perfect sense of futility... (Johnson, 24). The empowering function of utopian thinking has also been adopted by grassroot movements for ecology, equality and more. If backed by supple dialectics, utopian visions will be able to drive social development without returning to the didactic, the dictator and the dismissal of differences. The anti-utopian sentiment is debunked as dull and mechanical.

In *Archaelogies of the Future*, "Jameson addresses the disputed terrain of the utopian imagination, and more particularly the anti-utopian situation of our own times, a situation that leads him to argue for an 'anti-anti-Utopianism'" (Jorgensen, 46). He does not ask for a return of utopia, although he also argues against those who are against utopia. In this construction, Jameson is merely naming the fence on which current utopian thinkers straddle. Despite the best intentions of critics to re-appropriate utopia's revolutionary potential, both the 'anti' and 'anti-anti' camp still falls into the negative - in the case of 'anti-anti', an eternally postponing negative. In that realm, utopian thinkers are passing on the baton of "more critique" in a relay race run on a track without a finishing line. Each will run till each expires.

In what follows, I aim to interrogate Kathi Weeks' utopianism in her concept of the utopian demand in her book *The Problem with Work* in light of the problematic idea of Jameson's "anti-anti-Utopianism". I aim to seek the place of the proposition in her contemporary "reformist project with revolutionary aspirations" (Weeks, 136) by investigating her interaction with Bloch, Nietzsche and especially Federici. In her invocation of Marxist feminism in the reconstruction of the workplace, she revives the idea of the utopian demand, which was a part of the 1970s' wages-for-housework discourse. Through these methodologies, I hope to grasp the critical potential of Weeks' utopian demand and use it to move beyond the entrenched notions of "anti-anti" that are still inherent in her work.

Weeks' Utopianism

Weeks' book *The Problem with Work* has been alive and buzzing in feminist and political theory circles since its publication in 2011, and rightly so. Her dismantling of dominant work ideologies are met with fruitful ideas for liberation from labour, which are the demand for

basic income and shorter work hours. However, it is the way she engages with the critical feminist tradition that is truly provocative. As she sets out to do in her introduction, she is able to evade the 'era' and 'familia' perspective of the critics that have gone before her and treats previous ideas not as dated and irrelevant, nor as legacies to be protected. She brings them together in a cohesive formation of past-present-future. In rescuing the revolutionary potential in past ideologies and marrying them with the present's immanent desire, Weeks proposes the 'demand' as a direction to the future. Her curtain call chapter on utopia brings together the elements of her argument and situates it within a wider understanding of revolution. It lays out again the inextricability of utopia from feminism and political theory because it seeks to 'force capital to restructure social relations' (Federici, 19) and to imagine a complete and alternate society: in Weeks' case, the ideal utopia of a post-work society where capitalism no longer characterises social relations.

Weeks asks the question: "What if we were to respond to the charge of utopianism not with embarrassment or defensive denial but with recognition and affirmation?" (Weeks, 175). Her use of the term utopianism throughout the book discusses a devolved utopia that is no longer sutured to the prerogative of idealism. It instead denotes a society with a desired construct that is considered somewhat impractical, a society that seeks the "ultimate greatest good" (Weeks, 178). Against that, Popper argues that "searching for, and fighting against, the greatest and most urgent evils of society… is the only rational course of political action" (Weeks, 178-9). Weeks' question is a challenge to that kind of anti-utopian mindset.

To ensure that her work will not join, as Barbara Taylor puts it, the "history of all progressive movements… littered with such half-remembered hopes, with dreams that have failed" (Weeks, 113), Weeks posits a concrete utopia. Her affirmation of utopia takes into account ideas such as Moylan's: that the "ultimate function of utopianism is… the

development of an open consciousness of the present" (Sargisson, 56). She also accounts for the future effect of utopian ideas that is "catalytic to revolutionary thought rather than as didactic" (Sargisson, 42). By nuancing the conception of utopia, Weeks proposes something like the "creation of utopian spaces in concrete social or political practices intended to cultivate the possibility of alternative social relations" (Davis, 137). Weeks' utopianism rescues the 1970s wages-for-housework demand from the depths of history and infuses it with a consciousness of the present so that in turn, her demand for basic income will be regenerative.

However, she bolsters her chapter on utopia with an epilogue that reads like a pin safety on her revolutionary revolver. She makes clear that her utopianism is a catalytic one that intends to "[provoke] a different future" (Weeks, 233). She defers the utopian moment to a far future in favor of conceivable and possible actions in the now, which enacts quite a radical shift from a complete and alternative utopia to one that is rooted in political agency. Weeks seems to be in agreement with Jameson when he says in *The Politics of Utopia*, "this clearly does not mean that, even if we succeed in reviving utopia itself, the outlines of a new and effective practical politics for the era of globalization will at once become visible; but only that we will never come to one without it" (36).

Identifying Jameson's Anti-Anti

Jameson presents utopian thought as essential but ironically ineffective in bringing about utopia. Kumar illustrates Jameson's irony: "[the utopian enclave is] momentarily beyond the reach of the social and testify to its political powerlessness at the same time that [it] offer[s] the space in which new wish images of the social can be elaborated and experimented on" (Kumar, 551). Here, the utopian enclave is necessary to highlight the undesirable ideologies

latent in society, but this enclave is merely a 'space' of emptiness that purposes to only hold 'wish images' of the future. It is not considered a 'place' of material or political construct. A double negative plays itself out in this concept, just as it does in Jameson's quote from *The Politics of Utopia*. In the previous section's quote, he negates utopia ('does not mean that… will at once become visible') and then negates the negation of utopia ('never come to one without it'). In the illustration by Kumar, the same act is performed. The utopian enclave exists to negate the social, but the subject that negates is also negative in its emptiness. This incision into Jameson's rhetoric is necessary because it reveals the 'negative' component that is pervasive in much of contemporary utopian thought. The effect of this component is such that most of the critique on this subject boils down to 'no, but, no'. This is Jameson's 'anti-anti-utopia'.

Before attempting an incursion into Weeks' work in search of this 'anti-anti', it will be helpful to situate Jameson's concept within the influence of Adorno's *Negative Dialectics*. Adorno's dialectics is an inversion of Hegelian dialectics. It is comprised of thesis and antithesis and antithesis and antithesis and so on. It denies closure in synthesis. The string of antitheses lends familiarly to Jameson's 'anti-anti'. In *The Politics of Utopia*, Jameson states outright that his concept of utopia is couched within Adornian dialectics: "My proposal will involve neither a choice between these extremes nor some 'synthesis' of them; but rather a stubbornly negative relationship to both" (49). Jameson thinks that it is within this relationship of negation that "the genuine political and philosophic content is located" (50). A double-negative theorisation will never come to an utopian proximation because it is fundamentally opposed to the idea of utopia itself, which is to reach an ideal societal construct. In its striving towards a state of perpetual contradiction and the infinite deferral, its project of negation for the liberation of the future is merely an emptying of the present to liberate an empty future.

The Anti-Anti in Weeks' Utopianism

The influence of the 'anti-anti-utopian' and its close relation to the postmodern denial of total narratives has worked its way through feminism, and has actually transformed it "into a self-perpetuating academic institution like any other" (Johnson, 24). The denial of total narratives has become a totalizing narrative in itself. Ironically, it excludes feminist thinkers from exploring exclusive claims such as utopia. Benhabib illustrates this phenomenon:

> "What scares the opponents of utopia... is that in the name of such future utopia the present in its multiple ambiguity, plurality and contradiction will be reduced to a flat grand narrative... Postmodernism can teach us the theoretical and political traps of why utopias and foundational thinking can go wrong, but it should not lead to a retreat from utopia altogether. For we, as women, have much to lose by giving up the utopian hope in the wholly other" (Johnson, 20-21).

The feminist movement's subscription to postmodern and poststructuralist ideas played its role in bringing in 'otherness' into the overall value of feminist thought. However, it has also introduced its own series of theoretical potholes that could lead to a complete removal of utopian thought. One such effect would be the constant opening up of critical thinking to infinities, horizons and possibilities. For these to be posited, a constant deferral to the future has to happen.

Since destination as utopia would necessitate an eventual specification of possibilities, utopia has to shift from destination to direction (Weeks, 221). Direction itself becomes utopian. By dismissing the destination, the 'not' place of utopia overrules 'good' place. When they are subscribed to, infinite possibilities become a circular and 'self-perpetuating' system. It introduces levels of complexity to feminist activism which, in requiring absolute liberation, limits rather than liberates. Weeks, in her engagement with utopian thinkers and feminists, makes decisive moves away from the traps of postmodernism. In this section, I will endeavor to examine if she manages to chart a safe journey through perilous waters, or if she sails into the currents of the endless deferral.

Bloch plays a major part in Weeks' theorization of utopia. In particular, the motifs of daydreaming, the Not-Yet-Become, the Not-Yet-Conscious, the not yet decided, the fulcrum of the present and the Real-Possible are components of Bloch's project of hope. Weeks uses them as a defense for the function of utopia in the Marxist feminist movement. As noted by Kumar, these terms all share the same "anticipatory consciousness" (562). The emphasis is on the idea of the 'not-yet', which, if subscribed to, requires the principle of hope in the present to drive "a directing act of a cognitive kind" (562). Hope as drive can be elaborated as the training of the desire and will, which is essential to cultivate an "anticipatory consciousness". Weeks values Bloch as a building block to her construct of the utopian demand exactly because of this sense of anticipation and hope he advocates. The demand itself is a joyously excessive "directing act" for utopian possibilities, and it needs the subject to first be aware of the 'not-yet'.

Bloch's call to train present desires for future utopian possibilities is a sophisticated step away from anti-utopia. However, his heavy reliance on the premise of the future places him still on the precarious perch of the 'anti-anti'. Future hope as a directing act indicates that the

future itself is performative. It returns to the previous idea of utopia as direction rather than destination. The future as the place-hood for utopia is eradicated and dragged into the present as outsourced labour.

Utopia is the construct of an ideal society viewed as impossible at the present moment. However, utopia as direction rather than as achievable state seems to be posited here because it is the best among all conceivably possible options. Utopia is not, and should never be, amalgamable with the terms 'best' and 'possible'. It should always be tinged with impossibility and imagination, set apart from the projected possibilities of the now. Weeks advocates the "risky violations of that strategy of social adjustment by which we allow ourselves to want only what we are likely to have" (Weeks, 191), but in her act of critique itself, she constructs only what she is likely to have. By banking all of her utopian elements on the endless and unknowable future, she removes all "risky violations" from the act of demanding in the present. She takes one foot away from the anti-utopian, but refrains from putting the other down in utopia. In Weeks' usage of Bloch's conceptual framework, she infuses her utopian demand at a foundational level with the 'anti-anti' temperament.

Weeks also intersperses her concept with Nietzsche, whose theories she uses "against his inclination" (Weeks, 195) to support the utopian demand. She significantly picks out a concept from the reluctantly utopian Nietzsche that pertains to the continuous deferral. The work she puts into fitting Nietzsche within her discourse points to the persistence of the 'anti-anti-utopia' in her thoughts:

> "'Man is a bridge,' Nietzsche insists, 'not a goal'. The goal is not to
> preserve the present and what we have become - to settle on the
> bridge, as it were - but to affirm them so as to enable the subjects who

could then will a better future. After all, for Nietzsche, the animating

force in life is not the will to self-preservation but the will to power;

the goal is not - to switch now to Bloch's terminology - self-

preservation but self-extension." (Weeks, 201)

In this quote, Nietzsche indicates that man is not supposed to perpetuate the present in self-preservation, but to link the past to the future through his present. He is to make himself a link between one temporality and another: self-extension. Through her use of this, Weeks characterizes the utopian demand as the present man's directional act that will act as a 'bridge' to the 'better future'. Here also, the consistent problem is the non-existence of utopia which man should extend towards. When man extends to the next man in the utopian direction, it works in this metaphor as bridges leading to other bridges in a perpetual deferment. In this logic, the bridges will lead on to an infinite point and can never actually perform their function of connecting one bank to another. Nietzsche's man as bridge is like the fence of Jameson's 'anti-anti': The immediate and practical present is left behind, but the alternative society can never be reached.

Through Bloch and Nietzsche, Weeks conceives of an admirable critique that almost evades the negation of utopia altogether. By this evasion I mean returning from a critical tradition of opposition and reaction to one of proposition and action. For the sake of brevity, I would like to term proposition and action as 'positive utopianism'. As pointed out above, Bloch and Nietzsche as the source of Weeks' utopian concepts fall short of actually reaching the place of utopia. Weeks also engages with the rhetoric of the 1970s wages-for-housework movement to create her own version of the demand. In this article, Federici will be used to represent the wages-for-housework movement. In Weeks' loud and direct demand for basic

income and shorter working hours, she conceives of something concrete that is tantalizingly close to positive utopianism:

> "As the example of wages for housework suggests, the explicit feminist substance of the demand for basic income may be less significant than the *political process of its proposition* as part of a larger feminist project. By this measure, it is not the content of the demand but the *collective practice of demanding*, that will determine whether what we win 'will be a victory or a defeat'" (Weeks, 149) [*my emphasis*].

Weeks wraps up her chapter on the basic income with the above passage. It provides a strong imaginative vision for contemporary feminist activists because the act of demanding itself re-integrates utopia without resorting to a 'flat grand narrative'. To enable a 'collective practice of demanding' is to perform utopia. The content of the demand, which is basic income, is less important than the act of utopia itself, which is the 'political process of its proposition'. Situated in the present and in the act, Weeks' demand comes close to a positive utopianism while maintaining critical integrity.

I say "comes close" because Weeks re-appropriates the wages-for-housework demand for the contemporary moment, and by doing so, she grafts into the demand the concept of the 'not-yet'. Whereas the demand of the 70s was for power to the present subject, the Weeks demand is for power to the future subject. Federici's conception of the demand highly involves the subject of the present struggle: "from now on, against capital, for us, in the measure that we organize our power" (20). She envisions an alternative society which is in the process of becoming through the demand for wages for housework. The women who

demands will accrue power through every small victory. In Weeks' time of writing, the demand for wages for housework has proven to be politically less effective than it was dreamt to be. Capital relations only made minor alterations to accommodate this type of feminist activism, but it still maintains its structure of oppressive work logic, which leads quite directly to Weeks' insistence in *The Problem with Work*. Weeks revives the revolutionary potential within the wages-for-housework demand in spite of its political failures and seeks to reinvent it for the "right now" (Weeks, 221).

> "Precisely where the demand fails to pass muster with a model of political calculation sutured to the present may be where it can succeed in sparking the political imagination of, and desire for, a different future" (Weeks, 146).

In this quote, Weeks questions the way the wages-for-housework demand is tied to the subjects of Federici's present and the factors of that specific present which requires a specified "model of political calculation". In its suturing, the demand is no longer generative in each temporality, and becomes another half-remembered dream when the political situation that brought it forward passes away. Weeks proposes instead that the demand needs to be catalytic for envisioning a different future.

Instead of imbuing the present demander with power, the demand's function of pointing to the future is prioritized. Weeks demands that the demand be a catalytic act, transforming the demand into a performative utopia. She does this by making a careful case for the demand's relation to temporality. She situates the potential of the past in the present by using it to generate futures. Weeks explains the relation of the utopian demand with the present and the future:

"With utopian demands, the *immediate goal is not deferred* as it is in the more comprehensive utopias. To make a demand is to *affirm the present desires* of existing subjects: this is what we *want now*. At the same time, the utopian demand also *points* in the *direction* of a different future and the possibility of desires and subjects yet to come. The paradox of the utopian demand is that it is at *once a goal and a bridge*; it seeks an end that is *open-ended*, one that *could* have a transformative effect greater than a minor policy reform" (Weeks, 221-2) [*my emphasis*].

She seemingly addresses the problem of deferral by positing an immediate goal, but this goal is the act of demand itself. She valorizes the present with words of action: to affirm, to want now, to point, to direct. These verbs become the un-deferred 'immediate goal', which means that the utopian goal is transported from the future into the present. The present act becomes the goal, and to act is utopia. She succeeds in giving the present utopian agency, but a future utopian fulfillment will always be not-yet. As such, she only comes close to positive utopianism because she denies the spirit of proposition while validating action. The bridge to utopia leads back to itself, the bridge that is the goal. When she suggests "an end that is open-ended", what she implies is that there should be no end. Utopia becomes a 'not-place', man remains a bridge, and utopian thought is still perched on the 'anti-anti' fence.

Utopia Banished

Drawing from my analysis of Weeks' utopianism and the role that Jameson's 'anti-anti' plays in it, I can only conclude that utopia itself is banished from Weeks' affirmation of

utopian thought. Her move away from the abstracted and impossible utopia has caused her to change the definition of utopia itself. The positing of a concrete or grounded utopia is a part of the same manoeuvre that she performs on the wages-for-housework demand. She salvages what she sees as the 'revolutionary potential' of the utopian proposition, which is the imagining of a brighter, better future. In the process, she dismantles the thing that is utopia. Weeks does so by her adoption of Jameson's 'anti-anti', which manifests in her work as the deferral of the utopian future. She also revives the power of the 'act' in feminist manifestos while rejecting the form, and invests utopian thinking with a similar performativity. Content when demanded transforms from text to performative act. In her attempts to situate utopia in the concrete, she imbues her work with the notion of negation; neither utopia nor anti-utopia is affirmed. Through the 'anti-anti', utopia in *The Problem with Work* is placed in the enclave of negation and loses its promised potency. The deferral and the act, I would like to argue, ultimately banish utopia.

> "In the 1971 essay, Jameson argued that it was 'wrong to want to decide, to want to resolve a difficulty.' Instead, it was better to shift these difficulties to a new theoretical level, to transform them dialectically into a means for further thought" (Jorgensen, 48).

The deferral is immediately recognizable in Jameson's discourse, and is driven by his refusal to 'decide' and 'resolve'. In the postmodern dedication to open-endedness, he pushes for a 'shift' to the 'new' and the 'further'. He makes a bid to transform difficulties into means for further thought, which, when condensed, means "means for more means" and "thought for more thought". It makes for a frustratingly distancing and deferring concept where any form of responsibility is passed on to the future. The future becomes a form of intellectual and critical credit. Weeks displays the influence of Jameson's system of thought when she

says: "the demand's status as a means rather than an end... demand for the power to make further demands" (Weeks, 133). In juxtaposition, the means for means, thought for thought, and demand for demand are all variations of the same technique of deferment. When the replication of demand becomes the goal, the endpoint or fulfillment of the demand vanishes. Following that, the conception of utopia as an ideal and alternative society is made irrelevant.

Deferment is in direct correlation to the performative because the deferred demand is an utopian act. Weeks' attribution of utopia to the 'act' also contributes to the banishment of utopia. When "utopia is conceived more as an ongoing process than a solution, more a project than an outcome" (Weeks, 211), the sense of utopia as a complete alternative society becomes defunct. Utopia is indirectly remodeled into a more possible version of the original, which goes against its original concept altogether. Weeks might as well state that she denies the possibility of utopia. Her prioritization of the performativity of activism through the collective demand replaces utopia and robs it of its 'placehood'. The method becomes the result.

The deferment and the act plays a vital role in the construct of the utopian demand. Weeks relies heavily on them to lend power to her concept. She says: "The radical potential of such relatively modest demands lies in two qualities that we reviewed in the previous chapter: their directionality and performativity" (Weeks, 228). As illustrated in the previous paragraphs, directionality and performativity leads to utopia devolving into *oὐ-topos*. The world where desires of the present moment actually become manifest and corporeal is debunked and banished. "Anti-anti-utopianism" is another version of "anti-utopia" because in both any ending, any destination, any *εὖ-topos* is sliced out by the postmodern scalpel of utopian thinkers.

The Utopian Expectation

Although Weeks' theorization falls into the pit of the 'anti-anti' and results in the banishment of utopia, she does set out with the brave purpose of recognizing and affirming the utopian charge. She brings to critical attention the importance of utopian thinking for any social movement, particularly in any attempts to lead the world into a post-work ethic. She paves the way from Bloch's "education of desire" (Weeks, 207) to the performance of that desire in the utopian demand. However, she is merely rallying and "activating agents" (Weeks, 222) under the banner of possibilities and the slogan of desire. Utopia is still nowhere in sight. Like Puchner's dissatisfaction with the manifesto, her demand falls short because it is "more of an act than a text, perhaps, but not act enough" (Weeks, 215).

As a response to what Weeks has constructed in her utopian demand, I would like to propose an 'act enough'. I am aware that in my article, I have myself performed an 'anti' that latches onto Jameson's 'anti-anti', warping it into a terrible triple-anti. In this concluding section, I want to dissolve that negating act by returning to the proposition - the original utopian sentiment - while retaining action. I propose positive utopianism. I propose the utopian expectation.

I propose the utopian expectation as an act that goes beyond, transcends, the 'anti-anti' in Weeks' utopian demand. A discourse for the utopian expectation is saved from the deferring and purely performative elements of the demand. In its proposition for the endpoint of the utopian future to be 'now', it theorizes the end of postponement. Even if our political world may not be there yet, the continuous expectation for utopia to be 'now' both maintains the place-hood of utopia and validates a political process. Neither the method or the result is

sacrificed. The expectant present is ready to receive at any time the state of being utopia, but in its constant expectation it also avoids being abstracted and removed from human action. The political process still ensues in that, instead of projecting possibilities into the future in the act of the demand, the utopian expectation actively awaits the arrival of an already late utopia.

Like Weeks, the utopian expectation is inspired by Federici, in this case her constant use of the word 'expect'. She uses the word 'expect' about seven times in her *Wages Against Housework* to describe women's relations to commanding husbands, to their kids, and to society. Women are expected to cook, clean, fuck. I would like to generalize the sentiment to include workers and the work logic, and to invert that relationship of expectation. Society should now be expected in its turn to be utopia. In a 70s feminist tract, "the writers warn, 'we will bring them [children] up to EXPECT more' (Weeks, 135). Decades later, we should claim to be those children.

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James Handy

Machiavelli's *Andria* and *Clizia*: Civic Comedy and the Early Modern Family

Family and citizenship are central to Niccolò Machiavelli's humanist plays. As well as being comedies, both *Andria* and *Clizia* aim at "bringing the deviant back into line by means of mockery" (Andrews, 57) and so are also didactic works. No comedy is written in a social vacuum. Machiavelli wrote principally for a contemporary Florentine audience. He therefore offered a translation with local idioms, jokes and references. The educative nature of the plays helps enlighten us to contemporary discourse on civic philosophy. Moreover, most of plays' comic value depends on intra-familial conflict, from which it is possible to discern implicit values of masculinity, honour and duty, which Machiavelli believed should be present in a robust Florentine civil society. That is to say: '…the importance of the family as the rehearsal for full participation in civic life…' (Gavitt, 70) functions throughout Machiavelli's comedies. *Clizia* and *Andria* were written within the civic tradition and not in spite of it. Consequently, they are useful sources on civic as well as family life.

In his prologue to *Clizia,* Machiavelli assures his audience "*…se voi ci satisfarete ascoltando, noi ci sforzeremo, recitando, di satisfare a voi*" ("... if you grant us the satisfaction of listening to us, we will make every effort in our performance to give you satisfaction in return" Machiavelli, trans. Sices and Atkinson *The Comedies of Machiavelli,* 284-285). This 'satisfaction' is twofold. In the first instance it is about eliciting laughter, as all good comedies should, but secondly Machiavelli asserts it is about moral instruction:

> Giova veramente assai a qualunque uomo, e massimamente a' giovanetti, cognoscere la avarizia d'uno vecchio, il furore d'uno innamorato, l'inganni d'uno servo […] la poca fede di tutti gli uomini.

("This should be of much to use to any man, but most especially to the young to know the greed of the old, the fury of lovers and the duplicity of servants… indeed, the lack of faith among all men" Machiavelli, trans. Sices and Atkinson *The Comedies of Machiavelli,* 282).

In this vein, Cicero described comedy as "*imitationem vitae, speculum consuetudinis, imaginem veritatis*" ("an imitation of life, a mirror of manners, an image of truth" Goldberg, 120). The comedies are in part educative guides for the conduct of a good 'free' citizen. This is not to say that either *Andria* or *Clizia* are simple allegorical extensions of Machiavelli's political works, since they actually shed new light on his writings. They illuminate an imagined private sphere drawing from social conventions as envisaged by Machiavelli. As a result there is more than just "overlap" between Machiavelli's comedies and his humanist political works (Hulliung, 33). The private settings (i.e. domestic, neighbours, servants) provide a *practical* rather than utopian environment for Machiavelli's humanistic ideals. In so doing they shed light on Machiavelli's Renaissance political values as well as social-familial relations.

Machiavelli treats his audience to a farce in order to provoke consideration of his own conception of *virtù*. He conceives of this as a highly masculinized *virtù* in the ultimate service of the city, drawing on 'Roman' principles of military discipline and stoic behaviour. Tellingly, *virtù* from *virtus*, in Latin philosophical texts, is an equivalent of the Greek *aretē*. But the Roman *virtus* is also used of courage and manliness (related to the word *vir* for man). *Andria* and *Clizia* give an example of how classical antiquity could be applied within elite discourse to the government of Renaissance society. The plays themselves are "basically Roman in plot and structure" (Duckworth, 401). For the Renaissance, or early modern, historian it is useful to consider in what ways Machiavelli followed in the dramatic mould of

Terence from which his style can be traced. Terence's translation was a 'contamination' of Menander's *The Woman of Andros* and *The Woman of Perinthos;* both New Comedy plays of which he wrote "*qui utramvis recte norit ambas noverit*" ("If you know one, you know them both" Terence trans. Barsby, 50-51) on account of their similar plotlines. Plautus and Terence also employ everyday colloquialisms. Likewise, where Machiavelli has made modifications to the classical versions, he does so in an effort to localise and familiarize. These can offer insights into early sixteenth-century Florentine society. For instance, in Terence's play, when Pamphilus asks Davos what punishment he thinks he deserves for his failed scheming, Davos replies with *crucem* ("crucifixion" Barsby, 121) whereas Machiavelli's Davo replies *Le force!* ("The gallows!" Sices and Atkinson, 105). This substitution reflects an attitude in which crucifixion—the most extreme form of punishment in ancient Rome and Greece—was not considered appropriate for literal translation. Crucifixion was imbued with Christian notions of sacrifice and martyrdom, which would make it inappropriate for the character of a *servus callidus* ("tricky slave") such as Davo. Conversely, where Machiavelli offers a more faithful translation we may come to understand how he came to draw parallels between his own society and the ancients. From a historical perspective then, both *Andria* and *Clizia* are worthwhile sources.

The comedies were written for performance and as such it was essential that the content did not serve to alienate a contemporary audience. Machiavelli avoids this by incorporating familiar institutions into his writing. In *Clizia*'s case, he transposes the geographical and temporal setting to early sixteenth-century Florence. For instance, when Palamede, a close friend of the junior protagonist, Cleandro in *Clizia*, warns of the irritations of *cantori, vecchi ed innamorati*, he complains:

Se tu sei con uno vecchio, e' ficca el capo in quante chiese e' truova, e va a tutti gli altari a borbottare uno paternostro. (If you are with an old man, he sticks his head into

every church he passes, and he goes and mumbles an 'Our Father' at every altar"

Machiavelli trans. Sices and Atkinson *The Comedies of Machiavelli,* 289).

In *Andria,* despite taking place in ancient Athens, there are notable stylistic differences in translation such as that regarding Davo's punishment discussed above. Character development is in large part achieved through the actors' interactions with these recognisable social elements.

In addition to his introduction of Christian features, Machiavelli situates *Clizia* within his own time. Indeed, recent political occurrences help first to form the background of the plot and secondly, through the course of *fortuna,* allow the central quandary between Nicomaco, his wife Sofronia and their son Cleandro to be satisfactorily resolved. The arrival of Clizia as a ward in Nicomaco's household is explained through the invasion of King Charles VIII of France in 1494. Cleandro tells of how a French gentleman, Bertram of Gascony, was accommodated in their house as part of the French advance into the Kingdom of Naples. Bertram, having become good friends with Nicomaco, later entrusted a girl named Clizia whom he had taken from Naples in order to keep her safe from battle during the French retreat:

> …e per uno suo servidore la mandó a mio padre, pregandolo che per suo amore dovessi tanto tenerla, che a più commodo tempo mandassi per lei. ("…and his servant sent her to my father, who begged for his love so much that he had to keep his daughter and provide a home for her" (Machiavelli, *The Comedies of Machiavelli,* 290-293).

By employing Florentine history in his translation of *Clizia*, Machiavelli sought to allow the audience to better empathise with the characters and events at play. Many of the audience would have had first hand experience of the French invasion. Unlike *Casina,* a specific time

and place is given for *Clizia* in which, according to Cleandro's speech, it is 1506 in Florence (Hale, 21). Therefore, Machiavelli would have set the play significantly closer to home for a Florentine audience. Through this he wanted to contemporise *Clizia* to a high degree while preserving the Plautine structure of character relations. This signifies Machiavelli's belief that the interaction of classical stock characters could translate successfully for a contemporary audience while the updated setting served to underline its relevance as both a comedic and didactic tool.

Andria and *Clizia* consistently juxtapose ideal family types with comically dysfunctional ones in order to underline the importance of *patria potestas* for the family (Kirshner, 86). Machiavelli contrasts the virtuous *paterfamilias* with its corrupted counterparts. Having transformed into a foolish *inamorato* through his infatuation with Clizia, Sofronia laments the man her husband used to be: "…soleva essere uno uomo grave, resoluto, respettivo. Dispensava il tempo suo onorevolmente" ("He used to be a serious, resolute, considerate man. He spent his time honourably" Machiavelli *The Comedies of Machiavelli*, 316). In this way, Machiavelli contrasts Nicomaco as a man of *virtù*— sufficiently self-disciplined for his role as *paterfamilias*—to an embarrassing and impulsive fool; a situation made even more humiliating due to Sofronia's disrespect towards him. In his *Discourses on Livy,* Machiavelli wrote that people were easily liable to corruption and could end up rejecting their duties regardless of education or social standing (113). As such, Machiavelli used the templates of Plautus and Terence to help express his warning of man's moral fragility. Just as in Plautus' *Casina,* which is set among ancient Roman families, *Clizia* centres on social-familial tensions between husband and wife, father and son, master and servant in Renaissance Florence. Terence similarly bases his comedy on the animosity generated by family members attempting to fulfil conflicting social duties (Goldberg, 216). In *Andria,* Panfilo is determined to keep his promise to raise his and Glicerio's child while

placating his father, Simo, over an arranged marriage with his neighbour's daughter, Filùmena, while secretly reassuring his friend Carino who in turn loves Filùmena. Comic devices such as these would have required an audience accustomed to everyday paternalism and subservience in order to appreciate the comedy. That is not to say that Nicomaco or Simo are historically accurate portrayals of Renaissance father figures. Rather, the audience would have appreciated the dramatic significance of a son disobeying a father's command or the irony of a manipulative servant. As a result, the comedic success of Machiavelli's *Clizia* and *Andria* depends on their audiences identifying implicit values on which the social-familial tension rests.

Obligations defined through commonly recognised gender roles drive these tensions forward. These obligations help to explain the competition between Machiavelli's characters. *Clizia* and *Andria* are therefore enlightening with regards to the gender norms of early sixteenth-century Florence. Gender roles reinforce the route people were expected to take so as to attain honour. Much of the plays' comedic value centers on a subversion of masculinity represented through *onore* within the family. Simo and Nicomaco are both father figures who are deceived and disobeyed for comic effect. Indeed, neither character is supposed to be taken seriously since Machiavelli trades in their honour to achieve comedic value. Simo is constantly deceived by others and even deceives himself on the issue of the birth of his grandson through his son's love affair. Nicomaco goes from temperate patriarch to impulsive *inamorato* and ultimately he commits to being a *paterfamilias* in name only: "Sofronia mia, fa' ciò che tu vuoi: io sono parato a non uscire fuora de' tua ordini, pure che la cosa non si risappia" ("Sofronia, my darling, do whatever you want. I am ready to anything you say, as long as nobody knows about this business" Machiavelli *The Comedies of Machiavelli,* 386). Both he and Sofronia are concerned that their peers remain ignorant of his humiliation at the hands of his own wife and servants. When the characters in *Clizia* are finally reunited, their

first priority is to protect the reputation of their family. As a result the resolution of the comedy comes at the expense of the individual, Nicomaco, but does not extend to his family. Here honour is a valuable "resource that [figures] in social transactions between people" and one that is imbued with individual *as well as* collective worth (Strocchia, 39-40). Both comedies reinforce this conception. In both *Andria* and *Clizia*, the families are each made to consider the social status of their prospective daughter-in-law. In *Andria,* it is only by the favour of fortune that Simo discovers that his son's love interest, Glicerio, is in fact of citizen status and so is permitted to marry Panfilo. Likewise, in *Clizia*, the family only allows Cleandro to marry Clizia when she is confirmed to be of noble blood. The reconciliation of both Clizia and Andria through their high status originates from Menander writing at the end of the fourth century BC during a crisis of Athenian citizenship (Wiles, 63). Menander wrote at a time in which the definition and eligibility criteria for Athenian citizenship were in flux as was similarly the case with Florentine citizenship in the sixteenth-century when family status was insecure. The plays emphasize the collective honour of the family unit as being of principle importance. These resolutions allow Machiavelli to maintain romantic relations between key characters while avoiding the social limitations imposed by social hierarchies. The fact that Machiavelli does not alter this literary device demonstrates the significance of family honour and status for marriage between families in the Renaissance.

Both of the plays are constructed from assumptions on gender typologies. The audience would have been expected to sufficiently identify the roles dictated by gender norms from their own experience. Nicomaco's humiliation is made worse by its sexual nature which underlines his subsequent emasculation. His sexual subjugation by a much younger man crudely denotes the loss of the *virtù* he requires for his role as *paterfamilias.* It also serves to break Nicomaco's illusion that he can play at the role of a younger man simply by taking an aphrodisiac potion or wearing an effete perfume. Machiavelli himself warns against

such frivolity and effeminacy (Machiavelli *The Prince,* 136). "Nature cannot allow […] that an old man play the role of the male which, in a fertility rite, is naturally reserved to youth" (Maria, 210). This should be understood within the context of Machiavelli's association of leadership and politics with masculine *virtù.* Sexual humiliation signposts the loss of Nicomaco's virility; something integral to his masculine identity. It allows the audience some amusement at the expense of his honour. But it also acts as a "negative example" of how men should behave (McPherson, 20). 'Nicomaco' may serve as an ironic reference to *Ethika Nikomacheia* or as an imitation of Niccolò Machiavelli. Indeed, not being above self-deprecation for comic effect, in 1509 he wrote to Luigi Guiccardini regarding his own humiliating encounter with a Veronese prostitute (Paterpan, 22). Having had sex with her in a darkened room as a result of his lust, he subsequently discovers her ugliness; so horrific that he vomits on her. Machiavelli consequently gives an insight into a masculinity defined by honour and paternalism.

Sofronia is the character who benefits the most from Nicomaco's humiliation. In the end her own status within the household is much enhanced, while publicly Nicomaco is to play at *paterfamilias* so as to create the pretense of normality. Sofronia employs tricks of manipulation to bring her husband back to his senses as a dutiful citizen. She therefore demonstrates Machiavellian *virtù.* The name 'Sofronia' from σωφροσύνη, transliterates to *Sophrosyne* and translates to moderation or self-control. Her character embodies this as she employs the cunning necessary to make her husband abandon his foolishness. Audiences would have recognised that Sofronia was "an active schemer, though on the side of conventional morality rather than corruption…" (Fenichel Pitkin, 119). Because of this a conjugal power struggle ensues. Nicomaco complains: "Sofronia, Sofronia, chi ti pose questo nome non sognava! Tu se' una soffiona, e se' piena di vento!" ("Sofronia, Sofronia, he who chose this name did not dream! You are an insufferable bag of wind!" Machiavelli, *The*

Comedies of Machiavelli, 315). The social conflict is again framed by gender roles which the audience would have understood in terms of gendered definitions of duty. The ideal of marriage outlined in Alberti's *I Libri della famiglia* was a sacred tie of friendship and intimacy, albeit with the man in charge (King, 35-36). As an outspoken and willful woman, Sofronia was intended as a laughable character, yet one whom "the audience could sympathise with … because her trick was played in a good cause" (Andrews, 57). Considering that Machiavelli maintained the tradition of removing key female characters such as Clizia and Andria altogether from the dialogue, Sofronia is in contrast a portrayal of a deviant in her capacity as an unsubordinated wife.

According to Robert Faulkner, while '[a]musement is the bait; underneath are useful lessons' (35). Faulkner argues that the value of Machiavelli's *Clizia* derives from its enlightenment of a Renaissance private life in which the "household as alliance" is presented in contrast to the "pretensions of fathers and masters and the dutifulness of mothers and servants" (46). However, Machiavelli's presentation of Renaissance society extends beyond the dynamics of family life. *Clizia* and *Andria* employ private settings in order to discuss the *virtù* necessary in the public sphere. The comedies enable Machiavelli's conception of *virtù* to be performed in a primarily domestic setting that an audience could more readily relate to. Principles of duty, obedience and astuteness, which are discussed within *Il Principe* and *Discorsi,* are played out in his comedies using traditionally comic scenarios.

By giving a glimpse into Renaissance family life, Machiavelli constructs an image of the Florentine citizen in practice, with all his imperfections laid bare. *Andria* shows a father's conflict with a son whose love for a woman of unacceptable social status leads him to disobey. Simo, suspecting that his son, Panfilo, is infatuated with a young woman of uncertain social status, commands that he marry his neighbour's daughter so as to test his

obedience. To avoid having to do so, Panfilo colludes with his family's slave, Davo, to outwit his father. The struggle embodied is a dilemma between social duty and romantic love. Regarding Panfilo, Machiavelli wrote *in tutte si travagliava mediocremente* ("in all things he strove for moderation"). As in Machiavelli's political works, considerable discussion is given on the relationship between the 'common good' and individual ambitions. Quentin Skinner states "[it] is Machiavelli's contention that to act in this way is invariably fatal to the cause of civic freedom and greatness" (138). Machiavelli urged the need for a strong republican ethos in the service of a professional state, using military activities, e.g. parades, training etc., to encourage the stoic attitude essential for *virtù civica* (Mallett, 174). Such a political model depended on militaristic obedience towards one's superiors. In *Andria* and *Clizia,* Machiavelli demonstrates the practical obstacles in the way of achieving this. His portrayals of social relations are in large part a warning against indiscipline directed towards his Florentine contemporaries. In *Andria,* Panfilo acknowledges his duties as a man, stating to his father: "Tu medesimo, o padre, hai posto fine a queste cose: e' si appressa il tempo che io arò a vivere a modo d'altri; lasciami in questo mezzo vivere a mio modo" ("You, father, have put an end to such youthful things; and the time approaches that I must live in the way of others; let me live in this way" Machiavelli *The Comedies of Machiavelli,* 50). The sons in both comedies come to terms with the responsibility that full citizenship entailed. Likewise, *Clizia'*s Cleandro is distressed over the impropriety of his love for Clizia:

> Io ho tenute occulte queste mie passioni infino ad ora per coteste cagioni, per non essere fuggito come fastidioso o uccellato come ridiculo […] la Fortuna m'ha condotto in lato, che mi pare avere pochi rimedii. ("Until now I have kept the causes of my passions hidden so as not to be seen as annoying or to have been ridiculed… lady fortune has led me to this for which I can see no remedies" Machiavelli *The Comedies of Machiavelli,* 288).

Both Cleandro and Panfilo therefore represent the citizen in the making, reluctantly preparing themselves for their own paternalistic duties. This is corroborated by his belief that people should adapt their character depending on the circumstances in order to succeed (Ryan, 380). In this way, he wrote his comedies with the interests of the *res publica* in mind.

Clizia and *Andria* therefore tell us about Machiavelli's beliefs regarding the ideal citizen. Machiavelli understood an important aspect of this to be about people's personal natures. In fact most of his political writings are concerned with the character of individuals tested by the unpredictability of *fortuna*. Often they are figures referenced from antiquity, as is particularly the case in his *Discorsi*. The acutely interpersonal focus and subject matter of his discourses hold too many themes in common to simply be a coincidence. Machiavelli consistently deducts from individual qualities to matters of statecraft and vice versa. For instance, the Romans showed *umiltà* towards the Latins; all men are easily corruptible as was proved by Appius and Quintus Fabius who ended up supporting tyranny; people who gain liberty but who are corrupt struggle to remain free (Machiavelli, *Discourses)*. Machiavelli is using a humanist device of referring to *exempla* in antiquity so that he might teach practical advice to contemporaries. This mirrors the lessons that he aimed to teach through comedy.

Clizia and *Andria* tell us about various aspects of Renaissance life through the lens of Machiavelli's literary and pedagogical preference for humanism. The plays are useful because they contain implicit values about family and gender, as well as citizenship. The comedies' primarily domestic settings offer depictions of dysfunctional family lives where the characters provide lessons for personal conduct in the civic sphere. This is because at the heart of the plays is a discourse centering on civic *virtù,* which Machiavelli believed to be relevant to Florence in his own time.

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Isabelle Milton

"It was as if he had put on the quality of maleness like a flamboyant cloak" (Angela Carter 45). **An examination of the notion of gender as performance in** *The Magic Toyshop* **and** *Howl.*

Both Angela Carter and Allen Ginsberg use revolutionary techniques of writing, narration and characterisation in order to challenge and subvert the themes of gender within *The Magic Toyshop* and *Howl.* Both texts portray gender (and in some places, sexuality) as a conscious, performative action subject to influence and change rather than a permanent or physical state, and both texts are a reflection of and a reaction against the society in which they were written. This questions both the attribution of labels to ourselves as individuals and the effects of the aesthetic and behavioural gender stereotypes put in place onto the individual by society. The idea of gender as a performance as opposed as something tied to a natural, biological state of being (such as some definitions of sex), highlights both the act we are required to put on show in order to appear sufficiently "masculine" or "feminine" and the idea that gender is not a strict category, but rather a protean concept, capable of flux and change according to the individual and their experiences. Although this paper argues for the possibility of the individual to constitute their own 'true' identity separate from external agents, it draws influence from Butler's exploration of the possibilities of cultural transformation (521) when gender and sexuality are treated as concepts that are not determined by nature (531). Both *Howl* and *The Magic Toyshop* reveal themselves to be fascinating examinations of gender. The visceral realities of individual experience reveal the revolutionary potential and issues of gender regarding its performativity, the primary conflict being between the 'true' self and societal influence, and whether the latter has such an effect on the former that there can be, in fact, no true self.

Angela Carter's 1967 novel *The Magic Toyshop* is a coming-of-age tale which examines the work of male oppression and the mother figure, or lack of one, in their effects on one family, in particular the teenage protagonist Melanie. In her endeavour to scrutinize and reassemble the established dynamics of gender within a novel, Carter uses a number of diverse characters which exhibit the traits and effects of gender roles and stereotypes, and the revolutionary efforts of the individual against the trappings of society. Allen Ginsberg's *Howl*, meanwhile, is an epic poem that depicts the struggles of "the best minds of [his] generation" (1): poets, artists, political radicals, jazz musicians, drug addicts, and psychiatric patients whom he encountered throughout the 1940s and 50s. Throughout the poem, Ginsberg explores many aspects of the gender identity struggle, primarily that of homosexuals. The individuals within the poem particularly appear to reflect a struggle of closet homosexuality and seek escapism in drugs and illicit sexual activity. The language is candid and graphic as the poet describes the harsh underworld that he was forced to occupy by society. So graphic, in fact, that the first public reading of his poem earned him an obscenity charge for his troubles (Morgan and Peters, 3). It is easy to see why: the poet's visceral, explicit portrayal, which arguably tapped into the poet's personal experience by providing an uncomfortable insight into the struggles of homosexual individuals in a society which demonised them. Certain American readers were unused to the brutal honesty that exposed a hidden homosexual world, which could explain the extreme reaction of the authorities.

Both Carter and Ginsberg throughout their texts stress that it is not the wishes of the wider society, from stereotypes to the expectations of family, which should define one's gender and sexuality but one's own personalities and innermost feelings, a revolutionary concept which challenges many social and biological explanations of gender. However, gender identity is nevertheless subject to external influences, including popular culture and religion, and these effects, both beneficial and detrimental, are also explored in the texts.

Both texts appear as a reflection of and a reaction against the times in which they were written. Judith Butler's theory of performativity engages with a similar notion that gender exists because of specific "acts" (519), or constructions, rather than being innate. In her essay 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution', Butler critiques the concept of the human body and how it is subject to the confines of its gendered appearance (523), and the way in which one is thus treated according to this appearance. She also challenges the long-held beliefs regarding sexuality, arguing that heterosexuality being deemed 'natural' (Butler, 524) is merely a conjugation of social conventions in the services of producing offspring, and that sexual taboos are in place just to channel all sexuality into the ideal of straight marriage. This is key to understanding the construction of gender in the texts; as individuals, the characters are fighting against the acts that they have to perform in an attempt to individually. Butler's notion of a societal determinism to make one act or be constructed is a force to be fought against. However, these texts embody the belief that the individual can constitute themselves from within their personality and inner thoughts, making them, essentially, meditations upon the opposing viewpoints of the inner individual and external society.

The iconography of gender is a recurring occupation for both writers, used to illustrate contemporary ideas regarding gender and how these have influenced them and the individuals within the texts. In *The Magic Toyshop,* the central character Melanie is first portrayed, in the continued absence of a mother figure, as building and developing her adolescent ideas of appearance and femininity around images from Renaissance, Romantic and Modern art: "she was too thin for a Titian or a Renoir but she contrived a pale, smug Cranach Venus" (Carter, 2). The works of Rossetti and Lautrec provide her with reference points when discovering her own body. Thus, in line with Butler's opinion on the gender of the body existing as a theatrical 'act' (519), Melanie's own opinions of her gender are entirely dependent on the

existing conceptions of male artists, giving her very little space to decide for herself what is feminine or beautiful, or not.

The opening of the novel further illustrates this passive construction of the individual when the heroine ventures dangerously far into the summer night, wearing her mother's wedding dress after admiring its fragile virtue. Symbolically subjecting herself to the trappings of domestic womanhood, Melanie unwittingly fulfils this prophecy by destroying the dress by climbing a tree in a sudden panic. Her apparent entry into womanhood is taken as a usurpation of her own mother, who dies immediately after in a tragic plane accident along with Melanie's father: "'It is my fault because I wore her dress'" (Carter, 24). Therefore, Carter appears to be not only reiterating the problems which arise from imitating existing gender icons, which can only result in the development of a hollow, stereotypical identity, but also the dangers of wanting to grow up too fast. In her attempt to imagine her future as a woman Melanie is suddenly and brutally thrown into the motherly role for her younger siblings and must spend the rest of the novel endeavouring to free herself from it as an individual.

In a similar way, Allen Ginsberg uses *Howl* to preach against gender performance as he saw it: the archaic and traditionalist images of masculinity which he and his peers were required to conform to, a revolutionary concept which was echoed by his fellow beat writers, such as Jack Kerouac and William S. Burroughs. His subversion of the dominant poetic and literary norms was not reached either quickly or easily. The visionary perspective of the poem had apparently already been revealed to Ginsberg in a series of hallucinations he had experienced over a series of days in a Harlem apartment in 1948 (Raskin, 166). The false starts, intermittent flashes of the poet's innate sharp perception, and increasing self-awareness were a part of his ongoing difficulty in accepting and embracing these visions, and the insanity that they implied, and to find a new, all-encompassing literary form and language

that would sufficiently capture their heady strength. In his creative and often brutal use of language, Ginsberg attempts to break down the confines of traditional poetry and develop his own new genre of expression, thus developing his own individual ideas of gender as well.

One of the most striking examples of this is in the poet's use of profanity directly alongside elevated, even formal language. With language designed to shock, such as "a vision / of ultimate cunt and come eluding the last gyzym / of consciousness," (Ginsberg, lines 116-118), *Howl* conjoins the spiritual and the corporeal, the language of the streets and the underground with that of education and illumination. Furthermore, these elements are not connected in an inert, arbitrary fusion, but in a revolutionary movement which subjects the reader to a sudden and demanding immersion in the sordid contemporary realities of the harsh world in which Ginsberg found so much pain and inspiration.

Butler deconstructs social conventions as a set of repeated, ritualised performances and Ginsberg, in accordance with this, remains consistently uneasy about life in the body. He even goes so far as to frequently represent the pressures of manhood and masculinity as causing more pain - "purgatoried their torsos" (line 23) - than they do pleasure. In this way, he is evidently pained into inspiration but trapped, as Butler recognises, within the constant cycle of re-enactment and legitimation. Ginsberg's language makes the gaping holes in society incarnate: the space between the darkness of the basement and the light of heaven, between his tortured friends and the elite of society, gaps both literal and visionary, then makes connections between them, using "images juxtaposed" (line 175). Both Carter and Ginsberg, through their use of imagery and language, challenge the gender and sexual stereotypes that we are presented with every day, and in doing so raise many questions, primarily those of nature versus nurture, whether we are born as a certain gender or shaped to be that way. This to an extent agrees with Butler's central argument that there is no natural basis to gender, but as these texts consider in such detail the personality and feelings of the

individual it becomes harder to deny that there is not, in fact, an inner gender different for everyone which cannot be defined by external stereotypes. In their effort to convince us towards the latter, the writers must sometimes use brutal techniques, perhaps in an attempt to shock the reader from their stupor and allow them to redefine their views of gender.

The opinion of Ginsberg and his contemporaries is that of unrest: discontent with America's morals and disdain for their lifestyles, and rebelliousness towards the current status quo. As was illustrated earlier, Ginsberg's new form of poetry would need to strike a stark contrast between his new poetic form and the old form, and the overt sexual imagery was in direct opposition to prevalent American moral principles. Fears of legal action and threats from authorities caused many radio stations and publishing houses to deny *Howl* any exposure in print or in performance (Morgan and Peters, 3). However, language was not the only element of his poetry which caused *Howl* to be condemned - it was also Ginsberg's portrayal of homosexuals.

Sympathetic, brutal and first-hand, the poem brings to light the damning effect of the gender performance upon those required to cover up the most. From the first line, *Howl* instantly and assertively questions society's deeply-ingrained prejudices as well as asserting its own right to exist as a work of art and social commentary. This assertion champions people from the downtrodden urban counter-cultures and their right to exist as respected members of society. *Howl* is a portrayal of the dilemma faced by homosexuals in mid-twentieth century America: succumb to others ideals of masculinity and be miserable, rebel and be an outcast.

While its strong argument makes *Howl* a powerful but male-centric work, Carter's novel addresses the complex position of women in relation to gender in the text's contemporary society, both formally and thematically. In her portrayal of Melanie's treatment by her tyrannical, faceless uncle, Carter explores a dilemma of women's empowerment

experienced by feminist movements of the 1960s and onwards. Expected, and indeed ordered to be passive and weak, the female protagonist is constantly forced into the traditional, gendered roles of love interest, wife and mother. In short, she becomes the mistress and never the master. If she does indeed attempt to gain power for herself, she endangers her femininity, beauty and desirability. Butler explains this further, recognising that male-centred views and traditions are taken as gospel (530), and any deviation from the norm, that is, the category of women is considered unnatural, unfeminine and dangerous. When looked at in the light of this, these double standards of gender identity necessitate a performance in the same way that Ginsberg and his contemporaries were required to conceal and fake. This dictates that the woman must hide her intentions or face derision and anger from men, being labelled as a witch or temptress. The feminine 'power' must be gained from sexual manipulation of men, dreams, hallucinations or suicide, not in rational logic, education or politics. The stigma placed on female independence even at a time in which the women's movement was gaining strength means Melanie is trapped and dependent on those who abuse her. Rather than a conscious decision, the gender performance is necessary as a survival mechanism in the oppressive household in which she finds herself. If we are to consider Butler at this point, it is important to note that she focuses on the detriments of conforming upon the individual, while Carter conversely argues for the preservation of the individual by, ironically, conforming. Butler would debate that there is no 'true' Melanie behind Uncle Philip's construction, while Carter's work suggests that there is, but to demonstrate so would be dangerous for the protagonist.

The idea of gender as a performance, rather than a rigid category, draws our attention to its potential fluid nature, how it can change and adapt according to the individual rather than existing as a fixed state of being. The characters of *The Magic Toyshop* exhibit different traits that are typically conceived as male or female, subverting both the reader's existing

preconceptions of gender roles and their own roles within the family. Paulina Palmer recognised this in her essay on gender in Carter's novels: "the representation of femininity in Carter's fiction reflects two contrary approaches. One we might call 'femininity as entrapment', the other 'femininity as self-invention and role mobilization'" (31). This theory can help to illuminate the treatment of the women in Carter's novel. Melanie and her Aunt Margaret serve as different concepts of female and femininity, with the former beginning the novel as girlish and sexualised, and the latter extremely passive and submissive. Both of them are "planets round a male sun" (Carter, 140) and yet both are ultimately liberated in different ways. While Butler speaks of a constructive performativity which we must adhere to, it is clear that, ultimately, there is an individual behind it all. The fact that the women are different shows that the way people navigate themselves is individual, that they can have a self-navigation, both through using the performance that society has forced on them and in their rejection of it.

Melanie, in particular, is forced into the harsh reality of womanhood and sexuality by the death of her parents, which drives her into the possessive, manipulative jaws of Uncle Philip and the lustful eye of her cousin Finn. Accordingly, Carter illustrates this through the alteration of Melanie's distinctive inner voice. From the opening passages of dreamy introspection, full of fanciful childish imaginings: "she had been a chorus girl or a model" (Carter, 1), and predictable teenage worries: "Oh, how awful if I don't get married" (6), Melanie's world abruptly simplifies to the perils of the here and now, with further narration almost entirely preoccupied with her sinister new family and surroundings. Thus, Melanie is both literally and metaphorically torn from her childhood home and behaviour into a much more adult, predatory environment. Her gender is suddenly defined and categorised without her consent, and does not reflect her individual identity. The definition forced upon the individual is something Butler could identify as a result of "the prevalence of sexual

difference as an operative cultural distinction" (531), or patriarchal society's attempt to conflate gender with biological determinism. This quotation also clarifies Carter's treatment of Aunt Margaret, who, mute since her wedding day and seemingly entirely under her husband's control. Described as "a wispy appendage of the toymaking uncle" (Carter, 37), she is defined by the men in her life.

The problems of male oppression and the difficulties of masculine roles are also explored in *Howl* and *The Magic Toyshop*. It is important to note that the oppression of Uncle Philip affects the male characters as much as it does the women. Margaret's brothers Francie and Finn both experience threats to and manipulations of their masculinity. Francie is threatened because of his incestuous relationship with his sister. Fin is forced into the role of the male aggressor as Philip orders him to seduce and eventually deflower Melanie. While the performative element of gender in *The Magic Toyshop* allows gender to be manipulated by external forces, Ginsberg is more concerned with how the men of *Howl* deal with the inner influences which affect their gender identity. Robert K. Martin decides that the poem is "an affirmation of the homosexual's alienation from the 'straight' world and a desire to become an object of love rather than a participant in it" (165). This could go some way to explaining the omnipresent drug use within the poem. Not only is this an attempt to escape from the troubles of life, but also an attempt to elevate the American from their own body and thus from the trappings of masculine or feminine, homosexual or straight, and to realise that equality regardless of gender and sexual identity is far closer than society would allow it to appear.

A dissection of the word "performance" reveals many facets of gender within the texts. Butler postulates that "In the theatre, one can say, 'this is just an act,' and de-realize the act, make acting into something quite distinct from what is real" (527). This blurs the lines between the performance and life. Not only does this imply that gender, for those within *The*

Magic Toyshop and *Howl*, is extremely dependent upon outward opinion and approval, but, as a theme, it reveals that gender has no inner meaning past an initial surface impression, and has the potential to be different in public and in private, and for different audiences. This also highlights the superficiality of gender as we are familiar with it: false, scripted and shaped by others, just as a play can only represent a fraction of the human experience of real life, so too do the labels 'male' or 'female' barely cover the diversity of the individual, their personality and their sexuality.

One notable characteristic of the Beat Generation artists was the prominence given to verbalisation, on the poem as a performance rather than a piece for paper, the belief that the text could live on its own, independent of a reader or book. Accordingly, *Howl* uses relentless repetition, primarily the refrain of "I'm with you in Rockland" (Ginsberg, 111) almost as a chorus, with oxymorons such as "angelic bombs" (111) hiding the meaning of familiar worlds in the same way that those Ginsberg knew had to conceal their sexuality. Interestingly, however, although Ginsberg would initially appear to be exclusively concerned with 'the best minds of [his] generation' (line 1), the poem gradually expands to include more expansive pronouns such as "we" (line 99). This allows the poem's brutal message and content to deeply affect the reader; the content designed to shock away any initial prejudices we may have had to affect our honest opinion. While the poem is in itself a performance, it sufficiently removes any act the reader may be carrying out, thus eliminating the necessity of gender performance, which allows it to subsequently reject the performance of society.

The most notable element of performance in *The Magic Toyshop* is Uncle Philip's play; a gaudily sinister, quasi-sexual affair with pretensions of grand melodrama, seemingly designed to simultaneously intimidate Melanie, its reluctant star, and the rest of the family. Supposedly re-enacting the rape of Leda by the Greek god Zeus, Melanie becomes her uncle's puppet both literally, acting among his wooden creations - "he wants you to be in his

next show" (Carter, 138) - and figuratively, being forced to wear the clothes which he has chosen for her. The fact that Carter amplifies the threat of the play by manifesting scenes into the real life of the novel, such as Finn's attempted seduction of Melanie, is indicative of her views of gender performance. Uncle Philip's attempt to shoehorn his family into the roles which he creates for them only ends in death and destruction, in this case his own death and the burning of his house and shop. The play, which uses mostly puppets in place of human actors, shows how the artificiality of gender has the potential to make puppets out of people, which, however lifelike they may appear, can never match the detail of the real thing.

It is at this point where Butler's theory loses its grasp. While she argues that the entirety of gender and sex are a construction of society and preordained stereotypes, Carter here demonstrates that there is a real self behind the construction (although this isn't necessarily a 'natural' self). Uncle Philip's play is not merely a play; it is a thinly-veiled extension of his frustrated and violent masculine energy, his manipulations of his family, and his obsession with simultaneously repressing and controlling Melanie's sexuality. In a similar way, the pain and anguish Ginsberg describes in *Howl* comes not from the gender performance itself, but from the real individual who is crushed beneath it. Butler fails to recognise the ultimate problem of the gender performance: not that it completely dictates who a person is, but that a person's true self is constantly buried beneath the pressures of social convention and gender norms.

Gender as a performance is evidently one of the defining themes of *The Magic Toyshop* and *Howl*. Both Carter and Ginsberg recognise that the complexities of human identity and sexuality cannot be sufficiently covered by the labels 'feminine' or 'masculine', 'straight' or 'homosexual', and thus go to great creative lengths in order to examine the many forms that gender can take. Judith Butler argues that gender is performative, and that it should accordingly be treated as such is an important step towards understanding both writers

and both texts. *Howl* is a fierce and compelling poem, which recognises the anguish and pain, both physical and mental, which results from the pressures upon gay men to appear correctly masculine and heterosexual, with the fear of social alienation a constant threat. Ginsberg's strong language and gritty imagery, though initially deemed too offensive for public consumption, is in fact a way of using the written word to express feelings which cannot be otherwise accurately conveyed. In a similar way, Angela Carter uses her characters to illustrate the many different forms gender, and in particular the female aspect, can take, and how these forms can be manipulated and eventually surpassed entirely. Butler denies the existence of a true self, but it is evident in the very personal essence of each text. I think that it is here that the changeable nature of gender can be accurately identified. In their refusal to present anybody or anything within their texts as typically permanently male or female, Carter and Ginsberg create works which transcend the trappings of a male- or female-oriented story, and thus give the reader an entirely new perspective, free from existing societal opinions and prejudices.

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