ON SERVITUDE AND DIVISION OF LABOR IN PAKISTAN AND AMERICA

JIA AHMAD

Every year that we intend to spend the summer in Pakistan, my mother spends at least two months beforehand assembling gifts for the multitude of people we know there. She buys chocolates and sneakers for my cousins, perfumes and wristwatches for my uncles, purses for her college friends, sweaters for my grandparents, and often a pair of shoes for Yunis Chacha. "Chacha" means uncle, but while Yunis knows my face and age and predilection for tandoori naan, I don't call him "uncle" because he's related to me by blood: Yunis Chacha is my grandparents' oldest servant.

At first glance, servitude in Pakistan and America seem vastly different, and not only because Pakistani family members are so familiar with their employees. Almost every practice, from hiring servants to asking them to serve dinner, differs in these two countries. Yet I feel the same guilt tiptoeing around the workers from the cleaning service my parents hire in suburban Pittsburgh as I do asking Yunis Chacha to make me tea. Why is this so? Barbara Ehrenreich, author of "Maid to Order," might be able to help explain my moral distress. For this article in *Harper's*, she spent several months working as a maid for a corporate cleaning service in Maine. Through an exploration of class, gender, subjugation and personal moral development, Ehrenreich raises this question: "As the home becomes a workplace for someone else"—in Pakistan or America—"is it still a place where you want to live?" (62).

The middle-class Pakistani household is distinct from its American counterpart in many ways. In my grandparents' home, for example, three employees are almost always present: a watchman for the gate, a cook, and another catch-all employee (he's the one sent out for quick errands or the one who sets the table for tea). A woman comes by every day to do the laundry and clean; the gardener comes by every second or third day. My parents' house, situated in a comfortable Pittsburgh suburb, is miles away from Pakistan not only geographically but also atmospherically. Though my parents are objectively better off than the preceding generation, they cook their own food and make their own beds. They do, however, hire a landscaping service and a cleaning service—practices that are becoming increasingly popular amongst upper-middle-class professionals (Ehrenreich 62).

It's true that my family benefits from these workers, but isn't it true that I benefit from the work of others every single day? I do not weave and stitch my own clothes—nor do I grow or cook much of the food I eat. As Ehrenreich puts it, "Why should housework, among all the goods and services we consume, arouse any special angst?" (69). She provides the answer to her own question—housework is different from other products and services "because of its proximity to the activities that compose 'private'

life" (69). Furthermore, she claims that having maids in the house can damage one's moral character. According to Ehrenreich, having maids teaches children to valorize their own personal worth and time more than that of others (i.e., their parents' employees). Because children with maids never have to clean up after themselves, they don't learn responsibility and therefore "achieve a certain magical weightlessness and immateriality" (70).

This is the weakest aspect of Ehrenreich's argument: unlike the rest of her article, in which she bolsters her arguments with empirical observations based on personal experience or statistical data, here she makes a generalized, value-laden statement about a large number of people without citing any sources. True, some children who grow up in homes with maids might become lazy and inconsiderate individuals, but is that always the case? I have not found it to be so. Personally, I am morally troubled by hiring others in my home, but not because I don't always pick up my own socks. Some of my friends here in college have grown up with maids as well, but they don't expect fairies to come down and dust their tables—they do it themselves. Hiring maids simply cannot be morally troubling because of the nature or location of the work in question, so something else must be at play.

In Pakistan, there is no shame in employing servants: virtually all middle-class and upper-class households have them. Having not grown up constantly in Pakistani society, when I return, I invariably feel guilty asking Yunis Chacha to make me tea or bring dinner to my room—requests my relatives insist are nothing out of the ordinary. Yet no matter how many times my aunt patiently explains that we're actually doing his family a service by hiring him, I cannot come to terms with it. It is true that the economy in Pakistan is not as stable or as successful as that of America's. Because of the lack of a good public education system, poor individuals, especially in rural areas, are unable to accrue skills that would enable them to attain middle-class jobs in the future. They then rely on the middle and upper classes for employment. Therefore, being a servant in a home is an important niche in the lower-class job spectrum. If servitude is such a vital part of the economy and way of life, why should I be disgusted with myself when, possessing two healthy legs and knowledge of the house's layout, I wish to ask Yunis Chacha to get me tea?

Bruce Robbins, author of "The Sweatshop Sublime," helps me to better understand my aunt's position, but he also broadens my dilemma:

> [D]isgust with dependence on the work of other people in the home risks passing over into disgust with the dependence on the work of other people in general—a disgust with being a part of a highly elaborate division of labor. Yet learning to be a part of that division is a precondition for almost any progressive politics, nationally and internationally. (92)

It makes sense: middle- and upper-class households in Pakistan, by hiring lower-class servants, provide those individuals with jobs. This interdependence is characteristic of our international system—as American consumers, we rely on Chinese laborers to produce clothes and Mexican immigrants to pick vegetables. It is unrealistic for us to expect to function without dependence on services, without dependence on the labor of other people. What difference does it make if workers are sweating away in a field hundreds of miles away or if they're in the sweatshops that we call home?

It does make a difference. In his essay, Robbins recounts Kant's definition of the sublime, in which there is a "feeling of the inadequacy of the imagination for presenting the ideas of a whole, wherein the imagination reaches its maximum, and, in striving to surpass it, sinks back into itself, by which, however, a kind of emotional satisfaction is produced" (85). Robbins applies this idea within the modern context of globalization and sweatshops. In short, there are times in which comfortable, upper-middle-class individuals feel momentarily guilty about Chinese sweatshop laborers who've toiled over their clothing for little to no pay, but this feeling quickly passes. Upper-middle-class individuals are satisfied to have at least briefly contemplated the problem, but as they do not interrupt the routine of their daily lives in an attempt to solve it, it has no lasting effect. This sensation is more difficult to produce when the sweatshop is one's own home: lacking the luxury of having their laborers separated from them by languages or miles, homeowners hiring maids or employing servants must face the laborers working for them every single day.

What, then, is the problem? If division of labor is an acceptable part of life, then why should an employer feel guilty about bringing workers into her home? In "Maid to Order," Ehrenreich nails the answer: "Housework was not degrading because it was manual labor . . . but because it was embedded in degrading relationships and inevitably served to reinforce them" (61). She is speaking within a feminist context, but gender relations are not the only hierarchies reinforced through household labor. Just as women have been professionally restricted because of their obligation to the bathroom floor and the kitchen table, certain families in Pakistan have been generationally disadvantaged because of their roles as household servants.

The Pakistani public education system is absolutely dismal: it yields no opportunities for the already disadvantaged to improve their station. Graduate and professional schools are only realistic ambitions for children whose parents have attended those types of schools. Yunis Chacha's daughter Aliya is an excellent illustration of this point: Yunis has been employed in my grandparents' home for over forty years, and his daughter, when she was of an able age to work, joined him at his workplace. Whereas he would cook dinner and brew tea, she would make beds and wash clothes. Aliya stopped going to school at the age of thirteen to help her parents bring in an income; her children will likely stop going to school at the same age, and for the same reason. My mother and her siblings, on the other hand, who grew up at

the same time as Aliya, all went to private schools, completed graduate school, and went on to lead comparatively affluent and comfortable lives.

The guilt I feel when I ask Yunis Chacha to bring me tea is not so much my disgust with division of labor as a whole. It is much more complicated than that. It is my recognition that his role as a worker in my house is representative of our respective roles in Pakistani society, which reflects not only our socioeconomic statuses, but also those of our children and grandchildren. In Pakistan, both wealth and poverty are maintained throughout generations because the barriers to social mobility are staggeringly high. The guilt is recognition of precisely this: Yunis Chacha probably never chose his line of work, and he and his successive generations are stuck in a rut of servitude, whereas I, daughter of professionals and student at a renowned university, have myriad opportunities available to me, ripe for the picking. The problem is not that there is servitude; it is that I will never have to be a servant. I do not feel guilty because I go to an Ivy League school, but because Aliya will never be able to.

Is American society really so different from the one half a world away? I would argue—and Ehrenreich might agree—that social mobility in these two countries is more similar than it seems at first glance. Whereas housework in Pakistan is emblematic of generational poverty, in America housework is representative of the subjugation of women and minorities. Ehrenreich claims that "the association between housecleaning and minority status is well established in the psyches of the white employing class" (63). This is not without any basis in reality: "One thing you can say with certainty about the population of household workers," Ehrenreich claims, "is that they are disproportionately women of color: 'lower' kinds of people for a 'lower' kind of work. Of the 'private household cleaners and servants' it managed to locate in 1998, the Bureau of Labor statistics reports that 36.8 percent were Hispanic, 15.8 percent black, and 2.7 percent 'other'" (63). Furthermore, studies conducted by *The New York Times* for the recent series "Class Matters" concluded that social mobility in America is not quite as attainable as it seems. Data from the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s show that people are increasingly remaining in their socioeconomic class: while in the 1970s, 35 percent of people stayed in their class, in the 1990s 40 percent did (Leonhardt). Additionally, whereas 27 percent of families were able to move up or down two quintiles in the 1970s, only 21 percent were able to do so in the 1990s (Leonhardt). People in America are becoming less able, on average, to change their socioeconomic class. Since in America race and class often come paired, this means not only that the country experiences generational poverty to an extent that we do not realize, it also means that generational poverty is occurring in a disproportionately high number of minority families.

Robbins has a point: division of labor is necessary, inside and outside the home, and it is not useful to decry the fact that people outsource the loathsome task of wiping the toilet seat simply because wiping the toilet seat is in and of itself distasteful. It is

simply the case that the world is interdependent and that within this complex system of divided labor there are tasks less desirable than others. It is not so much a problem that division of labor exists and that within it there is a hierarchy. There is a problem in that division of labor *maintains* a certain hierarchy. This is the point Ehrenreich recognizes, and addresses well: housework has become symbolic of historic exploitation of gender, class, and race. In both Pakistan and America, housework is simply the obvious example of a much greater problem. The solution would be to make social mobility a more feasible reality, especially for the historically disadvantaged. That task is an enormous one, however: too great for the confines of these pages. Hopefully, by furthering discourse on these important topics, we can come to a greater understanding of them and enable ourselves to address them in the future.

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NATION-LESS: THE UNNATURALNESS OF NATIONALISM AS SHOWN BY THIRD-CULTURE KIDS

MARIA LAURE TORRE GOMEZ

For a twenty-three-year-old, Erika has had a life comparable to that of an eighty-year-old. She has danced to Ecuadorian flutes in fiestas, gone sailing in Singapore, and spent vacations visiting the Malaysian rain forest and Karen tribes in New Zealand. Yet for all the cultural knowledge Erika has gained by growing up in countries far away from her native New York, she lacks something few go through life without: a feeling of home. Erika was one of the young adults interviewed by David Pollock, a social anthropologist who studies third-culture kids, children who "have spent . . . at least part of their childhood in countries and cultures other than their own" (6). Erika has no single nationality but rather a "third nationalism"—she feels no real attachment to her birth nation, the United States, but has no legal ties to the country that captured her heart, Singapore. National attachment is the focus of Benedict Anderson's book, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, in which he states that "nationalism, [a] cultural artifa[ct]"(4), arises from citizens' common history and shared cultural markers, such as language, appearance, and ethnicity. For Erika, however, these represent the mechanisms that prevented her from establishing a connection with any country, leaving her displaced and nation-less.

Whereas language can foster feelings of connection among citizens of a nation, in the case of third-culture kids such as Erika, language often prevents nationalist feelings from arising. Erika explains how language alienated her from her birth country, relating "how strange she had felt the first time her American cousins had asked her to go 'cruising'" during her vacation-stay in her native New York. "She presumed they [had] meant some type of boat ride. . . . [T]o her amazement, cruising . . . meant endless driving about town with no apparent purpose" (Pollock 11-12). Her inability to understand what her cousins had meant by "cruising" caused Erika to feel distance from her home country. As a result, Erika disassociated the United States, stating that "for her, 'going home' meant returning to Singapore at the end of summer" (Pollock 12). Erika thereby challenges Anderson's argument that language is responsible for creating "horizontal comradeship," (7) and that "the nation was conceived in language, not in blood" (145). In fact, it is language that distanced Erika from the citizens of her "imagined political community," (6) breaking the connections she had to the country rather than forging them.

Just as language can serve to exclude, so can appearance. After living most of her teenage years in Singapore, Erika had come to think of this country as her home, introducing herself to peers at her American university as being from there. Yet she was distressed when they replied, "Really? You don't look like it" (Pollock 12). She

didn't fit in with her American counterparts either, due to her foreign fashions, expressions, and gestures. It was not until she adjusted by taking on more American clothes and tastes that "others accepted her as one of them" (Pollock 12). Thus it seems that outward appearance is important in the determination of one's nationality. However, even after Erika changed her clothing style enough for her peers to invite her into their community, she did not fully fit in. Erika continued to feel that Americans "couldn't understand her world . . . [and that] she couldn't understand theirs" (Pollock 13). While being outwardly recognized as American due to her Caucasian features and clothing, on the inside Erika didn't feel American at all.

More telling than clothing, gestures, or accents, are skin color and racial features. While Erika associated herself with Singapore, upon a trip back to the country after college, Erika found out that she did not belong there either. Erika was distressed to find that as a young white woman she stood out from other Singaporeans. She came to the realization that "here, in the world she had always thought of as home . . . she was seen as a foreigner" (Pollock 16). Anderson posits that one's ethnicity plays a big role in the formation of ties to fellow citizens. He gives the example of Javanese villagers, who "have always known that they are connected to people they have never seen," aware that they have "indefinitely stretchable nets of kinship and clientship" (6). In other words, the fact that we will never get to see everyone in our community, and much less our country, does not prevent us from feeling connected to our fellow citizens based on our cultural and ethnic similarities. Erika's foreign ethnicity, however, prevented these national ties from being fully formed.

Thus the country Erika legally belongs to does not feel like home and inspires no nationalist feelings, yet she has no ties with the country she chose to be hers—and even she had, she would still stand out from the population due to her skin color. No matter where Erika settles, she will always be a foreigner, preventing feelings of "horizontal comradeship" from arising and preventing her from developing any sense of nationalism. Anderson, however, argues that nationalist feelings form because of the immediate attachment between those who share a culture, language, or ethnic markers. He sees these feelings as inherent and natural, and argues that "in everything 'natural' there is something unchosen" (143). He compares the "disinterred [feelings of] love and solidarity" we have for our families to the feelings we have for our nations since we can't choose either (144). Anderson even asserts that "everyone can, should, [and] will 'have' a nationality" (5). While this may be true for those who have remained in one nation for most if not all of their lives, Erika's experience growing up in several nations troubles the concept of a "naturalized nationality."

Erika's lack of a definite nationalism shows that one is not born with roots to a country but rather with an ability to develop nationalist feelings. Erika's attachment to Singapore is a demonstration of this, but it also reveals the pains and challenges that result from developing ties to a country other than one's own. Indeed, if nationalism has "proved notoriously difficult to define" (Anderson 3), then Erika's "third

nationalism"—in which no relation is established with one's birth country, and all relations to other countries are uncredentialed—is perhaps impossible to define. The belief held by Tom Nairn that "Nationalism . . . [is] as inescapable as neurosis" (qtd. in Anderson 5), may be correct after all; it might just be that Erika has no country to put her nationalism in and has to awkwardly carry it around without ever finding a place to place it. Confronted with no nation to call her own, Erika is left to ponder, "Where [is] home now?" (Pollock 12). Perhaps what she should ask is, "Will I ever have a sense of home?"

The experience of third culture kids is a difficult one, especially due to the lack of connection that these children feel for their home country, to which many return. In addition to the difficulty of forming bonds to countries to which one does not legally belong, they face living with a second-rate status compared to real citizens, and constantly worrying about when the next move will be. Benedict Anderson's "natural nationalism" is hard to apply to such children, whose homes change so often that they are ultimately left with none. Yet while nationalism is not a naturalized feeling, it can, as Anderson states, be considered a creation of our environment that requires constant upkeep and reassurance from the threats that are imposed by such anomalies as third culture kids.

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MANHATTANVILLE, MEET WEST HARLEM: AN URBAN FRONTIER

LUKAS HUFFMAN

I stand at the corner of Broadway and 128th Street. Overhead, the elevated Number 1 train rumbles by. Once this has passed, a ratcheting from the auto body shop to my left picks up the chorus. Then, the high-pitched beeping of a truck in reverse chimes in. The layers of noise are rich with urban industry and have more presence than actual people. I head west on 128th Street toward the Hudson River and into the neighborhood that is the site of Columbia University's proposed Manhattanville campus. I don't see any trees along the street. The gray sidewalk makes a ninety-degree angle with a warehouse building. The brick and concrete walls of this neighborhood are home to four hundred residents and roughly sixteen hundred jobs. Columbia University is proposing to develop a secondary campus on the seventeen-acre plot of land in West Harlem. It is a thirty-year expansion plan to "allow an elite but cramped university to build additional academic and residential buildings, including new facilities for its arts and business schools and dozens of modern science research labs it needs to keep pace with other Ivy League universities" (Williams). In addition to providing academic resources, the project is intended to weave the "university into the fabric of city life" (Columbia University Web site).

To develop the campus, most of the structures and people in the neighborhood will be displaced. Behind these walls is a community that has been sensitive to the threat of displacement since the 1960s, when the university was "purchasing apartment buildings all over Morningside Heights, displacing thousands of poor, mostly black and Puerto Rican residents" (Eviatar). This West Harlem neighborhood is the frontier of a gentrification movement sweeping through New York City and other American urban centers.

In his essay "Frontiers in American History and the Role of the Frontier Historian," Jack D. Forbes defines the concept of a frontier as "a meeting point where two forces come up against each other, whether they be groups of human beings or such vague things as civilization and wilderness or knowledge and potential knowledge . . . [and therefore] there can be no frontier without . . . a contact situation" (206). The Manhattanville project has created a meeting point where the Columbia community comes into contact with the West Harlem community. At this frontier there are two fundamental points of tension: one is a local concern and involves debates about the development process of the new campus; the other is relevant to developing urban areas all over America and involves gentrification and the displacement of low-income residents. By viewing expansion in America through a historical lens, this paper examines the Manhattanville project and the contemporary threat of gentrification. It illuminates the perspectives of the Columbia and West Harlem communities at the

Manhattanville frontier in an effort to understand the dynamics of the relationship at this "meeting point."

The proposed Manhattanville campus is a result of Columbia's efforts to remain a competitive Ivy League institution. In a 2006 *New York Times* article, Columbia President Lee Bollinger commented, "As knowledge grows and fields grow, we need more faculty, you need a certain scale." He added, "Columbia has 194 square feet per student; Harvard boasts 368" (Eviatar). The Columbia community has argued that the new facilities will function as a place of intellectual and scientific development of benefit to society as a whole. In a 2007 *New York Times* article, Columbia spokeswomen La-Verna Fountain built on Bollinger's comments, stating, "Columbia wants to work on the kinds of issues that impact humanity, like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease" (Lee). Columbia's impetus for the Manhattanville campus stems from market pressures, but the project has the potential to generate contributions beyond self-interested financial gains. According to the Columbia community, the campus expansion can and should contribute to the development of a healthy society. The developmental logic of Columbia holds that expansion of its domain is related to societal advancement.

In an 1893 address before the American Historical Association in Chicago, Frederick Jackson Turner discussed the ideological relationship between expansion and a successful society. He provided an Anglo-American description of America's western frontier during the 1890s and the societal implications of Manifest Destiny:

> The peculiarity of the American institution is the fact that they have been compelled to adapt themselves to the changes of an expanding people—to the changes involved in crossing a continent, in winning a wilderness, and in developing at each area of this progress out of the primitive economic and political conditions of the frontier into the complexity of city life. (2)

Turner applauded America for "continually advancing [its] frontier line . . . this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character" (2). This perspective can help us understand the debate about the Manhattanville project by contextualizing the situation within the historical approach of the "American character" to growth. The Columbia administration's motivations do not mimic Turner's statement in regard to how the native community of West Harlem is viewed, nor does the Columbia community view West Harlem as a "wilderness" with "primitive economic and political conditions." Columbia administrators argue, however, that the development of Manhattanville will advance societal progress as a whole. Turner argued that the expansion of the Western frontier helped solidify America's national character and some areas of governmental policy:

"It is safe to say that the legislation with regard to land, tariff, and internal improvements . . . was conditioned on frontier ideas and needs" (27).

Columbia champions an ideology similar to Turner's, in that expansion would allow the university to make medical advancements of benefit to society. Bollinger comments, "We [Columbia] need to have the property in order to build a campus . . . that's able to do the kind of intellectual work that needs to be done." He continues, "We cure disease and find cures, and we try to understand the world, and we educate people, and we are basically a public service institution" (*Columbia Spectator*). The relationship that Turner suggests—between expansion and societal development—is also prevalent in Columbia's perspective. This is a relationship that has been the driving force of American urban growth since the settling of the Western frontier, as discussed by Turner, more than a century ago.

Forbes argues that the Turner approach to the frontier neglects the populations that already live in the area of desired expansion. He criticizes Turner's account of the western frontier: "while undoubtedly serving a useful purpose within the frame work of Anglo-American nationalism, [Turner's ideas are] essentially one-sided and ethnocentric. It is in effect looking at an inter-group contact situation entirely from the point of view of one of the interested participants" (Forbes 204-205). As we saw earlier, Forbes points out that any frontier frames two groups "in a contact situation." Turner's "one-sided" approach undermines this idea and overlooks the social dynamics present at a frontier. This criticism is not entirely applicable to Columbia's approach to the Manhattanville project, as the university is well aware of the West Harlem community. However, the development of Manhattanville has been initiated by, designed for, and is largely beneficial to only one party, the Columbia community.

The West Harlem community's inequality in the development project is exemplified by Columbia's attempt to acquire the land. The university already owns over fifty percent of the seventeen-acre property, but needs to purchase the remaining buildings before it can develop the campus. There is a group of West Harlem property owners who refuse to sell to the university. The group is concerned that they will lose clientele if they have to relocate their businesses. Columbia has made clear that, if necessary, it will use eminent domain laws to acquire the rest of the land. Eminent domain allows the state to transfer property from one private owner to another. The residents of West Harlem question why the university insists on occupying all of the land in the proposed area. In a 2007 *New York Times* article, local resident Luisa Henriquez complained, "They want us out of here, they want it all. Columbia should work around us; they say everything is for the students. What about us?" (Lee).

Columbia President Bollinger counters that "if needed to fulfill our public service responsibility and if the state were willing to use eminent domain . . . it would be irresponsible to take it off the table" (*Columbia Spectator*). This standpoint raises Forbes's concern that the traditional Turner-American approach to expansion can cause a one-sided expression of growth. West Harlem residents have opinions

concerning eminent domain, but the complexity of the situation and Columbia's dominant role serve to silence their voices.

The deeper source of tension at the Manhattanville frontier exceeds local concerns about the physical development of the campus. The Manhattanville project is symbolic of the gentrification process underway throughout Harlem. A 2002 Columbia *Spectator* article outlines the university's role in this process:

> The recent influx of higher-income individuals [to the Harlem area] has given many landlords a reason to overturn rental regulations in favor of wealthier tenants, thus disadvantaging long-time low-income residents . . . Students represent a large portion of these new, higher-paying tenants . . . and Columbia's proximity makes this even more of a threat in Harlem than in other gentrified neighborhoods. (Johnson)

An influx of upper-middle-class students and staff threatens to displace lower-income local residents. The development of Manhattanville could become a new phase in an ongoing process that is destructive to the Harlem community's heritage. Local residents are aware that the new campus will drive up surrounding real estate values and jeopardize their ability to live in the area. At an August 2007 public hearing, Nellie Bailey of the Harlem Tenants Council argued:

> Columbia University's expansion cannot be viewed in isolation from the overall gentrification of Harlem. . . . The masses of Blacks, especially the poor and working classes are exacerbated, angry, demoralized and put off. . . . [T]here is no political will from elected officials to provide a viable alternative to the powers-that-be including Columbia University's land grab that will permanently alter the ethnic, socio-economic and political demographics of West Harlem, and by extension the greater community of Harlem. (NBPC website)

Bailey articulates the local community's fear of being driven out of their own neighborhood and their resultant distrust of Columbia University. Still, the university argues that the proposed campus is designed to bolster neighborhood quality of life: "Columbia has promised to relocate residents directly displaced by its $7 billion plan, which it expects will create nearly 7,000 new jobs over 25 to 30 years. . . . It has reserved space on the campus for a public school specializing in math, science and engineering" (Eviatar). Columbia plans to take financial responsibility for the dislocation of residents and, in turn, to focus on the potential for creating economic and educational opportunities in the neighborhood.

The project offers other benefits, as evidenced by Columbia's architectural design philosophy that "an urban campus isn't defined by gates and walls, but by weaving the university into the fabric of city life." (Columbia University Web site). The university

boasts that "new trees, lighting, street furnishings, public art and publicly accessible open space would invite people to the entire area. New buildings would not only be open to the public but would also look and feel open because of transparent glass at the street level" (Columbia University Web site). This is an intelligent, modern approach to the urban placement of an academic institution. The goal of chief architect Renzo Piano, a native of Italy, is to create the feel of a piazza. He states, "the people will come, there will be discourse" (Eviatar). Piano and the university aim to create a space where the Ivy League and West Harlem communities can share their day-to-day activities and thereby engage in a dialogue that will further human understanding. This type of engagement is a fundamental device of intellectual inquiry and, if realized, could benefit both groups at the frontier.

For discourse to occur, however, there needs to be an element of trust between the West Harlem and Columbia communities. In her essay "The Uses of Sidewalks: Contact," Jane Jacobs examines the elements necessary for constructive public contact. She states,

> The sum of such casual public contact at a local level . . . is a feeling for the public identity of people, a web of public respect and trust, and a resource of personal or neighborhood need. The absence of this trust is a disaster to a city street. Its cultivation cannot be institutionalized. And, above all, it implies no private commitments" (73-74).

The problem with Manhattanville's attempt to create a public space where West Harlem and Columbia will have "contact at a local level" is that the very existence of the campus creates distrust between the two groups. Chairperson of the local community board Jordi Reyes-Montblanc commented, "On a scale of 1 to 10, Columbia is a minus 5 in terms of trust" (Williams). Due to the university's fraught history with Harlem, concerns about eminent domain, and the threat of gentrification, the West Harlem community is hard-pressed to feel "public respect and trust" toward Columbia. Distrust—or, worse, resentment—could lead the Harlem community to avoid the new campus, which would obviously make physical and intellectual exchange with the Columbia community unlikely.

It is important to include the perspective of the students who would occupy the future Manhattanville campus, as they would be responsible for half of the intercultural discourse that might occur at this frontier. As a Columbia student, I am aware of my contribution to the gentrification of the Morningside Heights neighborhood and feel some discomfort in being party to a process that has driven out local residents. I do realize that gentrification has helped to make the neighborhood safer for the residents who live here, and I appreciate my opportunities as a Columbia student. Given what I understand of the Manhattanville frontier, however, I am unsure of my ability to engage in a dialogue with the West Harlem community. If the local community is

uncomfortable with my presence in West Harlem due to eminent domain disputes or the larger threat of gentrification that I represent, then I too would be uncomfortable on the campus. If my presence is a source of tension for the local community, I would be nervous to enter the campus. And yet I agree with Columbia's argument that the expansion can be seen as an opportunity to weave "the university into the fabric of city life."

By viewing the dynamics of the Manhattanville-West Harlem relationship as a frontier, one can better understand the perspective of both parties affected by this meeting point. The university's expansion is part of the larger history of unequal growth and development that spans from the American West's "civilization" to contemporary gentrification frontiers. The conflicting needs and concerns of the Columbia and West Harlem communities make for a challenging relationship. But by making an effort to preserve the local community, Columbia University has an opportunity to rethink how American institutions approach growth. The Manhattanville project could become a model for expansion that is sensitive to the economic, social, and cultural complexities present at the urban frontier.

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FOR THE ULTIMATE GREEN

CHRISTINE KIM

My family resides in Seoul, the most prosperous and developed city in South Korea. We live in a twenty-four-story apartment building, which provides an energy-saving central heating system. An apartment setting essentially helps us save energy, since heat escaping from our apartment helps to heat the apartment above ours. The subway station is a ten-minute walk, and buses stop in front of the apartment complex. We therefore prefer taking public transit to driving cars in the middle of traffic jams. In Seoul, a life like this is not particular to my family; most of the buildings—both residential and commercial—are at least ten and often twenty stories high; Seoul Metro, a part of Seoul subway system, daily transports six million people (sixty percent of Seoul's population).

In his essay "Green Manhattan," David Owen praises the extreme compactness of urban centers like Manhattan for their "greenness." He asserts that "New York is the greenest community in United States, and one of the greenest cities in the world" (1). Because of the city's dense population, New Yorkers mostly take public transit, reducing fossil fuel use, and use skyscrapers, which save more heating and cooling energy than houses thanks to less exposed exterior surface per square foot of interior space. Owen's vocabulary of "density" opens up the possibility of seeing Seoul as a "green" place. Resembling many aspects of Manhattan that Owen enumerates, Seoul generates less greenhouse gas, conserves more energy, and produces less waste per capita than suburban communities. However, looking at the landscape of the city, I feel troubled calling Seoul green. Is Seoul—the city of asphalt lands and skyscraper forests—really green?

Owen oversimplifies the term "green" by describing urban centers as green. The term "green" applies to two different qualities. One is metaphorical green, as Owen uses: energy efficiency and pollution decrease—saving the planet. The other is more literal: trees, grasses, and plants—the elements of nature that are indeed green in color. If the former promotes the health of planet, the latter does the individual health; many people move to rural places when sick. The former relates to communal responsibility, while the latter does to individual interest. Both greens are important in human life. We cannot abandon our responsibility to save the earth to pursue our selfish interests. Conversely, we cannot sacrifice our own interests altogether to fulfill that responsibility. I believe that the ultimately "green" place should provide both greens. Although, at first glance, the two greens do not seem to differ too much, in reality, they often contradict each other. Then, how do we create the "ultimately green" place? How do we balance the literal green and the metaphorical green, or individual interest and civic responsibility?

Owen's argument is, in itself, a telling example of the difficulty of balancing the two. He attempts to solve the question by urging us to "make other settled places more like Manhattan" (3). He criticizes the sprawling environment of "other settled paces" like suburbia, with their scattering of houses, workplaces, and shops, for their ecological malignancy. One-story houses, which rarely contain a central heating system, radiate more heat than apartment buildings and therefore use more energy; yards, which are often over-watered, require lawnmowers that are hardly energy efficient; worst of all, cars, the obvious fossil fuel consumers, become a necessity in suburbia. Owen therefore insists that we should transform suburban towns into more densely populated cities to save energy, consume less fossil fuel, and ultimately to better the health of the planet.

The solution, however, fails to acknowledge the self-interests involved in a life in suburbia. Owen's argument does not balance communal responsibility and self-interest; rather, it chooses communal responsibility at the expense of self-interest. The dilemma is too complex to resolve in such simple terms, and his solution is therefore impractical. Owen's own move demonstrates the impracticality of his claims. Although he advocates the virtues of living in urban centers and condemns living in suburbia, he contradicts himself by moving to a suburban town from Manhattan:

> [My wife and I] had both grown up in suburbs, and we decided that we didn't want to raise our tiny daughter in a huge city. Shortly after she learned to walk, we moved to a small town in northwestern Connecticut, about ninety miles north of midtown Manhattan. Our house, which was built in the late seventeen-hundreds, is across a dirt road from a nature preserve and is shaded by tall white-pine trees. After big rains, we can hear a swollen creek rushing by at the bottom of the hill. Deer, wild turkeys, and the occasional black bear feed themselves in our yard. From the end of our driveway, I can walk several miles through woods to an abandoned nineteenth-century railway tunnel, while crossing only one paved road. (1-2)

By telling us that he wanted to raise his daughter in suburbia, just as he and his wife grew up, rather than in an urban center, Owen admits that some individual interests may be fulfilled better in suburbia—around tall pine trees, streams, and wild animals. He later mentions more explicitly the "growing desire to live a more natural, biological life under pleasanter and more natural conditions" (4). The sharply contrasting environments of urban centers hardly fulfill that desire. Owen acknowledges the drawbacks of living in Manhattan: "Manhattan is loud and dirty, and the subway is depressing, and the fumes from the cars and cabs and buses can make people sick. Presumably for environmental reasons, New York City has one of the highest childhood-asthma rates in the country" (3).

New York City deprives its residents of a clean environment and ultimately their health. While inhabiting a dense city may be beneficial on a societal level, residing in

suburbia near nature may be healthier on an individual level. Because Owen's argument considers only civic responsibility and does not take individual interest into account, even the arguer fails to be consistent with his own claim.

Ruminating on my own experience in suburbia, I also find it hard to abandon the literal green of suburban towns for the metaphorical green of cities. When my family lived in Pasadena, California, we picnicked at a nearby lake that was peaceful and spacious, instead of the park in Seoul that is crowded and often trashed. I ran around the woods and chased chipmunks in the yard, instead of playing in an outdoor parking lot where my parents repeatedly reminded me to be careful of the cars. My dad taught me constellations in the dark, instead of being bothered by the numerous lights that veil the glow of stars. My mom, especially, misses the days in Pasadena. Even though she lives in a metaphorically green environment, she yearns to leave Seoul for a more literal green. Claims like Owen's will not persuade people like my mom to live in urban centers since to them the pleasure of living around nature, which Seoul seldom provides, is the value that cannot be compromised by any others.

In fact, literal green is not an antonym of environmentalism. Living in suburbia may not necessarily be totally harmful to the environment since it may help us foster more responsible environmentalism. In his essay "The Trouble with Wilderness," William Cronon discusses responsible environmentalism—the right way to view wilderness. He questions the modern American environmental movement that idealizes wilderness over human settlements.

> [The] idea of wilderness has for decades been a fundamental tenet—indeed a passion—of the environmental movement, especially in the United States. For many Americans wilderness stands as the last remaining place where civilization, that all too human disease, has not fully infected the earth. . . . [In fact, instead, wilderness] is a product of that civilization. (83)

Owen also writes of the flaws of modern American environmentalism: most Americans consider "wild, unspoiled landscapes—the earth before it was transmogrified by human inhabitation" as ecological, although Manhattan, "one of the most thoroughly altered landscapes imaginable, an almost wholly artificial environment, in which the terrain's primeval contours have long since been obliterated," is one of the most environmentally friendly places in America (2). Like Owen, Cronon disapproves of associating wild and uninhabited land with a true environmental area.

Although both Cronon and Owen advocate for people to change the aims of modern environmentalism, Cronon is less interested than Owen in assessing ecological benefits of urban centers and instead focuses on "discovering what an ethical, sustainable, honorable human place in nature might actually look like" (97). Cronon insists that the modern American environmental movement often equates the

preservation of wild and uninhabited areas with saving the globe. He recognizes that "nonhuman nature and large tracts of the natural world do deserve protection" (98). He values the nonhuman nature like many others but warns against the danger of misusing the label "wilderness":

> To the extent that we celebrate wilderness as the measure with which we judge civilization, we reproduce the dualism that sets humanity and nature at opposite poles. . . . Worse: to the extent that we live in an urban-industrial civilization but at the same time pretend to ourselves that our real home is in the wilderness, to just that extent we give ourselves permission to evade responsibility for the lives we actually lead. (97)

By imagining nonhuman wilderness as an angelic world where we can escape from the troubles of devastating human civilization, we set ourselves outside of nature and often let ourselves desert the responsible use of the "home" that we actually inhabit. Such a misguided concept of wilderness thereby threatens the place of responsible environmentalism.

As an alternative, Cronon suggests that we find nature in our own backyards and embrace both city and wilderness as "home." He celebrates the moments that remind us of the nature all around us, since they let us realize that nature is not distant and that our home should be the "middle ground in which responsible use and non-use might attain some kind of balanced, sustainable relationship" (103). By discovering the nature all around us, we can foster what Cronon calls responsible environmentalism.

I thus contend that suburbia can promote responsible environmentalism. Recall Owen's reflection on his suburban home in Connecticut. Recall my experience in Pasadena. In suburbia, we discovered the nature right beside us: shades of tall white-pine trees, a swollen creek that rushes after rains, wild animals that appears in the yard, a peaceful lake by which to enjoy a picnic, several miles of woods for a walk, and even shining stars in the sky. We were touched by these little moments and learned to value nature as home, and home as nature. The place where we live is the nature that we must preserve.

After moving to Seoul, my family became one of the most environmentally responsible in the town. My mom, especially, is determined to better the city's environment. She never overheats or overcools the house; she washes cans, bottles, and paper covers of milk packs to recycle them; she always buys refillable shampoo or detergent to reuse the bottles; she usually travels by foot or on buses or subways rather than in her own car; she often volunteers to clean trashed parks with her fellow residents. However, my friends who have always lived in city like Seoul often have a hard time picturing their home as natural. While I feel guilty about the idea of littering the streets, they mindlessly drop garbage everywhere. Though they may rage at the sight of trashed mountain, they rarely feel guilty trashing their own home. To my

family, home is the nature that we need to preserve. To my friends in Seoul, home is the already-polluted environment that they need not care for. If that is the case, suburbia—the literal green—should not be sacrificed because it is, to some extent, necessary to encourage responsible environmentalism.

Yet, metaphorical green must not be ignored either. Despite the advantages of a life in suburbia, we do need to realize its drawbacks. When my family lived in Pasadena, we harmed the environment just as Owen criticizes. We lived in a one-story house that is far less energy-efficient than apartment buildings, with a neat lawn that required a lawnmower and water, and hence a significant amount of energy. Moreover, we consumed tremendous amounts of fossil fuel: my parents drove me to kindergarten, drove to their jobs, drove to Target to shop, drove to meet their friends, and drove ten miles to the gas stations. Even more troubling, I wonder if my mom would still be environmentally as responsible in Pasadena as she is in Seoul. Would she be able to use public transit and consume less energy? While suburbia may be environmentally friendly in the literal sense, suburbia needs reformation to become green in the metaphorical sense.

Cronon discusses a similar dilemma. He recognizes the worth of the unused natural world but equally values the responsibly used civilization. Thus, he seeks "a middle ground in which responsible use and non-use might attain some kind of balanced, sustainable relationship." To better the environment, he believes that we should explore the middle ground of wilderness and civilization. He furthers his argument by asserting that the middle ground is our home—the home that we should be responsible for both using and not using. In a similar context, to make the world greener, we must find the "middle ground," where literal green and metaphorical green are balanced. It is important to consider the ecological benefits of urban centers, but we should not underestimate the advantages of suburbia. To reach that middle ground, we must make suburbia metaphorically greener and urban centers literally greener. To reach that middle ground, we must be motivated to better our home—the home that encompasses both our self-interests and communal responsibilities, the home we want to improve for ourselves and the home for which we are responsible.

Owen's impractical suggestion of "making other settled places more like Manhattan" can help us attain the middle ground if we adjust his argument in a less radical way. For example, we can encourage people to walk rather than to drive by widening the sidewalks, narrowing the streets, and moving buildings closer to the edge of sidewalks. Mixing residential and commercial use can also help, since this kind of zoning enables people to shop without driving. We can make commercial buildings, which do not provide significantly more literal green, more energy-efficient by designing them so that they are one story higher and closer together. Adding public transportation would reduce a significant amount of fossil fuel use, but if this is not feasible due to scattered houses, organizing carpools would be a good alternative.

In a similar way, by making urban centers more like suburban towns, we can find ways to make urban centers literally greener by mimicking aspects of suburbia, including: lawns that are large enough to accommodate running children in apartment complexes; incorporating greenery into buildings themselves, and planting more trees and plants on side streets to make urban daily life greener in color. Taking advantage of outstanding public transit systems, we can also create wild parks easily accessible by subways or buses.

It is not easy to figure out how to balance the two greens. We are often frustrated by the difficulty of fulfilling both self-interest and civic responsibility at the same time. But to attain a better home that is truly green, we must consider the problem. Neither Seoul nor Pasadena is truly green, for they lack one green or the other. To transform them, we do not need to be motivated by a universal action. Small efforts to better our home can help. In Seoul, we can pick up trash and value the trees on the sidewalk. In Pasadena, we can ride a hybrid car and carpool. If we realize the significance of both greens, if we learn to be responsible for our home, and if we continuously search for that middle ground, then perhaps, one day, both Seoul and Pasadena will shine in green.

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THE USAGE WARS À L'ENVERS

EMMA MCGLENNEN

I recently downloaded a podcast of a French radio program, "Époque," and was listening to it one night a few weeks ago. The program was targeted at youth, executed and produced by youth, and centered around issues of political and social enfranchisement of young people in France—that is, from what I could understand. I am fluent in French; I attended an all-French immersion school for fifteen years, and read, speak and understand the language with relative ease. However, what I quickly realized was that the language on the program was not the French of my early education, nor was it the French of ten years ago when I lived with a French family in Paris for a month. More complex than simple slang or casual colloquialism, this sounded like an altogether different language, from which I could extricate meaning only through the brief contextual commentary offered by the older-sounding program host.

What I was hearing was in fact an extremely new form of spoken French. *Verlan*, as it is called, is literally the phrase *à l'envers* (translation: backward) backward—a system of reversing the first and second half of a word and thus creating a new one. For instance, in verlan, the word *femme* (woman) becomes *meuf*; the word *arabe* (person of North African descent) becomes *beurre*. In verlan, almost every proper noun has been thus manipulated, and a simple sentence begins to sound a bit like gibberish to the unversed ear. Though a comparison to American Pig Latin would suggest a kind of obscure and short-lived early adolescent phase that many Americans once experienced, verlan is the ubiquitous language of French youth. It originated in the banlieues, or the suburban slums that surround major urban centers like Paris, as a kind of gang language, but in the last ten years it has spread to almost every corner of youth culture.

Verlan is much more than a simple linguistic trend. It is both a social protest, as its origins in the slums would suggest, as well as a widespread resistance to the institutional conventions of the language itself. Verlan is a subversion of the otherwise rigid ordinances for French usage, as prescribed by the Académie Française, a government body conceived in 1635 during the reign of King Louis XIII, and the single authority for the official French language. It sets the standards for language education nationwide, and its members, aptly named "The Immortals," oversee all formal changes, additions, and alterations to the official language, embodied in the Académie's standard usage dictionary. The body's intent was "to set down the French language, to give it rules, to render it pure and comprehensible for all" ("L'histoire").[1] For decades, the Académie Française has attempted to maintain the "purity" of the language by resisting such trends as slang, or argot, as well as the Americanization of common parts of speech. Its excessive rigidity has drawn widespread scrutiny, but its lack of enforcement power has given it the status of archaic vestige at worst and

cultural relic at best. Yet regardless of its seeming impotence on a large scale, the Académie Française nevertheless represents an official government position on the institution of language, and as such, it has been at odds with the French people since its inception nearly four centuries ago.

In the United States, which lacks an institution similar to the Académie Française, the debate over language has been framed by lexicographers and theorists such as David Foster Wallace, Steven Pinker, and George Orwell. These tend to fall into two main categories: Prescriptivists, who, in the vein of the Académie, adhere to stringent grammatical guidelines, and Descriptivists, who believe that all forms of spoken language (by native speakers) are inherently correct, an argument that would seem to resonate with advocates of verlan. At first glance it would appear that the schism between the Académie and its young *résistants* is at heart a divide between traditionalist Prescriptivism and progressive Descriptivism. However, the nuances of the arguments by American lexicographers reveal a surprising paradox: Language exists as a tool for protest, but when the institution being resisted is the language itself, we must reexamine the terms of the debate.

David Foster Wallace is a self-proclaimed Prescriptivist, albeit with a pragmatic philosophy. In his essay "Tense Present," he contends that the conventions of a language are determined primarily by a desire to gain acceptance into a particular group, or "Discourse Community":

> People really do "judge" one another according to their use of language. . . . [T]his judging involves acceptance, meaning not some touchy-feely emotional affirmation but actual acceptance or rejection of somebody's bid to be regarded as a peer, a member of somebody else's collective or community or Group. (50)

This argument is integral to the early development of verlan. Its earliest forms were intended as a language of exclusion, of subversion against the police, and of protest against established French society. The notion of a discourse community could not be felt more strongly than in the case where outsiders find the language completely impenetrable.

However, Wallace goes further. He believes that a shared desire to be "taken seriously" is justification for the existence of a Standard Written English (SWE), or the standard language of the educated class. Though he supports the rights of various dialects to exist, he believes that this human impulse towards acceptance and respect by one's peers motivates the widespread acceptance of SWE.

Language theorist Steven Pinker challenges Wallace's ideas as being classist; he sees SWE as a tool of a hierarchical system to instill social differentiation. In his essay "Grammar Puss," he shows how linguistic trends in the eighteenth century supported the rise of the intellectual elite:

> Latin was considered the language of enlightenment and learning and it was offered as an ideal of precision and logic to which English should aspire. The period saw unprecedented social mobility, and anyone who wanted to distinguish himself as cultivated had to master the best version of English. . . . [T]he manuals tried to outdo one another by including greater numbers of increasingly fastidious rules that no refined person could afford to ignore. (2)

By this account, Pinker asserts that the Prescriptivist rules were instated in order to preserve a kind of upper-class elitism, resisting the trend of upward economic mobility of the lower classes that otherwise defined the time. These rules, when applied today, only reinforce this elitism, and thus emphasizing one dialect above all others cements the effects of social stratification.

What's more, Pinker shows how a collective aspiration toward "educated" speech debases the power of language as a political tool, especially by the common people. In his view, a person who uses language that does not meet the arbitrary standards of educated English will automatically be thought "ignorant of the rules, rather than challenging [them]" (3). By arguing, as Wallace does, that SWE exists as the only platform on which "serious" discourse can take place, language is denied the power to act as its own tool of protest. Alternative uses of language are rendered impotent.

In Pinker's view, Wallace's failing is that he believes everyone aspires to more or less the same Group: that of the educated class, those whose opinions are taken seriously. Pinker suggests that the standardization of language robs alternative forms of expression of their power to evoke resistance, protest, or criticism and merely reduces them to "ignorant" forms of communication. The young French-Algerian immigrant who decries police brutality in his own language, verlan, risks the credibility of his argument because of the arbitrary standards of the elitist Académie.

Indeed the early development of verlan would seem to confirm Pinker's views that "alternative" language can act as a political tool. Its conception was rooted in contempt for the French society that refused to take this group of people seriously. The dialect's first words related primarily to drugs, guns, and gang violence, realities of the suburban slums, as well as to politically and socially disenfranchised groups such as North African immigrants (*beurres* for *arabes*, *kaïra* for *racaille*, or rabble) or racial signifiers (*renoi* for *noire*, or black). It was used to withhold meaning from figures of authority, namely the police, and quickly grew to the status of gang-speak.

However, as verlan gained ground amongst youth culture at large, its focus shifted as well. Whereas it began as a language of self-identification for a marginalized demographic, it quickly morphed into a broad, generational war to reclaim the French language for its speakers. By the early 2000s, it was no longer the "exclusive" language of minorities or gangs, and as it spread through schoolyards and shopping malls, television and radio, it began to encompass a new attitude towards language as a whole. Language itself became the authority against which the protest was mobilized, itself

transformed into the political battleground. French youth had revolted against a single oppressive figure: the centuries-old Académie Française. They took everyday words—*mère*, *père*, *école*, *ami*, *voisin*—and literally reversed them, made everyday phrases convoluted, turned the traditional austerity of the French language into a joke. The once sleek and graceful phrases were made ugly and halting. And it made a statement. It was language turned back to its vulgar original—a language of commoners.

Wallace contends that the primary reason for standard language is to demonstrate respect for the listener. By using correct grammar, one saves the listener the extra effort of decipherment. Clearly, the point of verlan was the opposite: to demonstrate an open contempt for the institution of language and to debase it at its most fundamental level. Contrary to his argument that dialects can exist simultaneously and independently, verlan in fact rejects the legitimacy of all standardized language. Both Pinker and Wallace examine the contexts in which language is put to use over a political agenda, but what they have failed to acknowledge are the circumstances in which language is not at the service of a specific protest, but is itself being protested. Neither Prescriptive rigidity nor Descriptive inclusiveness could account for the violent reaction that sprang out of the suburbs and into the mouths of French teenagers nationwide. All language—the idea of language itself—was under fire.

It is ironic, based upon the progressive, near revolutionary precepts of verlan, that its strongest defense comes from a hardline Prescriptivist. In his essay "Politics and the English Language," George Orwell argues against the misleading rhetoric and intentional vagueness of what he calls "ready-made" language, which is perpetuated by standardized language (and, presumably, institutions such as the Académie). The preconceived phrases of learned speakers, he says, flood our thoughts and corrode meaning. They create vagueness and imprecision and are used by the governing elite to mislead the uneducated, or those who are simply not interested in weeding through dense rhetoric. He argues for an active stance in the determination of one's language, for choosing words that best express—rather than conceal or prevent—thought. "One can choose—not simply accept—the phrases that will best cover the meaning" (9). Verlan, at heart, is just this: a rejection of institutional and dispassionate language, a direct confrontation with the insincerity of politically correct and traditionalist ways of speaking. Orwell argues in favor of Prescriptivism only to the extent that it makes meaning clear; beyond that, he insists that the speaker must take an active and autonomous role in the formation of phrases.

Orwell's theories reveal a breakdown in the traditional division between Prescriptive and Descriptive language theory. Orwell argues that the most important element of grammatical Prescriptivism is clarity and sincerity; if anything, his is a kind of Prescriptivism for thought more than language. He advocates active language formation that excludes the "ready-made" phrase, which serves only to streamline and homogenize the kinds of ideas we discuss. Speakers (and writers) must exhibit freedom and autonomy in their language choices—and this, surprisingly, is a distinctly

Descriptivist concept. By emphasizing the importance of individuals choosing their own language, Orwell reverses the sense of the terms Prescriptivism and Descriptivism. The fundamental tenets of Prescriptivism become an unwitting ally of the Descriptivist objective.

Individual choice is at the core of verlan's power as a political tool. Linguistic agency reflects its speakers' much-desired political agency. Verlan is used not merely to differentiate its speakers from the educated French elite, to establish its own Discourse Community, but rather to engage politically with the evolution of the language, as Orwell most adamantly suggests we should. Using verlan is not a social statement, and economic or racial statement, but a linguistic statement: an affirmation of autonomy and agency in language itself.

And so the Académie Française appears to be in a state of turmoil, if not on its way out altogether. The rigid prescriptions of standard French have existed since the seventeenth century, and today they have been almost entirely rejected by the new generation of French speakers. Yet I find it unlikely that the classical French language will disappear altogether. Verlan will, in my mind, soon join the status of dialect, shared by a generation of disillusioned youth. However, it is a potent reminder of the power of language that is developed in the most democratic of ways: by the people.

NOTE

1. "La mission qui lui fut assignée dès l'origine était de fixer la langue française, de lui donner des règles, de la rendre pure et compréhensible par tous."

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BLACK RHYTHM, WHITE POWER

SAMANTHA AINSLEY

Introduction and All that Jazz

The lights went down at the Miller Theater, but not a note was played. Then a voice rose above the muffled sounds of the crowd, followed by another, and then another: Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, interlaced with words by Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali. The three men's tones resonated with the rhythm of the African djembe beating in the backdrop. Soon, Christian McBride's anticipated bass riff joined the refrain. The great speeches faded along with the drum line, and the jazz took hold, as was permissible since the foundation had been laid: Jazz is a music, a history, a culture. That is, African American culture is intrinsic to jazz.

The music has its roots in post-Reconstruction New Orleans, at a time when Jim Crow laws lumped Creoles and blacks into one marginalized subgroup. Jazz evolved as a synthesis of "African-derived rhythmic, tonal, and improvisational senses" and French-inspired Creole string ensembles (Hall 36). The word "jazz," in fact, derives from the Creole *jass*, a slang term for sex. Granted, Creoles are light-skinned and hardly black in the usual sense of the word. To that Perry Hall, director of African American studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, adds, "Creole participation in jazz came directly as a result of the discovery by Creole musicians of their Blackness" (47). In other words, Creoles began to play jazz after relocation to and degradation in the United States made them party to the black experience. Yet when jazz gained mainstream popularity in 1917, its face was neither black nor Creole. The first jazz record released to the masses was that of the self-proclaimed "Original Dixieland Jazz Band," a group of five white musicians (38). In the years that followed, a white musician by the name of Paul Whiteman enjoyed great success performing "symphonic jazz," a style that tamed the "primitive rhythms" of original jazz and therein became "more acceptable to white audiences" (38). In uprooting jazz from its African American culture, Whiteman grossed one million dollars in a single year in the 1920s and was dubbed the "King of Jazz" (39).

Hail to the Thief[1]

Paul Whiteman's success arguably lacked merit, but it was hardly unique. Since Whiteman, white men have perpetually sat atop the thrones of black music. For example, in the 1930s, Benny Goodman, a white man, became the "King of Swing" (Hall 31). Decades later, Elvis Presley was crowned the "King of Rock 'N' Roll." In 2003, *Rolling Stone* declared Justin Timberlake the "King of R&B" (Kitwana 156). And, of course, there's Eminem, who continues to be revered as "the Elvis of hip-hop" (139). How can a white man be the face of black music?

To answer this question, we must examine the long-standing tradition of mainstream absorption of black musical forms (Hall 32). Beginning with jazz and leading up to hip-hop, white America has appropriated black music as its own. When whites cannot stake claims to black music—as in the case of hip-hop—the nature of the relationship between mainstream society and African American culture is simply exploitative. This essay will examine the ethics of cross-cultural musical appropriation in an attempt to discover why the Elvises and Eminems are able to reap the glory of African American cultural innovation.

Gillespie, Gift-Giving, and Genocide

"You can't steal a gift. Bird gave the world his music, and if you can hear it you can have it," Dizzy Gillespie declared in defense of Phil Woods, a white saxophonist who had been accused of poaching Charlie "Bird" Parker's style (Lethem 70). Jonathan Lethem, in his essay "The Ecstasy of Influence: A Plagiarism," draws inspiration from Gillespie in criticizing copyrights and exploring the concept of a "gift economy" (65). According to Lethem, works of art exist in such an economy, which is rooted in the poignancy of the product (65-66). This gift economy is independent of the market economy in which art and music are commoditized because "a gift conveys an uncommodifiable surplus of inspiration" (Lethem 66). No doubt black musical forms—as is true of all art—function in such an economy both in giving and receiving. To a greater extent, rock 'n' roll connoisseur Theodore Gracyk questions whether there was ever an African American musical form "that wasn't already the result of miscegenation and hybridization" (86). For example, as noted earlier, the first jazz musicians drew inspiration from both "the French tradition of military marching bands" and the European-style string orchestra (Hall 36). As Lethem would argue for any art, the making of music is a continual process of borrowing and sharing. Thus, Gillespie and Gracyk are right to say that black artists cannot claim exclusivity to black music. But what, then, distinguishes the use of black music by white musicians from the continual borrowing and sharing of musical property upon which black music is built?

In truth, the gift analogy is oversimplified. You certainly cannot "steal" a gift if it has been given to you, but you can misuse it. When appropriating black musical forms, white artists such as Paul Whiteman often reshape and redefine the styles to "minimize their association with 'Blackness'" (Hall 32). This type of cultural appropriation is less an exchange of gifts than "a virtual stripping of Black musical genius and aesthetic innovation" (Hall 33). To Gracyk, the very process of reshaping is what grants "those engaged in appropriation . . . some right to claim ownership of the music they perform" (107). Thus, symphonic jazz can be appreciated independently of the black musical style from which it is derived, and its creation gives whites some cultural ownership of jazz. Yet Gracyk fails to recognize the effect of appropriation on the original musical form, which distinguishes unethical appropriation from the harmless

inspiration that Lethem supports. In the most basic sense, a gift can be considered "misused" when it is damaged through usage. As is often the case when mainstream America whitewashes black cultural property and then claims it as its own, the result is what philosopher Amiri Baraka, one of the greatest voices of "spoken word" jazz, describes as a "cultural genocide" (quoted in Gracyk 110).

Gracyk rejects this notion of cultural genocide. According to Gracyk, "the analogy with genocide hinges on the thesis that, were it not for the nonreciprocal behavior of the cultural imperialist, the 'dominated' culture would not have changed" (110). Because African American culture would have evolved independently of white influence, white America's reshaping of black musical forms, he claims, simply gives rise to a "legitimate transformation" (110). Gracyk depicts this instance of cultural appropriation as natural, yet black musical forms have tended to evolve unwillingly. New forms emerge in hopes of reestablishing "the distinctiveness of Black music in a given sociohistorical context" (Hall 32). What is particularly unnatural is the continual need for African Americans to reassert their cultural autonomy. For example, when rock music became more closely associated with Elvis than Chuck Berry, black musicians such as Ray Charles and Sam Cooke fused rhythm and blues with "gospel-inflected harmonies" to create what became known in the 1960s as "soul" (44). Such innovation is less the result of dynamism than of marginalization. Cultural genocide arises when the art is separated from the people (31). The heavily consumed, appropriated forms are "ineffective as expressions and affirmations of the unique cultural experiences from which they arise" (32). Cultural meanings are thereby often erased (35), as happened when whites appropriated soul music—which spoke to black emotion and struggle during the Civil Rights Movement—and called it "disco" (45). When whites appropriate black music, the art is stripped not only of its cultural identity but also of its ability to function in the gift economy. Although Lethem agrees that one cannot steal a gift, he argues that one can destroy it: "Where there is no gift there is no art, [thus] it may be possible to destroy a work of art by converting it into a pure commodity" (66). When black musical forms are completely dissociated from their emotional foundation—as in the case of soul's devolution into disco—the result is no longer a work of art but a mere commodity, which Lethem defines by its inability to create a genuine emotional connection (66). However, the mainstream need not appropriate black music in order to commoditize it. We see this in the case of hip-hop. Though rap has been reinterpreted by a myriad of races, including whites, it is nevertheless identified with African American culture—a culture that is now bought and sold.

Back Yard DJs to NWA: Origins of Hip Hop

> "Rap in general dates all the way back to the motherland, where tribes would use call-and-response chants. In the 1930s and 1940s you had Cab Calloway

> pioneering his style of jazz rhyming. The sixties you had the love style of rapping, with Isaac Hayes, Barry White, and the poetry style of rapping with the Last Poets, the Watts poets and the militant style of rapping with brothers like Malcolm X and Minister Louis Farrakhan."
>
> —Afrika Bambaata, 1993 (quoted in Perkins 2)

Rap is revolutionary as a black musical form because every path traces its lineage back to an element of African American culture. Granted, today there are countless cultural varieties of hip-hop from Asian to Hispanic rap; still, all of these styles are indisputably derived from black music. So far, hip-hop has inspired imitations but it has nevertheless resisted cultural genocide. That is not to say, however, that it has escaped exploitation.

Hip-hop was born in the South Bronx in the mid-1970s as the product of the yard culture of West Kingston brought to New York by Jamaican immigrants in the late 1960s: "Yard DJs brought huge speakers and turntables to the slums, where they rapped over the simple bass lines of the ska and reggae beats. . . . The DJ ruled during hip hop's early days, and it was the DJ who established the foundations for the lyricist (MC)" (Perkins 6). In the 1980s, black middle-class rappers L.L. Cool J and the group Run DMC, both from suburban Queens, were representative of the first wave of hip hop artists to achieve mainstream success (Perkins 15)—that is, until their minimalist style gave way to controversial "gangsta" rap in the 1990s: "The gangsta was epitomized by the now defunct group NWA (Niggas with Attitude), which consisted of the MCs Dr. Dre, Ezy-E, Ice Cube, MC Ren . . . and Ice-T" (Perkins 18). Then came the "message rap" of artists such as Long Island's Public Enemy, which was followed by the much less political "booty rap" of groups like 2 Live Crew (Perkins 19-20). Rap's decades-long transformation exemplifies the natural cultural dynamics about which Gracyk theorizes. Its cultural autonomy remained intact at this point. Then, in the late 1990s, a white rapper from Detroit emerged on the scene and started down the path to becoming hip-hop's Elvis.

The Blue-Eyed Baller

> If I have a cup of coffee that is too strong for me because it is too black, I weaken it by pouring cream into it.[2]
>
> —Malcolm X, 1963

In 2003, a well-established hip-hop magazine, *The Source*, acted on a personal vendetta against the industry's most successful artist of the time, white rapper Eminem. In an attempt to derail the rapper's career, *The Source* published lyrics from unreleased tracks by Eminem that featured blatantly racist attacks on black women: "Girls I like have big butts / no they don't, 'cause I don't like that nigga shit . . . Black

and whites they sometimes mix / But black girls only want your money / cause they be dumb chicks" (quoted in Kitwana 136). After a public apology in which Eminem attributed his racist remarks to teenage angst and bitter resentment toward an African American ex-girlfriend, Eminem's success and popularity were unaffected (141). But *The Source's* crusade against the white rapper did not end there; the magazine's greatest concern was not that rap's most successful artist was racist, but that he was white and that hip-hop rightly belonged to a black youth subculture (136). Granted, Eminem was not the first white rapper to enjoy mainstream success. In fact, the first No. 1 hip-hop album was the all-white hip-hop group The Beastie Boys' 1986 *License to Ill* (White 201). Similarly, the first hip-hop single to top the charts was Vanilla Ice's "Ice, Ice Baby" in 1991 (Perkins 37). But the most successful white rappers often parodied the genre, which led some listeners to write them off as "wiggers." Eminem's music was revered as genuine hip-hop, and *The Source* feared the familiarity of his success. Countless times, owners of *The Source* declared that Eminem was on "the fast track to becoming hip-hop's Elvis" (Kitwana 136). That is, as had happened with Elvis, yet another black musical form would be more closely identified with an iconic white artist than with black artists.

In the early 1950s, Sam Phillips—the Sun Records executive who helped Elvis rise to stardom—proclaimed, "If I could find a white man who had the Negro sound and the Negro feel, I could make a billion dollars" (quoted in Perkins 38). Unlike his wannabe predecessors, Eminem can produce rap with that very "Negro feel." His lyrics have thematic similarities to some black rap because Eminem grew up in the marginalized class of impoverished white Americans. Hence, his music preserves the emotional aspect of the hip-hop gift. Perhaps Eminem's music exemplifies hip-hop's ability to function as a gift economy. After all, whereas Elvis' stardom catalyzed rock 'n' roll to become the predominately white musical form it is today, Eminem's success has not given hip-hop a white face. Has the music industry evolved beyond racial exploitation, or is the mainstream interested in keeping hip-hop black?

Mr. Ambassador at the Minstrel Show

In late 2002, the *New York Times Magazine* ran a cover story on hip-hop's cultural bandit, Marshall Mathers, a.k.a. Eminem, and titled it "Mr. Ambassador" (Kitwana 160). The astute title was fitting for the rap superstar who had previously been labeled the "king" of hip-hop, for Eminem is just that: the envoy of white America to the hip-hop nation. Eminem has attracted many mainstream listeners to hip-hop essentially because he looks like they do. Before Eminem, true hip-hop—which excludes the whitewashed works of Vanilla Ice and the Beastie Boys—was exclusively black and therefore incomprehensible to most white audiences. It does not follow, however, that Enimem is the white man's rapper. Quite the contrary: "although rap is still proportionately more popular among blacks, its primary audience is white and lives in the suburbs" (Samuels, quoted in Kitwana 82). In February 2004, *Forbes* reported that

of an estimated forty-five million hip-hop consumers between the ages of thirteen and thirty-four, eighty percent are white (82). This begs the question: Why do white people love hip-hop, that is, hip-hop in its true form? According to pop journalist Arnold White, "Rap flourished into corporate-sponsored hip hop because of the symbiosis that held whites enthralled to Blacks and kept Blacks indentured" (183). White America's embrace of hip-hop culture is hardly a move toward racial acceptance and cultural understanding. Rather, it is the product of "white supremacy (i.e., black kids selling black images of black criminality and inferiority and white kids buying them to reinforce their superiority)" (103). Hip-hop perpetuates the American tradition of minstrelsy, except that rather than whites painting their faces black, black artists have succumbed to stereotypes of themselves. In the case of hip-hop, white supremacy is enforced not through imitation but consumption of the "minstrel portrait" of black "dehumanization" (Baraka 328). In the eyes of the mainstream, hip-hop reinforces conventions and stereotypes of blackness that foster white power.

Though Eminem may honor hip-hop as a gift, the mainstream renders it a commodity. A commodity fails to establish an emotional connection between two people (Lethem 66). Though rap music showcases black suffering, mainstream America receives it not with compassion but with mockery—white supremacy prevents an emotional connection. Previous musical generations saw white artists destroying the gift of black music by failing to recreate its poignancy; the hip-hop generation sees poignancy destroyed through direct commoditization. In the case of hip-hop, whites are able to reap the power and profits of black culture not by marginalizing black ingenuity but by exploiting it. Simply put: whites couldn't do it better themselves.

Why Deny the Obvious, Child?[3]

Hip-hop may have broken the appropriative trend between mainstream America and black music, but it has done little to end the marginalization of African Americans. It seems that the key issue is not so much the act of appropriation as the driving force behind it. Incidentally, when discussing mainstream absorption of black music, few scholars aside from Theodore Gracyk acknowledge its contributions. We cannot deny that "rock would not exist without appropriation" (Gracyk 97), nor can we blame individual artists for acts of appropriation.

Take, for example, Paul Simon's *Graceland*, which is often criticized for Simon's arguably exploitative use of a group of South African folk singers to enhance the tone of the album and, ultimately, his own success. The accusation runs: "Visually and aurally, Simon appears as the white master who exerts a benign rule over his black subjects" (Mitchell, quoted in Gracyk 91). Yet to suggest that Simon's work with the South African choir had imperialistic motives is excessive. In truth, he was motivated by "a genuine love of South African music" (98); we cannot criticize him for that. Concomitantly, the South African tribal leader Joseph Shabalala praised Simon for

"the opportunity to disclose [their] music all over the world" (quoted in Gracyk 105). Though not Simon's fault, *Graceland* failed to inspire interest in South African music. Most people I know who own the album admit to skipping the only track that features the South African choir almost exclusively. The only music *Graceland* successfully promoted was that of Paul Simon—just as when Keith Richards and Mick Jagger started the Rolling Stones, in Richards' words, "to turn other people on to" African American blues artist Muddy Waters (quoted in Gracyk 15), they really only turned people on to the Rolling Stones.

The crime, then, is not the use of black musical gifts but the bigotry that often leads to their commoditization. The success of *Graceland* and the Rolling Stones speaks to whites' lack of interest in the black experience and their desire not simply to steal black music, but more basically to de-contextualize it—that is, to avoid establishing emotional connections. Appreciation of black music goes hand in hand with appreciation of black people, except in the case of hip-hop through which blacks have allowed themselves to be dehumanized. That is not to say that non-hip-hop black musicians enjoy no mainstream success—we know that to be untrue. Rather, mainstream America tends to depreciate black music, for connecting emotionally with such works of art might bring about an understanding of black suffering that would undermine white supremacy. Moreover, the commoditization of black music continues to foster white power by granting financial success to those who control the music industry: whites. The power disparity between whites and blacks in the music industry suggests that music is another tool the mainstream uses to perpetuate black marginalization. As Amiri Baraka has observed, "The laws once openly stated blacks inferior. Now it is the relationship these laws uphold that maintain the de facto oppression" (329). In the shift from de jure to de facto racism, mainstream America reshaped bigotry in much the same way it did black music—through the simple process of whitewashing.

NOTES

1. An allusion to Radiohead's 2003 album.
2. From a speech by Malcolm X entitled "God's Judgment of White America (The Chickens Come Home to Roost)," delivered on December 4, 1963, in New York City.
3. An allusion to the title of a Paul Simon track from 1990's *Rhythm of the Saints*.

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CAN THE PEN MATCH THE SWORD?: A LOOK AT THE VALUE OF WORDS IN THE DEPICTION OF WAR

JULIA HALPERIN

The word "war" evokes a montage of images so extensive it seems impossible to choose just one. We hear "war" and we think of massive green army tanks rolling over a sandy landscape in Iraq, blood-streaked victims of a suicide bombing in Israel, the barrel of a gun pointing out over a stone wall during the Civil War, or a phalanx of silver armor flooding across a hillside in the Trojan War. Ask a war veteran to imagine war, however, and he will conjure a narrower set of images: the bodies of fishermen and children strewn across a riverbank at dawn; the empty space where a friend used to stand a minute before a mine went off; or blood dripping on the back of one's own hand after firing the first shot (Shay 3, 71, 78).

What distinguishes the images of war in the mind of a war veteran from those in the mind of an ordinary civilian is that the former are first-hand accounts. They have not been filtered through a camera lens or a reporter's pen. According to essayist Susan Sontag, this discrepancy is immutable and insurmountable. She ends her essay "Looking at War," a discussion of the evolution, importance, and complexity of war photography, with this very sentiment: "We don't get it. We truly can't imagine what it was like. . . . That's what every soldier, and every journalist and aid worker and independent observer who has put in time under fire . . . stubbornly feels. And they are right" (98). With her last lines, Sontag casts the rest of her essay in a critical, if not dubious, light. All the images of war she has spent so much time discussing—images that have occupied the global consciousness since the camera's invention in 1839—are only that: images. They will never accurately render the disorienting, dehumanizing, and transformative experience of battle.

Sontag's admission begs the question: If we are truly incapable of conceiving of the reality of war, what use are war images? Sontag suggests that one possible motivation behind a war image is to provoke the viewer to oppose war (97). But she points out that a narrative is likely to be more effective than an image in arousing protest. She explains: "Partly it is a question of the length of time one is obliged to look, and to feel. No photograph . . . can unfold, go further" (98). Narrative, it seems, has more potential than a photograph to recall war faithfully enough to arouse active opposition. And unlike a photograph, whose meaning can be altered based on the caption (Sontag cites a photograph of children killed in the shelling of a village that was passed around at both Serb and Croat propaganda briefings), a narrative's meaning cannot be radically transformed by the addition of a footnote or an addendum (86). Narrative, it seems, offers a less easily manipulated depiction of war that can prompt activism more effectively than an image.

But Sontag explains that unlike a narrative, a photograph is universal—it does not exclude its audience based on the language it uses or the references it makes (86). And, according to Sontag, not all narratives are more effective (or affecting) than photographs: she uses Homer's epic poem *The Iliad* as an example of a war narrative that depicts battle in a steely, unfeeling fashion. In *The Iliad*, Sontag asserts, "War is seen as something men do, inveterately, undeterred by the accumulation of suffering it inflicts" (93). Like the two types of war photography, staged and un-staged, Sontag presents two families of war narratives: those that, like *The Iliad*, depict war in a glorified, unrealistic manner, and those that dutifully report the violence of battle to mobilize readers to oppose war. She designates only the latter category as one that can have a powerful, lasting effect on the reader.

But not all war narratives belong to these two categories. Upon closer inspection of a collection of war narratives—"The Charge of the Light Brigade" by Alfred Lord Tennyson, *The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien*, and *The Iliad*, by Homer—it becomes clear that the narrative's place in the pantheon of war depictions is as varied as the photographs Sontag presents. And while readers cannot interpret a narrative as disparately as the Serbs and Croats interpreted the photo of the dead children, the strength of the audience's response can vary widely based on the identity of the reader. But what do these narratives really do for us? What is their purpose if, as Sontag argues, they can't ever really put us in the soldier's boots?

It is an undeniable fact that certain war narratives glorify rather than accurately reflect the realities of war. Alfred Lord Tennyson's "The Charge of the Light Brigade" is one such poem. It memorializes a particularly bloody battle during the Crimean War, in which six-hundred British soldiers were ambushed on the plain above Balaklava, a town in Crimea. Tennyson's description of the men marching en masse to defend their country depicts a grand, cinematic version of the battle. He writes: "'Charge for the guns!' he said: / Into the valley of Death / rode the six hundred. . . . // . . . When can their glory fade? / O the wild charge they made!" (1). Tennyson's poem paints the soldiers riding "into the valley of Death" as glorious men nobly sacrificing their lives.

This line from Tennyson's poem became the title for one of Roger Fenton's most famous photographs of the Crimean War, entitled "Into the Valley of Death." In the photograph, which Sontag discusses in her essay, Fenton captures a wide, rutted road that holds the remnants of the bloody battle, littered with cannonballs and rocks. In stark contrast to most of Fenton's distinctly staged photographs, Sontag describes this image as a portrait "of absence, without the dead" (92). She explains that this portrait is the only one that would not have needed to be staged—it displays no more, and no less, than a void:

Tennyson's poem, on the other hand, is characterized not by absence, but rather by the presence of six-hundred soldiers marching to their deaths. He evokes the same panorama of destruction that Fenton's photo memorializes, but in a more melodious fashion. While Fenton's photograph captures the results of the destruction—the emptiness, the lost lives, the cannonballs—Tennyson's poem depicts the march to destruction, and the battle itself: "Cannon to the right of them / Cannon to the left of them / Cannon in front of them / Volley'd and thunder'd" (1). The rhyme and meter of the poem make it lyrical, which presents a strange contrast with the dark subject of the poem. It is interesting that Fenton would choose such a contrived, heavy-handed poem to entitle a photograph that is considered (at least by Sontag) to be one of the few emotionally affecting portraits of his career. Indeed, after reading the flowery poem, one would think that it belongs to Sontag's first category of war narratives: the glorified, unrealistic depiction of war.

The fact that Fenton used a line from Tennyson's poem to title his photograph, however, means that the poem did hold some significance at the time (if only for the artist himself). Although a contemporary audience might read the poem as a tired, flat memorial, when it was first published in 1854, readers felt it was a fitting tribute to the lost troops. Indeed, Tennyson wrote "Charge of the Light Brigade" immediately after reading an account of the battle in the paper. The poem became extremely popular and was even distributed in pamphlets among the troops in Crimea (Shannon 22). Despite what Sontag might think, it seems war narrative is not exclusively useful to provoke impassioned opposition. With careful word choice and elegiac form, narrative can also become a fitting memorial. Tennyson's poem shows us that war narrative, like war photography, is an art whose meaning constantly shifts and changes with time and audience.

It is clear that war narrative is not merely, as Sontag suggests, useful as a rallying cry; it can also be a requiem for lost troops. This incarnation of war narrative must understandably distort the event it elegizes, because it is written to honor and flatter

the soldiers who died. (Tennyson even changed the name of the squadron from "the Light Calvary Brigade" to "the Light Brigade" to make it more compact and rhythmic [Shannon 13].) But while this kind of war narrative challenges Sontag's view of the optimum purpose of a war narrative—to provoke outrage—it unwittingly supports her view of the abiding efficacy (or lack thereof) of these kinds of presentations of war. In glorifying these events, we in no way gain a sense of what it must actually have been like to be there. The line "Honor the brave and bold! / Long shall the tale be told" (Tennyson 1) isn't so much a glimpse into a battleground as much as it is a eulogy. Like Fenton, who often distorted the landscape in order to take a powerful photograph, Tennyson romanticizes and elegizes the famous Crimean battle to achieve his ends. But what if a writer's aim is to achieve what Sontag believes is impossible—to capture, for a reader who has never been in a war zone, what the world under fire is like?

Tim O'Brien attempts this very feat in his collection of short stories, *The Things They Carried*, about a platoon of soldiers in the Vietnam War. The stories, told from the perspective of a narrator also named Tim O'Brien, describe the earth-shattering and bizarre life in a war zone and provide glimpses into the broken lives of the soldiers who survived the war. In "Good Form," O'Brien distinguishes between "story-truth" and "happening-truth." A "story truth" may not have technically occurred exactly as it is described but is more faithful to the overall experience than a "happening truth," which occurred in objective reality. He explains: "I want you to feel what I felt. I want you to know why story-truth is truer sometimes than happening-truth" (179). Both Tennyson and O'Brien distort the objective truth in their depictions of war, but for different reasons: Tennyson, to honor the lost soldiers, and O'Brien, to honor what he believes to be the essence of his experience.

Indeed, O'Brien attempts to describe the turmoil going on inside of him by telling stories about the experience that caused it. O'Brien provides an example of a happening-truth: "I was once a soldier. There were many bodies, real bodies with real faces, but I was young then and I was afraid to look. And now, twenty years later, I'm left with faceless responsibility and faceless grief" (180). He juxtaposes this testimony with a story-truth: "He was a slim, dead, almost dainty young man of about twenty. He lay in the center of a red clay trail near the village of My Khe. His jaw was in his throat. His one eye was shut, the other eye was a star-shaped hole. I killed him" (180). With story-truth, O'Brien can give a face to the "faceless responsibility" and "faceless grief" he feels. Story-truth can, in O'Brien's words, "make things present" (180). The nagging feeling in the pit of his stomach twenty years after the war is over can be realized on the page as a "slim, dead, almost dainty young man of about twenty." Story truths, surprisingly more vivid than happening-truths, do not contain happening truths' uncertainty of things unseen. They give faces, names, and places to tenebrous memories.

Story-truths depict war very differently from a staged or a candid war photograph. These stories neither glorify war nor offer the methodical, painstakingly accurate depiction of violence that Sontag sites as a testimony to the power of narrative (98). Instead, O'Brien attempts to combine the control of a staged war photo with the emotional charge of a candid one. Sontag notes that the Vietnam War marked the end of staged war photography (93). It seems O'Brien inherited the legacy of the "lost art." He renders his experiences as he thinks they should be seen, not as he saw them.

O'Brien certainly challenges Sontag's claim that it is impossible to give civilians a sense of what being in a war zone is actually like. But it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine whether or not he achieved his goal. Readers cannot go back in time and find themselves in the midst of battle to see if they would share O'Brien's impressions. But O'Brien's stories can be seen as an antidote to a particular problem Sontag has with war photography: "The problem . . . is that people remember only the photographs. This remembering through photographs eclipses other forms of understanding—and remembering" (Sontag 94). O'Brien's stories enable a reader thinking about war to conjure up more than an out-of-context image. The reader can recall, as soldiers do, snippets of a larger story that are rooted in complex turmoil and emotion.

Both "The Charge of the Light Brigade" and *The Things They Carried* challenge Sontag's limited definition of a war narrative and pose answers to the question of what a war narrative can do for the reader. It can not only provoke opposition, as Sontag argues, but also can act as a memorial, and even venture to give readers a sense of what war is like. But what about the works that Sontag dismisses as unrealistic depictions of war, like *The Iliad*? If we have found prose and poetry that challenge Sontag's original characterizations of war narratives, might it be possible to see beyond Sontag's confining definition of *The Iliad* as a depiction of war that is devoid of emotion?

Sontag argues that *The Iliad* callously presents war as a fact of life:

> Descriptions of the exact fashion in which bodies are injured and killed in combat is a recurring climax in the stories told in the *Iliad*. War is seen as something men do, inveterately, undeterred by the accumulation of suffering it inflicts; to represent war in words or pictures requires a keen, unflinching detachment. (93)

She explains that this view of war—as inveterate, inevitable, and even normal—is a product of the epoch in which Homer wrote *The Iliad*. She explains that, in stark contrast to contemporary belief that "war is an aberration," *The Iliad* reflects a time at which "war has been the norm and peace the exception" (93). Homer's world exists in a continual state of combat, and seems far removed from contemporary America, in which wars involve a select few instead of entire nations and empires. Indeed, the idea of battle as a way of life seems not only archaic but also unrealistic, considering the large number of war veterans suffering from severe Post-Traumatic Stress

Disorder. (Without even mentioning the ever-increasing number of Iraq War veterans suffering from the disease, a quarter-million of the three-quarters-of-a-million combat veterans from Vietnam are still living with severe PTSD [Shay xix].) According to Sontag, *The Iliad* depicts war as ubiquitous, but this view of war is unrealistic, because war ravages a nation so thoroughly that the populace of a prosperous country could not maintain a perpetual state of war. Sontag sees *The Iliad* as a chronicle of a type of warfare that does not, and cannot, resemble our own.

But some see *The Iliad*—the story of warrior Achilles' anger in the Trojan War—not as an unrealistic depiction of war, but rather an extremely astute chronicle of a PTSD victim. Psychologist Jonathan Shay won a Macarthur Fellowship for his work treating PTSD in Vietnam War veterans using Homer's *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. In the introduction to his book, *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character*, he explains how that the story of *The Iliad* was actually similar to that of many Vietnam War veterans:

> Achilles . . . is tortured by guilt and the conviction that he should have died rather than his friend; he renounces all desire to return home alive; he goes berserk and commits atrocities against the living and the dead. This is the story of Achilles in the *Iliad*, not some metaphoric translation of it.
>
> This was also the story of many combat veterans, both from Vietnam and from other long wars . . . I have brought them together with the *Iliad* not to tame, appropriate, or co-opt them but to promote a deeper understanding of both, increasing the reader's capacity to be disturbed by the *Iliad* rather than softening the blow of the veterans' stories. (Shay xxi)

In contrast to Sontag, Shay sees *The Iliad* not as an unflinching, unfeeling depiction of battle, but rather as an accurate chronicle of the emotional turmoil of a soldier in wartime. Reading *The Iliad* helped him better understand—and therefore, better treat—Vietnam War veterans. By adding that he hopes the juxtaposition of the soldiers' stories with *The Iliad* will increase the readers' sensitivity to the epic poem, Shay implies that the emotional potency of the poem might be hard for modern readers to access. This implication sheds new light on Sontag's statement that *The Iliad* presents war as "inveterate" rather than exceptional or life shattering. It is possible that Sontag misread Homer's dutiful descriptions of Achilles' breakdown as detached, when they were, in fact, careful chronicles of a man losing his mind.

Indeed, it seems hard to imagine that Sontag could read Homer's description of Achilles' treatment of his rival Hektor's corpse as "unfeeling." Blinded by grief and rage, Achilles violently abuses the body of Hektor, the Trojan general who murdered Achilles' best friend Patroklos. The brutality of his actions is certainly vividly rendered, but the emotion behind it is apparent:

> [A]t that hour he [Achilles] yoked his team, with Hektor
> tied behind, to drag him out, three times
> around Patroklos' tomb. . . . / . . . Akhilleus [Achilles]
> in rage visited indignity on Hektor
> day after day. (Homer 562)

This description honors Achilles' grief in the wake of his best friend's death by revealing his inability to cope. Homer depicts Achilles dragging Hektor's body around Patroklos' tomb three times and abusing Hektor's body "day after day." As Shay points out, particularly traumatic events, such as betrayal by a leader, death of a friend in arms, or being wounded often leave a soldier at risk of entering a "berserk" state, one of unnecessary and uncontrolled violence. Shay characterizes Achilles—who has suffered all of these events—as "berserk" at this point in the poem.

But the berserk state is not exclusively a product of the Trojan War: a Vietnam veteran's description of his own abuse of a dead victim, included in Shay's book, could just as easily be read as Achilles' internal monologue. He says: "I lost all my mercy. I felt a drastic change after that. I just couldn't get enough. I built up such hate, I couldn't do enough damage. . . . [It] made some of the hurt go away" (quoted in Shay 78). It seems that Achilles is not merely a bloodthirsty warrior; like many soldiers, he is so overcome with emotion that he loses touch with the material world around him.

Parallels between Achilles' narrative and O'Brien's narrative further challenge Sontag's characterization of *The Iliad* as an unfeeling report of the Trojan War. In "How to Tell a True War Story," O'Brien describes his comrade Rat Kiley brutally murdering a baby water buffalo after the death of his best friend, Kurt Lemon. Like Achilles, and many war veterans Shay describes, Rat Kiley goes berserk in the wake of his best friend's death. O'Brien describes the scene: "Rat took careful aim and shot off an ear. . . . It wasn't to kill; it was to hurt. . . . [Rat] shot randomly, almost casually, quick little spurts in the belly and butt. Then he reloaded, squatted down, and shot it in the left front knee" (79). O'Brien, like Homer, describes with languishing detail the violent acts of soldiers in mourning. Both men brutally attack defenseless victims to displace the rage they feel in the wake of the loss of their best friend: Achilles abuses a corpse, and Rat, a baby buffalo. Both men also find it difficult to stop abusing the vulnerable victim. Interestingly, both soldiers' desperate desire for control leads them to abuse defenseless victims. Their testimonies help us begin to comprehend how and why war crimes are committed. The close parallels between the two narratives also shed light on Homer's epic. Like O'Brien, Homer so vividly describes his character's horrifying actions to impress upon the reader how unhinged and nearly inhuman war can make a person. His poetry is not, as Sontag seems to think, a testament to the normalcy of war. Quite the contrary: in fact, it is intended to display the extent to which war can remove a solider from both morality and reality.

Throughout her essay, Sontag looks exclusively at the way in which war photographs have affected viewers unconnected with war. It is not until the end of her essay that she ties in the view of the solider, stubbornly maintaining that the everyday civilian cannot understand what it's like to be in a war zone. But war narratives do not only serve the non-soldier. Unlike photographs, which are taken largely to document events for those who are not present, narratives can be employed in therapy for war veterans. O'Brien explains how his own writings helped him deal with his war experiences: "The act of writing had led me through a swirl of memories that might otherwise have ended in paralysis or worse" (156). It seems that O'Brien's embrace of "story-truth" is inextricably linked to the efficacy of his narratives. Through story truth, he explains, "I can attach faces to grief and love and pity and God . . . I can make myself feel again" (180). Sontag argues that war narratives are incapable of making us feel what war is like. But she leaves out the fact that war narratives can allow soldiers, hardened and withdrawn after the ravages of violence, to feel (something, anything) again.

In his descriptions of his own writing, O'Brien links his ability to remember with his ability to feel again. And O'Brien is not the only war veteran who had difficulty accessing not only emotions but also memories. Amnesia is common in the wake of traumatic events (Shay 172). And as Shay explains, narrative plays a substantial role in the healing (and re-remembering) process for war veterans: "Virtually all treatment methods direct the survivor to construct a personal narrative at some time in his or her recovery" (187). Shay explains that the construction of narrative is often difficult for veterans because sequential time is antithetical to the disorienting experience of battle. His description of the individual fragments that compose a trauma narrative recalls O'Brien's description of "story-truth":

> We see the paradox that narrative temporality can never be completely true to the timeless experience of prolonged, severe trauma. . . . The paradox disappears when we look at narration as a step in the survivor's larger move to communalize the trauma by inducing others who were not there to feel what the victim felt when he or she was going through it. (Shay 191)

Shay connects the two different audiences of war narrative—those who were there, and say we could never understand, and those who want nothing more than to understand. It seems the two parties are inextricably linked. In order to truly recover, a soldier must relay his experiences to a sympathetic audience. Depictions of war, then, can serve at least two audiences: those on the home front and those behind enemy lines. It also seems that war narratives can serve multiple purposes: they can memorialize and elegize soldiers; they can open one's eyes to the horror of war; and they can also allow those who know war all too well to close their eyes and move on with their lives.

When Sontag claims that depictions of war are in some way futile because we—those who have never seen war—just "couldn't get it," she seems to have missed the point. As Tennyson's poem displays, war narratives are not exclusively written to provide an accurate account of a battle. In fact, "accuracy" in war narrative is barely relevant at all. Shay displays that the writer's ability to capture war with emotional acuity, as O'Brien and Homer do, is what enables the soldier and the civilian to better understand each other. The soldier remembers how to feel, and the civilian gains some semblance of understanding the soldier's experiences. The war photograph gives the viewer a false sense of certainty; having seen a photograph, we are bound to think we have a sense of the milieu the image captures. The war narrative, at its most effective, has the opposite effect. It shows the reader just enough of the horrors of war to make him or her understand what soldiers must wrestle with daily—the utter incomprehensibility of it all.

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THE BLACK JAZZ MUSICIAN IN AMERICAN MAGAZINES, 1930-1950

ANNE K. MINOFF

The period between 1930 and 1950 represents a paradigm shift in Americans' thinking about race and its status in public discourse. It was during this time that the prevailing ideology of the Reconstruction era—white supremacy—was overtaken by a new ideology of "color-blindness" or "race-neutrality." Admittedly, it is unlikely that the average American at this time would have recognized this transformation. However, chances are good that if our average American was a magazine reader, he would have been exposed to the direct effects of this ideological shift through his reading of articles about jazz. Changes in the portrayal of jazz musicians in magazines from 1930 to 1950 are closely associated with concurrent changes in racial ideology. Whereas the explicitly racist discourse of magazine writers in the thirties reflects the poisonous ideology that dominated at the turn of the century, coverage from the forties partakes of the dominant "color-blind" ideology that continues to influence public discourse even today.

The 1930s marked the tail end of what historians have termed the "nadir of race relations" in the United States.[1] This period, extending from roughly 1890 to 1940, marked the height of white oppression of African Americans after the abolition of slavery. The virulent racism of the Nadir was abetted by the spurious "science" of the eugenicists and social Darwinists who dominated the scientific discussion of race at the turn of the century. Race, according to these scientists, was a discrete, biological feature responsible for determining an individual's intelligence, disposition, and sexual behavior (Omi 14). Scientifically unsound comparative studies of IQ allowed eugenicists to claim that European (and particularly Nordic) intellectual superiority over other races was genetic. Comparative studies of white and black physiology allowed social Darwinists to suggest that whites were more evolved than other races (Sitkoff 191). Taking their cue from their colleagues in the sciences, historians set about the task of rewriting history to adequately reflect the supposed superiority of the white race.

Paradoxically, it was during the Nadir, when defenders of white supremacy were resorting to scholarly acrobatics to avoid attributing anything of cultural value to blacks, that jazz first became popular with white Americans. In the Roaring Twenties, jazz's origins in the African American community only increased its appeal—if not for the nation's conservative cultural critics, then for a younger generation of white Americans. They regarded jazz as emblematic of rebellion against the staid cultural mores of the older generation. That jazz was played by black musicians in illegal speakeasies and allowed for "close" (that is, sexual) dancing made it seem all the more exotic and transgressive.

By the 1930s, jazz's transgressive appeal had been mitigated by Swing music's admittance into the white mainstream. Band leaders such as Duke Ellington and Fletcher Henderson popularized swing in performances at urban nightclubs and large dance halls which, in the South at least, were segregated. The musicians themselves, however, were both white and black, with black band leaders such as Ellington and Count Basie enjoying at least as much success as white band leaders like Benny Goodman. Indeed, Louis Armstrong, the most celebrated and recognized Swing musician of that era, was African American.

To the extent that magazines covered jazz in the years prior to 1930, it was to denigrate it and the musicians who played it in the explicitly racist rhetoric characteristic of the Nadir. As Maureen Anderson points out in her article "The White Reception of Jazz in America," mainstream critiques cast jazz as the music of primitive and crude savages, dangerous because it encouraged listeners to revert to their animalistic instincts. As a critic in *Literary Digest* wrote in 1917, "The groups that play for dancing, when colored, seem infected with the virus that they try to instill as a stimulus in others" (qtd. in Anderson 136). A writer for *Current Opinion* in 1919 continued the assault on the jazz musician when he wrote of musician Jasbo Brown that "when he imbibed freely of gin, which was his favorite pastime, he had a way of screaming above the melody with a strange barbaric abandon" (qtd. in Anderson 140).

Journalists in the 1930s, though generally more positive towards jazz and jazz musicians, nevertheless continued to partake of this racist discourse, though it could be argued their racism was of a more subtle variety than that of their predecessors. Nadir-era rhetoric was now deployed under the pretense of objectively "explaining" jazz to readers or else was dismissed as "all in good fun." The authors of "Hot Jazz Jargon," published in *Vanity Fair* in 1935, for example, offer readers a racist assessment of jazz music and jazz musicians under the guise of explaining jazz jargon. Another *Vanity Fair* article of the same year, entitled "Louis Armstrong," is written entirely in an affected "black" dialect that author Hermann Deutsch evidently intended readers to find humorous. The article is billed as "semi-fiction" and loosely relates the circumstances of Louis Armstrong's boyhood in New Orleans. The opening lines set the tone for the entire piece: "Hayah pappy! Hayah mammy! Hayah de gal chillen and de boy chillen all both!" Deutsch recognizes that Armstrong, a black musician in Jim Crow America, plays to audiences in the South that are entirely white, a fact that he seems to interpret as a bellwether of racial change: "White folks in de white light—Black folks in de black light—All but Louis Armstrong—He in de white light too, now. It ain't like it useter be, brudders and sisters" (70). Of course, the great irony is that the very existence of this offensive article delineates the very real limits within which Armstrong was forced to work.

Esquire's fictional "Impossible Interview" of the next year uses dialect to similar effect. The "interview," a regular feature in *Esquire*, pitted two cultural icons against each other in a fictional discussion. In this case, Louis Armstrong stands opposite the

popular white classical violinist Fritz Kreisler. There is no doubt that the contrast between Armstrong's dialect and Kreisler's normative English was intended to be comical, though it branded Armstrong as the uneducated one in the debate. However, the attitude of the author toward jazz musicians in general might be construed as positive; with encouragement from Armstrong, Kreisler begins to "swing" "The Moonlight Sonata" and declares: "Maybe there's something to this swing business after all" ("Impossible" 33). The author suggests white musicians might learn something from black jazz musicians, but he seems also to imply that jazz is legitimated only by white approval. Armstrong is portrayed as a grinning, happy-go-lucky, Uncle Tom who, in declaring "I don' wanna be in no symphony. I wanna swing," betrays a lack of sophistication and an inability to appreciate forms of "high art" (33).

Nadir-era racism was already on its way out by the 1930s. Criticism of the eugenicists' and social Darwinists' conception of race came from a group of social scientists headed by the eminent American anthropologist Franz Boas. How did anthropologists become caught up in a debate heretofore dominated by biologists? The historian Peggy Pascoe offers an explanation:

> [F]or social scientists, the attack on racialism was not so much an end in itself as a function of a larger goal of establishing "culture" as a central social science paradigm. Intellectually and institutionally, Boas and his followers staked their claim to academic authority on their conviction that human difference and human history were best explained by culture. (53)

Social scientists began their assault by refuting the claim that race was a discrete biological characteristic. The claims of scientific racism had rested on the biological purity of racial categories, but Nadir-era scientists had failed to arrive at a comprehensive list of discrete races. In fact, the number of identified races had continued to mushroom over the course of the nineteenth century as new categories were created to accommodate exceptions to the pre-existing metric. Social scientists exploited this weakness. The fact that, throughout history, people of differing ancestry had crossed paths and procreated, Boas pointed out, made the idea of discrete racial categories patently ridiculous. Finally, in a series of groundbreaking studies, Boas, Aldous Huxley, Lancelot Hogben, and Theodore Dobzhansky proved the degree of genetic variation within and between races to be roughly comparable (Sitkoff 193-4).

Other studies attacked claims that whites were both more evolved and more intelligent than blacks. The social Darwinists' assertion that physical differences—for example, in hair texture and degree of jaw protrusion—between whites and blacks indicated that whites had progressed further evolutionarily, was upset by a study reinterpreting the same data to indicate black evolutionary superiority. Psychologist Otto Klineberg's IQ studies undercut social Darwinists' claims about white inborn intellectual superiority. The IQ test, his studies concluded, did not actually measure

inborn intelligence. Rather, higher scores correlated with higher education levels and high socioeconomic status. Only a cultural explanation of intelligence, Klineberg argued, could account for the fact that blacks in the North often outscored whites in the South on IQ tests (Sitkoff 191-2).

By the late 1940s, the popular conception of race had been so radically undercut that many intellectuals were calling for race to be banned from public discourse entirely. In a 1941 issue of the *Journal of Heredity*, British anthropologist Ashley Montagu argued that race should be abandoned for the following reasons:

> (1) that it is artificial; (2) that it does not agree with the facts; (3) that it leads to confusion and perpetuation of error, and finally that for all these reasons it is meaningless or rather more accurately such meaning as it possesses is false. Being so weighted down with false meaning it were better that the term be dropped than that any attempt should be made to give it new meaning. (qtd. in Sitkoff 191)

Even biologists seemed to agree. Julian Huxley wrote that "the question begging term race [should] be banished . . . from all discussion of human affairs" (qtd. in Sitkoff 191).

Color-blindness was born out of this desire to relegate race to the sidelines of public discourse. It encouraged Americans to ignore or at least de-emphasize race as a significant factor in people's lives. Race might still have been a problem, but it was a problem with a built-in solution: the success that Irish and Jewish immigrants had had in assimilating into mainstream American culture would, many Americans felt, inevitably be repeated by African Americans. Slavery had set them back in this process, but that roadblock had since been removed. All that was left for Americans to do to facilitate black assimilation into the normative culture was to ignore race and let the problem solve itself. Needless to say, the shift toward a color-blind ideology did not represent a wholesale abandonment of the idea of race. As Jon Panish explains, "The not-so-subtle message encoded in color-blindness . . . is that white and black Americans should begin to move away from the stigmatized category of blackness to the privileged, unmarked category of whiteness" (6).

Color-blind discourse began to emerge in mainstream magazine coverage of jazz in the years after WWII. By this time, Swing could no longer claim the undivided attention of the press; Bebop was taking over. A new avant-garde style of jazz pioneered by a younger generation of musicians, Bebop was largely a response to what musicians criticized as the "sticky" sweetness of popular Swing music. Developed during after-hours jam sessions at Minton's jazz club in Harlem, it was fast, frenetic, incorporated unusual new harmonies, and often had no discernible melody. Trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie and saxophonist Charlie Parker were Bebop's primary innovators, but it was Gillespie who became the ambassador of Bop in the mainstream magazine press. Richard O. Boyer's use of color-blind discourse in *The New Yorker's* July 1948 profile

of Gillespie is marked. He reports that Gillespie's fans, "both white and black" describe him adoringly using the same, characteristically "bop" slang. Gillespie, they say, is "real crazy," "a bitch," and "a killer" (28). Boyer associates black jazz musicians and their black fans with cultural movements revered by *The New Yorker's* intellectual, and mostly white, readership. "Many of the Negro adherents of bebop" he writes, "take a subsidiary interest in psychoanalysis and abstract art" (28). When musicians have received formal musical training, Boyer mentions it. In fact, he continually offers up an image of the jazz musician as a thoughtful intellectual, someone with whom *New Yorker* readers might presumably identify. He describes the Bop pianist Thelonious Monk as "scholarly" and quotes him as saying "We [Bop musicians] liked Ravel, Stravinsky, Debussy, Prokofieff, Schoenberg, and maybe we were a little influenced by them" (30). He attempts to offset the popular stereotype that Bop music was fueled by jazz musicians' drug habits, emphasizing Gillespie collaborator Gil Fuller's "impeccable morals" and relaying Fuller's view that claims of drug use were "a gross and gratuitous libel" (29).

When a discussion of the racism Jazz musicians faced becomes unavoidable, Boyer's language becomes either vague or light and dismissive. He notes, for example, that "many Negro boppers like to pretend that they are Arabs," assuming Arab-sounding names and wearing turbans. Thelonious Monk, he says, "sometimes forgets that he was born of West Sixty-Third Street and announces that he is a native of Damascus" (31). His joking tone trivializes what he clearly recognizes as an attempt by black jazz musicians to escape the racism to which they were regularly subjected. When he reveals that Gillespie dons a turban from time to time when abroad, he speaks of him "[appreciating] this flight from harsh reality," (31) leaving readers to infer just what the nature of Gillespie's reality might be. He goes on to attribute the Islamic conversions of many boppers to a desire to escape what he vaguely calls "their American environment" (31).

That intellectuals at *The New Yorker* would be responsive to color-blind discourse may not be surprising, but this same gesture is discernible in *Life*'s photo essay of a few months later. A series of thirteen glossy photos, appearing in the magazine's regular feature "*Life* Goes to a Party" document what readers are led to believe constitute the scenes of Dizzy Gillespie's everyday life. In one, Gillespie jams with other jazz musicians, including the white pianist Mel Powell. In another, he signs publicity shots for white female fans who, in imitation of him, wear blue berets, thick-framed black glasses, and fake goatees. Shots taken at Billy Berg's Hollywood nightclub show the popular white singer Mel Tormé and actress Ava Gardner (wearing her own beret, glasses, and fake beard) enjoying Gillespie's show and socializing with the musician. One cannot imagine a more compelling illustration of mainstream white approval of the black jazz musician.

However much magazine writers or photojournalists partook of color-blind discourse, it was not enough to fully overcome their opposing tendency to "otherize"

black jazz artists. Bop musicians were too often portrayed one-dimensionally as adherents of an exotic and entertainingly coded subculture. The role of the white magazine writer was to interpret, often humorously, the curious behavior of the Beboppers for their white readership. In the *Life* photo essay, for example, a series of four photographs illustrates the "Bebop Greeting." The first photo depicts Gillespie and fellow musician Benny Carter greeting each other with what the caption explains are typical Bop salutations: "Bells, man! Where you been?" Next they flash "the flatted fifth" hand signal (which the author explains is a note common in Bebop), and shout "Eel-ya-dah!" (in imitation of Bebop triplet notes), before finally gripping one another's hands in the last panel. The caption wryly explains that it is only after completing this "ritual" that Beboppers can "converse" (139). With an air of theatricality, the author refers to Gillespie's beret, glasses, and rumpled suit as "the boppers' required costume" (139). Musicians' Islamic beliefs function as another entertaining aspect of their subculture, necessitating yet another set of complex rituals exotic to white readers. A photo depicts Gillespie (who was not actually Muslim but Bahá'í) at home in his Hollywood apartment bowing prostrate towards Mecca. The caption explains that Beboppers who have converted to Islam often "interrupt rehearsals at sunset to bow to the east (142).

Thus while magazine articles about jazz musicians during the period 1930 to 1950 show a distinct trend away from the racial discourse of the Nadir to the color-blind discourse of the 1940s, this does not mean racial discourse was abandoned. There remained a tendency to exoticize the jazz musician—to emphasize rather than downplay racial difference. In articles that self-consciously adopt the discourse of color-blindness, the importance of race is felt in its absence. It is the thing not spoken about. Race in these articles emerges as significant only insofar as it serves the interests of the white magazine writer to have it do so.

That the oppositional tendencies to downplay and exoticize race could exist side by side in articles about jazz should come as no surprise, as these impulses continue to characterize our modern discourse. What, after all, is "political correctness" if not a kind of color-blindness? If magazine writers in the 1940s adopted color-blindness because they believed, like so many white Americans, in the inevitability of assimilation, they have remained so today because to discuss racial difference would be to concede that it cannot yet be relegated to history. In spite of the persistence of color-blind discourse, however, the American mass media continues to exoticize the black musician. Just as white Americans in the twenties were captivated by the transgressive black jazz artist who inhabited the exotic world of Harlem speakeasies, white Americans today are transfixed by the black rap artist, evoked in the popular imagination as a streetwise hustler negotiating the urban ghetto. In this tendency towards the simultaneous diminution and amplification of race, the limits of color-blindness as an ideology are laid bare. After almost seven decades of operating within

these limits, perhaps it is time for a new generation of Americans to ask whether it will continue to do so.

NOTE

1. The Nadir was first defined by the historian Rayford W. Logan as the period from 1877-1901. The length of the Nadir period has since been redefined by a number of scholars. Here I adopt the sociologist James W. Loewen's definition of the Nadir as the period from 1890 to 1940.

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WHO OWNS ARCHITECTURE? COPYRIGHT AND THE FREEDOM TOWER CONTROVERSY

JOHN NG

Designed to fill the gap in the Manhattan skyline left by the *9/11* terrorist attacks, the original design of Freedom Tower, unveiled in late 2003, was inevitably invested with symbolic significance. Freedom Tower was meant to mark the re-emergence of innovative American architecture; its chief architect, David Childs, wanted the building to "demonstrate that American thinking and construction can compare with the best new examples in Europe, Asia and elsewhere" (Lacayo). These expectations and ambitions made it all the more shocking when architect Thomas Shine accused Childs and his firm, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM), of copyright infringement.

Of course, copyright protection implies that there is property to protect, and moreover, that someone has ownership of that piece of intellectual property. Because the purpose of American copyright law is to encourage progress, the assumption is that ownership of designs will give architects incentive to create increasingly efficient and visually pleasing buildings. But this copyright paradigm has not always existed in the field of architecture. The Architectural Works Copyright Protection Act (AWCP), which Shine invoked, did not come into being until 1990. And it is far from certain whether protecting claims to ownership in architecture will help or hinder the future of the built environment. This, then, seems to be the question at the heart of the recent Freedom Tower dispute: does granting ownership serve progress? The Freedom Tower controversy may shed some light on how the question is discussed today, how the current paradigm fits into larger historical trends in architecture, and how valid it might be to protect architects' claims to ownership.

Shine made his claim public in November 2004 when he charged Childs and SOM of plagiarism. In a suit under the AWCP Act, Shine argued that as an architecture master's student in 1999, he presented a project titled "Olympic Tower" to Childs, who was on the review panel for the class. Olympic Tower featured a tapering top and twisting body that was wrapped in an exterior structure with a repeating diamond-shaped motif. When Shine saw a similar combination of these elements in Childs' version of Freedom Tower in 2003, he smelled a rat; shortly after, he copyrighted his student project and sued Childs for infringement (Brown). A brief struggle over the legitimacy of the lawsuit ensued, with SOM asserting that the elements in Olympic Tower were in fact not original and hence ineligible for copyright protection. However, the court ruled that a lay observer "might find that the Freedom Tower's twisting shape and undulating diamond-shaped façade make it substantially similar to Olympic Tower" (Judge Michael B. Mukasey quoted in "Architect's lawsuit").

But exactly what about the tower's "design" was in dispute? And what part of the design was being protected by copyright? We may gain insight into the contours of the debate by looking at the rhetoric, which on first inspection suggests that it is the individual design features that were in question. Shine's argument centered on the suspicious replication in Childs' proposal of the distinctive elements which characterized his Olympic Tower. Newspaper reports on the infringement case broke down the architectural design into discrete copied elements and enumerated the "twisting surfaces," "diagonal exterior grid" and "other similarities" ("Architect sues"). The language suggests that such design elements are like Lego components; Shine's position was that each block in Freedom Tower was copied from his own skyscraper. Childs and SOM defended their position in similarly reductive terms, claiming that "most of these elements have been industry standards for decades" (SOM spokesperson Elizabeth Kubany quoted in "Architect sues"). If the parts that make up Olympic Tower are ineligible for copyright protection, SOM argued, then so is the design of Olympic Tower itself. What really appears to be at the heart of the case is the appropriation of the tapering, twisting and exterior grids en masse. It was not just the individual reappearance of these elements that startled Shine, but the copying of his own particular way of assembling these features.

But why is it significant that the legal conflict should be drawn over the arrangement of elements into a whole and not the elements themselves? In architecture, the overall composition of a building is of primary importance as far as the observer's experience is concerned. According to journalist Clay Risen, we appreciate architecture "holistically." "The vast majority of people, inside and out of the profession judge a building by the sum of its parts to the near exclusion of its individual elements," Risen asserts. If we do, indeed, see first and foremost the overall concept and character of a building, then there may be some credence to the view that Childs' design was suspiciously close to Shine's student project in its particular combination of architectural forms. The court that ruled on the case used a holistic approach, judging how average people would perceive similarity and difference according to a "total concept and feel" test (Brown). Although cultural progress is the goal of copyright, the court ruling suggests that progress can be made by simply rearranging external features of the design.

Fordham University law professor Raphael Winick argues for the equation of progress with rearrangement when she writes that architectural progress "consists of appropriating elements from the architectural vocabulary, and rearranging them in a more useful or more aesthetically pleasing way" (1605). Originality and innovation manifest themselves in the very combination of elements that Shine supposedly created, Childs purportedly stole, and copyright law is meant to be protecting. Winick writes that appropriation of existing design elements, such as the twisting façade and exterior diagonal trusses, "is absolutely essential" (1604) for the profession, but she would likely argue that the wholesale repetition of a particular arrangement of elements

would be antithetical to progress. Winick does acknowledge that "The incremental innovation that can transform art may be very slow and subtle," and that "small alterations in a previous design may constitute a significant utilitarian or aesthetic advance" (1605). However, by "small alterations," she appears to imply the introduction of some heretofore foreign element into a new context; she gives the example of the surprising and bold addition of a broken pediment, usually found on top of grandfather clocks, to the AT&T building in New York (1605). Simply placing Olympic Tower's torqued body, tapering crown and triangular trusswork in the novel context of ground zero would not qualify as any functional or aesthetic advancement, as Winick's idea of a "small alteration" seems to mean a quite substantial addition to the design.

Winick's contention that architectural evolution may be slow was embraced by old masters such as Mies van der Rohe, who reportedly said, "I don't want to be original, I want to be good" (quoted in Rybczynski). Mies, like Winick, recognized that architectural ideas had to be refined instead of created anew. But there is a key difference between Mies's position and Winick's: Mies would have probably approved of miniscule changes to the previous design, whereas Winick calls for design elements to be reshuffled, if only subtly. Instead of constantly producing new arrangements, existing ones ought to be returned to over and over again and tweaked to near perfection. Perhaps architectural advancement is not achieved by adding or taking away features from a certain combination—as you would introduce new blocks to a Lego construction—but by slightly altering the design's whole, even if the basic elements are kept intact. This possibility seems to be one that current architectural copyright law has overlooked. One only has to consider how the Freedom Tower controversy was debated to see that legal practice operates on Winick's rather narrow assumption of progress and not Mies' more open one.

Clearly there has been a shift in what constitutes architectural progress, and copyright law has developed in response to the times. To determine how valid the recent legal claims to ownership are, we need to look beyond our current epoch and see how architecture has worked historically. *Slate* architecture critic Witold Rybczynski writes that "For most of the last 500 years, imitation was the sincerest form of architectural flattery." Renaissance architects imitated ancient styles and gladly borrowed from and even depended on the work of their contemporaries. The profession was therefore a collaborative pursuit in which "ideas bounced back and forth, gathering momentum in the process" (Rybczynski). This unembarrassed reliance on previous works meant that no single "author"—so far as there could be one—owned the ideas. Even in the early twentieth century when "pioneers such as Mies van der Rohe made discoveries, they belonged to everyone; it was a sign of esteem when other architects copied." Now, however, we live in a moment "in which originality is valued above all" (Rybczynski). Clay Risen theorizes that postmodernism, with its rejection of dominant aesthetic rules, is to blame. Risen explains that ever since

the advent of postmodernism in 1950s, we have had what he calls an "anti-paradigm" in which there is no "single, definable, ruling aesthetic," only the aesthetic of difference. The result is that "each architect, rather than building off others in the formation and perfection of a particular aesthetic, is supposed to develop his or her own aesthetic to the near exclusion of everyone else." Unlike the "International Style" of Mies' era in which largely derivative steel and glass office towers swept cityscapes around the world, the emphasis today is on anarchic uniqueness. Suddenly, influence is out of fashion and fierce independence and originality is in vogue.

But fashion does not always reflect the facts; no matter what the current trends, today's architects are still very much influenced by the past and still rely heavily on creative exchange and collaboration. If anything, modern-day projects are more technically complex, requiring not only additional engineers but an entire hierarchy of designers who migrate from one firm to the next, taking others' ideas with them. Amidst this hubbub of interaction and influence, the "romantic image of the solitary genius," as journalist Fred Bernstein calls it, can only be a myth, for "an architect cannot but be influenced by images seen and remembered" (Giovannini). When Shine was a student working on Olympic Tower, surely myriad influences from his colleagues and professors were at work on him, and it is likely that he influenced others, including Childs. Even if there is no formal contact between architects, there is still that thing called the zeitgeist. Robert A. M. Stern, dean of the architecture school that Shine attended, describes it as such: "In any given moment . . . things are in the air. So people in different parts of the world often come to very similar solutions" (quoted in Dunlap). Shine and Childs probably tweaked and toyed with the same design solutions, bouncing ideas off of each other like all other architects present and past.

The trouble with our obsession with originality today is that it "distorts the creative process" (Rybczynski) which is necessarily characterized by this cauldron of collaboration, exchange and influence. Today's skewed conception of good architecture shifts the focus away from improving the built environment through refining a design. Instead, ambitious architects are pressured to cultivate their idiosyncratic style. Perhaps this emphasis on the importance of being an original thinker led Shine to file for infringement. Had attitudes about architecture been different, the case may never have arisen, and architectural copyright law may not be practiced today as frequently and restrictively. Of course, the very existence of the 1990 AWCP Act is a product of our mode of thinking about the architectural profession of late.

But the act of codifying current attitudes into law may also reinforce them. Professor of architecture Robert Greenstreet has conjectured that fear of litigation may lead to a "design-to-be-different" strategy. The result would be a dystopian landscape of utter visual discord; the AWCP Act might prevent individual buildings from "creating visual harmony with existing surroundings" (Greenstreet and

Klingaman 182). More generally, Rybczynski fears that the "architectural conversations" that are so crucial to the creative process may cease and that "the process of architectural evolution may grind to a halt as architects are forced to start from scratch each time they approach a project" (Risen). This seems to be only one step away from Shine's claiming legal ownership to his particular arrangement of taper, twist and trusswork and then suing Childs for not being original enough.

Given these grim prospects for the future, it could very well be that our current copyright paradigm is based on a misreading of the architectural creative process, that it is not doing justice to the complex question of ownership, and that by legalizing ownership it is stifling the profession's vitality. Borrowing and influencing, consciously or not, has long been an essential, at times even institutionalized, part of building design. One might even say these are among the timeless ingredients for architectural evolution. Only in recent decades has such influence become scandalous. Granted, Childs' Freedom Tower may have been strikingly "unoriginal," but perhaps this close similarity—a resemblance that borders on what some might call "plagiarism"—is what actually drives progress in architectural design. Originality, enforced by our current copyright laws, may have the opposite effect and could wreck the built environment. This possibility should make us rethink copyright protection and its place in architecture. To grant copyright is essentially to confer ownership, with all the risks of choking a profession that depends on the free exchange of ideas.

Appendix

Fig. 1

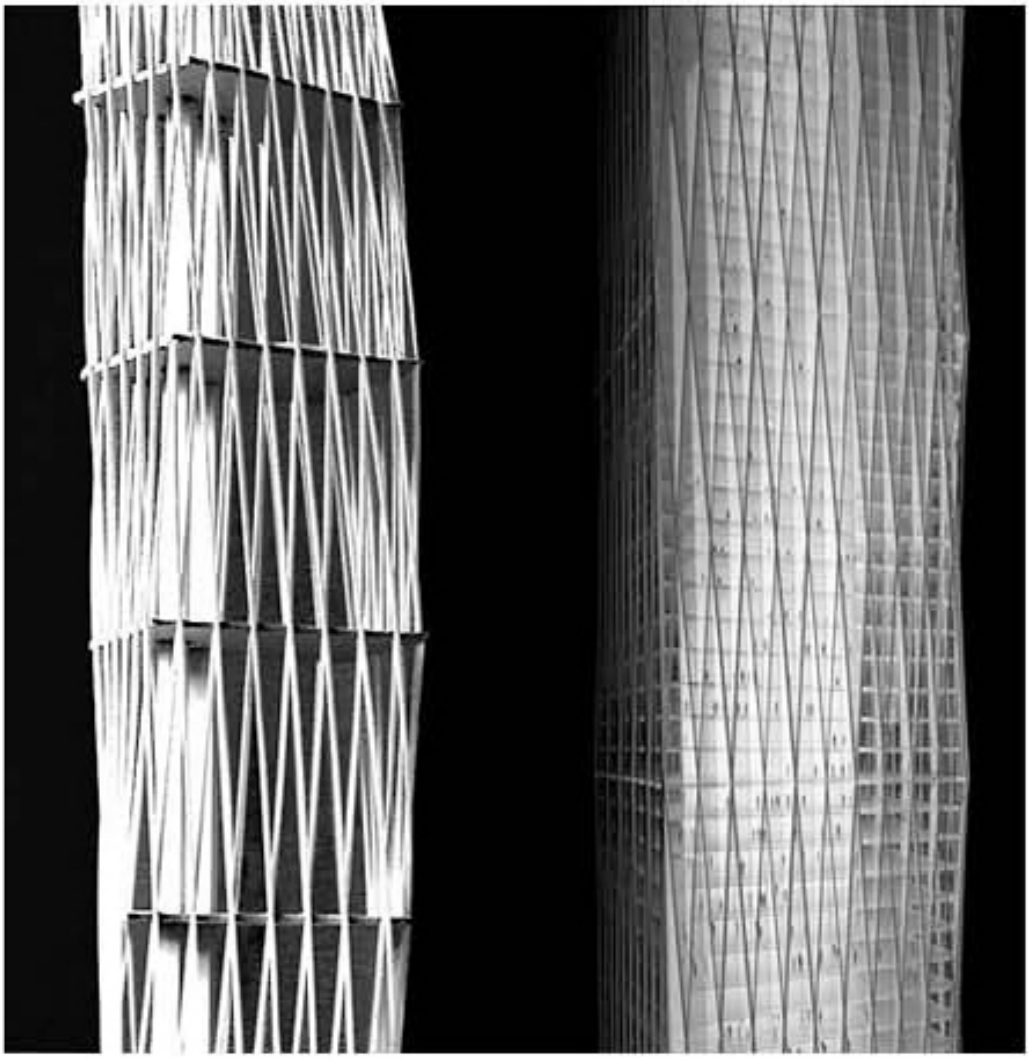

Fig. 2

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ANNE FRANK: FINDING THE TRUTH (AND LIES) IN DIARY-WRITING

SHERI PAN

"You betrayed millions of readers." With these words, Oprah confronted the author who had aroused a storm of controversy in the literary world. His name was James Frey, and, in four short months, his new best-selling memoir, *A Million Little Pieces*, had come under extreme scrutiny. The problem was that James Frey's memoir was not a memoir at all—he had dramatized large sections of his life, in one instance expanding his hours in jail to three months. Frey fueled an already fiery debate over artistic license and dramatic rendering in the "non-fiction" genres of memoir and autobiography. How rigidly can and should authors adhere to the facts when recounting their life stories? By examining *The Diary of Anne Frank* as an emblematic work of the genre, it becomes clear that the faithful recounting of one's own life is extremely difficult, if not impossible.

The world of self-narratives is often chaotic and blurry. Author Tom Sykes ironically announced in the *Guardian* that "fake memoirs are all the rage," and publishers have created genre after genre of "autobiographical novel," "semi-autobiographical novel," "roman à clef," and "nonfiction novel." The ambiguity lies in autobiography's presentational aim. Autobiography involves not only the portrayal of one's life, but also "the construction of a public self" (Goffman 26). Erving Goffman asserts in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* that each person takes on a role that they present to the world. In the process of self-representation, a conflict of interest arises: an author is tempted "to lie and to exaggerate," to construct his or her own character. Although autobiography implies a "true" representation of the author's life, language "always contains the possibility of lying" (Spicer 386). In the attempt to fashion a life into an interesting, readable book, autobiography takes on an "uneasy relation to fiction," and this makes its factuality highly questionable.

If the autobiography is stripped of its self-consciousness—the motivation to dramatize, shape, and inflate—a unique genre, objective and factual, presumably emerges. The diary seems to stand alone in its claim to pure introspection. Philippe Lejeune, a French specialist of autobiography, lists the four functions of a diary: self-expression, reflection, the suspension of time, and the potential for pleasure from the writing process (106). The author pens a diary not for another's entertainment or guidance, but for him- or herself. There is an element of secrecy that autobiographies lack in their exhibitionism—many people have memories of hiding childhood journals from parents. Where the autobiography thrives in its outward direction, in its desire to communicate with a world of readers, the diary begins as an inward turn; the writer is "alone, unable to pour it out to a friendly ear" (106). Without the social obligation to

present a coherent face and personality, a diarist can theoretically be honest with their dullness, their shortcomings, and their contradictions. The vacuum of pretensions should expose the true human being, stripped down and humbled.

In practice however, capturing an authentic experience proves much more difficult. Anne Frank's diary points to the fluid relationship between the diary and the autobiography. The intertwining of the two genres begins with an author's shifting intentions. When Frank first receives a blank, plaid journal at the age of thirteen, she intends it for her personal support and perusal. She writes, "I hope I shall be able to confide in you completely, as I have never been able to do in anyone before, and I hope that you will be a great support and comfort to me" (177). The word, "confide," confers a secretive dimension to her writing. When she mentions that others, curious for a peek, have asked to read her diary, she describes their requests as breaches of her privacy. Frank seeks to relay her deeper feelings and thoughts through the most unassuming of mediums.

Frank first mentions the idea of publishing her work when she hears a radio reporter suggest "a collection of diaries and letters after the war" (578). However, she moves on from this idea, or perhaps misinterprets it, to instead muse upon "Een roman van het Achterhuis," or "a romance of the 'Secret Annexe.'" The Dutch word, "roman," more accurately translates into "novel" in English (Caplan 81), and it is here that the reader first glimpses Frank's changing intentions. She sees that her diary will help with her "greatest wish . . . to become a journalist someday and later on a famous writer" (Frank 647). After constructing these plans, Frank's diary takes on a new dimension: it no longer serves a merely personal function, but now provides the catalyst for Frank's dream of becoming a celebrated author. She sees her diary as the foundation for a novel, a genre of fiction, and this vision, above all else, cements her decision to revise her entries.

Frank proclaims, "I want to go on living after my death!" (Frank 647). And so she begins editing her earlier entries, adding, deleting, and rewording. Her revisions mimic the process of producing autobiography by reflecting upon the past. Autobiography looks back, "so if something escapes you, it's the origin, not the ending" (Lejeune 103). In the act of revision, one inserts insights only later received and reconciles inconsistencies. In contrast, diarists are rooted in the present: there is no lapse in time between experiencing and reflecting on paper, and the diarist's stories—his or her life—obviously lack an "ending." The future "slips away . . . by showing up once again in the beyond." (Lejeune 103). Although Frank's original entries indeed unfold over the course of her time in the Annex and "she writes without knowing for certain the end of her story" (Caplan 81), she foresees an eventual ending. On May 20, 1944, she enthuses, "I have started my 'Achterhuis.' It is as good as finished" (Frank 653). The diarist always drives on, as the writing has no plot or form but the "shape of death" (Lejeune 103), Frank's work possesses a direction. Her *Het Achterhuis* cannot live past

her time at the Annex. In creating a conclusion for her diary, she enables herself to reflect, reexamine, and reshape her own story.

From May to July of 1944, Frank edited her two previous years of entries. The Critical Edition separates Frank's work into separate drafts—the a-text includes her originals, the b-text contains her own revisions, and the c-text the published version. These versions "set the Diary in a no-man's-land between fiction and memoir" (Caplan 81). What Frank seeks to accomplish in altering her diary is to enhance its drama and artistic value. She seeks "to make the Diary both more vivid (pleasurable) and more public (useful) (Caplan 82). She simultaneously recalls and creates reality by rewriting a more explicit experience of everyday life. She injects into paragraphs the interruptions of daily life, the casual exclamations, and spur-of-the-moment observations. In most cases, a small addition along the lines of "it is so peaceful at the moment" (Frank 185) suffices, but her edits involving her family's arrest prove much more heavy-handed.

Her original entry on the event spans two paragraphs and only briefly captures the shock. She summaries her feelings with a concise, single sentence: "Of course I started to cry terribly and there was an awful to-do in our house" (207). When she revisits this text two years later, however, she unabashedly sells the fear and the despair of the situation. She alters the narrative structure, foreshadowing the soldiers' entry before the arrest. She ends it with a cryptic, "hurried interjection of the present tense" (Caplan 82): "There goes the doorbell, Hello's here, I'll stop." The audience is later led to the horrifying discovery that this visitor is actually the policeman and feels like they are there to witness it all.

The revised entry detailing the actual arrest expands greatly beyond the original and spans five pages. This time, Frank recounts in vivid detail her heightened emotions, the hour-by-hour developments, and the arduous task of packing. She speaks in fearful language—"I picture concentration camps and lonely cells" (207)—and describes her surroundings with attentiveness: "The stripped beds, the breakfast things lying on the table, a pound of meat in the kitchen for the cat" (210). The palpable suspense and the colorful scenes that seemingly unfold in real-time dramatize the story for an audience. When, after the arrest, she writes in the b-text, "Years seem to have passed between Sunday and now," one wonders if she saw the irony. Years did pass between that fateful Sunday and the penning of that sentence—two, to be exact.

With the decision to publicize a text, there suddenly appears the recognition of an audience. The process of composing a diary for presentation involves not only the enhancing of literary content, but also the censorship of sensitive entries. Frank never intends for her audience to glimpse the immaturity and idealism that comes with adolescence. She writes at fifteen, "When I look over my diary today, 1½ years on . . . I no longer understand how I could write so freely . . . I really blush with shame when I read the pages dealing with subjects that I'd much better have left to the imagination. I put it all down so bluntly!" (305). Her "shame" refers to her entries on puberty (567)

along with her romance with Peter van Pels, and she relieves this shame by removing a considerable number of these diaries.

Her original entries on Peter are long and detailed. She writes as a young teenage girl, infatuated and exuberant at her first taste of love. "Oh, Peter, just say something at last, don't let me drift on between hope and dejection," she gushes (526). Naturally, after her enchantment fades, she feels inclined to excise entire months of entries that reference her preoccupation with him. She recreates her own adolescence, turning a "private diary into a public document" (Caplan 79). Even as a young author, Frank understands how text and identity merge: the diary serves as her reader's only source for judging her character.

In moving from the a-text to the b-text, Frank frequently censors herself to control her identity. However, one can only guess at her ultimate plan, as she was never able to finish her work. Publishers, however, continued where she left off, interpreting, editing, and repackaging the author to fit their perceptions and preferences. In particular, there is a "de-judaisation" of her work in moving from the b-text to the c-text, as Rachel Feldhay Brenner discusses in "Anne Frank's Portrait as a Young Artist." She champions *Het Achterhuis* as "an extraordinary piece of writing produced by an extraordinary writer under extraordinary circumstances" (Brenner 109). Frank herself testifies to the significance of her identity and acknowledges "awareness of the terrifying historical reality against which, as a Jew, she writes her life story" (109). In her diary, Frank comments, "It would be quite funny 10 years after the war if we Jews were to tell how we lived and what we ate and talked about here" (578). "We Jews," she proclaims. Her work centers around her individual life story, but this story is inextricably connected to her Judaism. She recognizes her narrative's indebtedness to this particular identity.

The publisher's presentation of the diary largely overlooks her identification as a Jewish author. Of all translations, the Dutch edition alone preserves Frank's original title. The English paperback, in contrast, calls itself, *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*. The first distortion is that of genre—Frank never intended to publish a diary, and her thorough edits reflect her intentions. Translators and editors, in "calling it a 'diary' . . . have perpetuated Anne's own fiction of a day-to-day journal" (Caplan 79). More significantly, however, the title places "the content in the realm of the 'normal'" (Brenner 106) when much of the diary seeks to relay the horrors of a war. Similarly, the synopsis on the back cover of the first English paperback edition suppresses the extraordinary for the ordinary, summarizing that "her story is that of every teen-ager" and focusing mainly on her relationship with Peter (Brenner 110). Frank loses her Jewish identity, and the book becomes a coming-of-age romance. She transforms into a generic "symbol of universal victimization and . . . prevailing humanism" (110) that fails to capture an essential piece of her story: she is Jewish and narrates a specifically Jewish experience. To deny this obscures "the difference between Anne and other teen-agers" (Bernstein 2).

The life story encounters obstacles to truth at every step of its formation. The diarist falls prey to bias from the start. Anne Frank's diary fails as a diary, as considerations for self-presentation are found within the text itself. The diary in full a-text form doesn't even exist—there are no multiple drafts of entries after the day she conceives of *Het Achterhuis*, implying that from then on she writes with full acknowledgment of an audience. How does one then confront the problem of inaccuracy in portraying the events of one's life? One may follow the lead of publishers and dissect the autobiography into minute, arbitrary, and often indistinguishable genres. One may lambast Anne Frank for her extrapolations and proclaim her a fraud. However, to argue in this manner misses the point. At the end of Frank's diary, one leaves not with the remembrance of the embellished details of the war, but with the sentiments she inspires that cannot be falsified. She remains alive today precisely because she is presented, albeit inaccurately so, as an ordinary girl coming of age in times radically different yet still somehow familiar. Texts, like both Frank's and Frey's, find their significance and power in more than the words themselves. It is the authenticity of the emotions that penetrate the minds of readers, with a little help from some harmless "lies."

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DAUGHTERS OF THE WILD: THE FERAL AND HUMAN PERSPECTIVE

JUN-HAO ROSALYN SHIH

When local villagers of Godamuri first encountered the wolf children of Minapore in 1920, they immediately suspected that the wild creatures were Manush-Bagha, Bengali for ghost-headed man-bodied beasts. Driven by curiosity and eager to dispel local superstitions, Reverend J. A. L. Singh led a band of men into the jungle where he found two "hideous-looking beings" (Singh & Zingg 5) huddled with a band of wolf pups in an old ant mound. Singh took the wolf-raised children back to his orphanage and named the younger one Amala and the elder Kamala. Singh kept a diary and recorded detailed observations of their feral behavior, such as the girls' four-legged prowling and mangled midnight imitations of the noises the wolves made. Amala died a year after her introduction to human society, but her older sister lived on. Singh continued to painstakingly document Kamala's "tardy development from a wolf-like existence to that of a human being" (Singh & Zingg 38).

Though Singh was deeply concerned with the well-being of the wolf-children, his diary was essentially a scientific case study, and he took a rational, dispassionate approach. This perspective prevented him from having to truly acknowledge the subjects of his investigations as human beings. He was more interested in the connection between heredity and the influence of environment, and he studied the feral children's ability to comprehend language and their capacity for human emotion. Singh noted that when the children smiled, it was merely to show internal satisfaction of basic needs such as hunger. He wrote that "unlike human pleasures and joys, theirs were confined in a very narrow circle, while those of mankind are extensive, circumscribed by time only . . . All this spoke of a peculiar joy among animals only." By contrasting their emotions with those of humans, Singh constructed a barrier between the feral children and ordinary people. Singh often made gestures towards eliciting sympathy in the reader, but he then qualified it with impassive statements. A year after capturing the children, he observed:

> Kamala shed tears—a drop from each eye was seen trickling down her cheeks—only at the time when Amala breathed her last on the early morning of Wednesday, the twenty-first of September, 1921. Beyond this, emotional faculties were dormant, and not appreciable.

Thus, the most tragic event in Kamala's life became an occasion for the study of emotion. The death of Amala clearly had its impact on Kamala, who spent nearly three days facing a wall and refusing to eat. But because she could not outwardly express her

emotions, Singh concluded (with a belittling "only") that she could not truly feel as a human being.

Admittedly, Singh's main goal was to present an objective understanding of feral children; eliciting sympathy was only his secondary aim, yet he still suffered from what Elizabeth Costello would have characterized as a "tragically limited" perspective. In a fictional speech at Applegate College, Elizabeth Costello, the character created by J. M. Coeztee in a 2003 novel by that same name argues that "the question to ask should not be: "Do we have something in common . . . with other animals?" (Coetzee 34). Instead, Costello, who is a famous writer, believes that the way to ensure universal understanding is to break all barriers that separate the superiority of humans from the supposed inferiority of animals. She calls for us to recognize the spark of life and "embodied soul" (33) shared by all living creatures.

Costello argues that if, as an author, she can think her way into the existence of a fictional character then it is possible to imagine ourselves into the existence of any living being. By this logic, the perspective of a child raised by wolves should not be difficult to understand at all. According to Costello, nothing can be viewed as "a fundamentally alien form of life" as long as it shares with us "the substrate of life." Of course, Costello herself is not a real person, but the reader of Coetzee's novel is still able to appreciate and understand her point of view. In fact, the reader herself becomes a vehicle in proving Coetzee's point: the creative imagination has the power to extend beyond rational thought.

Costello not only argues for but embodies the sympathetic imagination that Singh's rationalist perspective lacks. Singh was so fascinated by the extent to which feral children differed from either humans or wolves that he failed to appreciate them on their own terms. In attempting to compare feral children to ordinary human beings, Singh finds that the wild child's capabilities inevitably fall short, and he concludes that they lack the ability to reason. The danger of this perspective is that it implies feral children are unlike man and are not "godlike" but "thinglike" (Coetzee 23). With this belief, we open ourselves up to the possibility of treating them like "things," too. It is clear that lack of imaginative compassion has dire consequences.

Like Coetzee's Costello, Martha Nussbaum calls upon imaginative compassion as the basis of our perspective towards other beings, but at the same time recognizes its unreliability. While Costello has no problem imagining herself in the form of a bat or even a corpse, Nussbaum acknowledges that there are obstacles in understanding any living thing. Nussbaum recalls an educational program director in rural India, who, when asked how a foreigner would understand the suffering of another person in another country, indicated the scope of the problem. He replied, "I have the greatest difficulty understanding my own sister" (26).

Another problem with compassion is that it has the potential of slipping into partisan loyalty. As an example, Nussbaum cites the first baseball game in Chicago played after *September 11*, incidentally against the Yankees. Due to an increased

awareness of the situation of New Yorkers, and perhaps the volume of beer consumed, the spectators began to chant "U-S-A, U-S-A." At first, the chant was uttered as a sign of national unity, but eventually it devolved into a display of anger against the umpire after he made a questionable call.

Although severing all attachments may be one extreme way to guard against loyalty to one's own tribe, team, family, city, or species, Nussbaum does not believe in the option of universal impartiality. The extermination of these connections, she asserts, would only result in "death within life" (23). Nussbaum suggests that we retain our local attachments while engaging with other cultures and experiences. She calls this critical compassion: a sympathy heightened by imagination and sensitivity to the arts. Nussbaum believes in the role of "tragic art in promoting good citizenship" and in the artist's ability "to awaken a larger sense of the humanity of suffering" (25). Tragic art, such as Euripides, dramatizes the loss of local attachments but also places them in a context that crosses cultural and temporal boundaries. Through these works of art, we vicariously experience the pain of others and transcend the limits of our own understanding.

Once we have honed our capacity for critical compassion, we may approach feral children in a new way. Although Karen Russell's short story, "St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves," isn't exactly tragic art, it contains loss and sorrow on a scale significant enough that we sympathize with the protagonists. "St Lucy's" is the story of human children of werewolf parents who have been sent to a sanctuary managed by nuns who aimed to "humanize" the young girls. In order to help the children transition into society, the authoritative nuns erase the girls' original names ('GWARR!' and 'HWRAA!') and re-christen them Jeanette and Mirabella. The girls struggle to suppress their lupine ways and adopt the human code of falsities and formality. The story of the girls of "St. Lucy's" bears many similarities to that of Amala and Kamala, but the key difference is that Karen Russell, unlike Reverend Singh, is able to engage our critical compassion. Russell describes how the girls lose their local attachments and societal connections. Even so, Russell is able to narrate from a distinctly wolfish point of view:

> Those were the days when we dreamed of rivers and meat. The full-moon nights were the worst! Worse than cold toilet seats and boiled tomatoes, worse than trying to will our tongues to curl around our false new names.

Russell enters the mind of a wolf-girl so seamlessly that everything we regard as completely normal—even cooked vegetables and toilet seats—suddenly becomes alien. It is this disengagement from the human world that allows the reader to fully enter the realm of the wolf-girls. From the feral point of view, being human means knowing how to apologize, play golf, say "How do you do," talk about the weather,

and carry out other decorous social rituals. Humans are not civilized but "bred in captivity" (Russell 236), trapped by their own sense of civilized refinement.

Russell's wolf-children are the stuff of myths; nowadays children raised in the wild are extremely rare. But by stepping into the paws of the wolf-children, we gain an objective standpoint from which to recognize the contradictions and artificialities of our own human society. As Costello argues, sympathy is "all about the subject," not the object. Costello's act of imagining herself as a bat does nothing to affect the well-being of the bat. In reality, it is the act itself that has changed the subject and the subject's ability to view the world around her.

Our compassion then is for our own benefit: the simple act of empathizing is a lesson in self-awareness. We can consider using our critical compassion to imagine ourselves as various animals whose lives are directly or indirectly affected by our own. It is not enough for us to imagine ourselves as a bat; we need to examine how this perspective affects human lives, customs, and rituals that are taken for granted. Imagine yourself, then, as the rat in the subway running away with your discarded bagel, or the squirrel guarding the last Redwood, or the mosquito landing on your arm. If you briefly distance yourself from human attachments and gaze at the world though the eyes of another creature, you may notice something about yourself that you had never previously seen. Like Kamala discovering her own reflection in the mirror, you may find yourself unrecognizable.

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