Issue 10, 2015: Spaces

YEMAYA

Sydney University Law Society Journal of Gender and Sexuality

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The editors of Yemaya acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this land, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation.

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YEMAYA

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Contents

Origins of name

BY MARIANNA LEISHMAN

Yemaya is the African-Yoruban, Afro-Brasilian and Afro-Caribbean Goddess of the Ocean, whose waters broke and created a flood that created the oceans. While she can be destructive and violent, Yemaya is primarily known for her compassion, protection and water magic. In Cuba, she is referred to as Yemaya Olokun, who can only be seen in dreams, and her name is a contraction of Yey Omo Eja: "Mother Whose Children are the Fish". Canonised as the Virgin Mary, and appearing as river goddess Emanjah in Trinidad, Yemaya rules the sea, the moon, dreams, secrets, wisdom, fresh water and the collective unconscious. In Brazil, crowds gather on the beach of Bahia to celebrate Candalaria: a Candomble ceremony on 31 December. Candles are lit on the beach while votive boats made from flowers and letters are thrown into the sea for Yemaya to wash away their sorrows.

Foreword

Since Henri Lefebvre theorised a 'sociology of spaces', recognition has been given to the importance of various spatial dimensions as settings of power and potential. It is a discursive trend with daily, felt implications, especially for women and LGBT individuals whose rights and methods of identity formation have often been oppressed by the white, heterosexual, cis-male norm which overwhelmingly controls those spaces. This year's edition of Yemaya hopes to provide a counteractive space, filled with diverse intersectional discussions and representations of numerous gender and sexual issues.

Movements within symbolic physical spaces can often be rendered safe or hazardous by the play of various power relations. For Clyde Welsh, the disproportionately high usage of drugs and other substances among queer individuals is partly attributable to a correlation between queer spaces and drug identification. Spaces of targeted violence provide further examples; Adam Ursino considers the reasoning behind, and efficacy of, segregation of prison spaces along the lines of LGBT identification, while Josh Pallas advocates for a social constructivist position towards understanding how the (primarily female) body has been used to convey brutal messages in armed conflict settings.

While 'culture' is a particularly nebulous concept, certain accepted subsets – ethnic, popular and normative – are particularly resonant with women's and LGBT issues. In what she describes as an "alarming disjuncture", Helen Xue observes the regression in social gains for women in modern China, a nation whose communist administration was noted for its early support for gender equality. Across the Pacific, Judy Zhu's profile on Janelle Monae's music as performative resistance centres on how its blend of Afrofuturism and black feminism deconstructs assumptions about black femininity. This resistance against oppressive normative standards is echoed in Harley Milano's assertion that hegemonic orthodox masculinity is yielding to a more inclusive ideal of permissible masculine behaviours, even within the niche spaces of online MMA fan forums.

Knowledge spaces have also felt the influence of gender and sexual norms. Anna Egerton critiques how, to the detriment of research quality, gendered ideals of scientific objectivity have enabled the proliferation of sexist values in STEM research communities. Umeya Chaudhuri's critique of discursive colonisation in human rights spaces examines its reductive essentialism of its subjects, damaging local grass-roots movements. Finally, Tom Kiat considers what courts can do to overcome religious barriers to the uniform enforcement of sexual discrimination laws.

With these critical considerations interspersed by rich creative visual and prose works – Mackenzie Nix's visual rupturing of classical standards of gender beauty; Yiu Nam's exploration of the oppressive white appropriation of non-Western cultures; Marina Yang's representation of mental and emotional spaces; Jared Richard's portrayal of intimacy; and Michael Sun's examination of remembered spaces – this edition has sought to align women's and LGBT debates with the spaces in which they occur. It must never be forgotten that, sometimes, the medium is the message; discussion must always occur with an awareness of how the medium in which it occurs can assert its influence upon it.

We hope that you will enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed watching it come together.

SHIRLEY HUANG

The altar, the office and the school:

Religious exemptions to same-sex marriage and anti-discrimination laws in Australia

TOM KIAT

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws V

I INTRODUCTION

With momentum building globally, some have already claimed victory as in sight for the Australian marriage equality campaign.[1] But if the conservative Christian lobby cannot stop same-sex couples marrying, they will at least ensure that their ministers never have to preside over such unions. Those who believe the state should refrain from regulating religious space will see this as a fair compromise between religious freedom and LGB rights. The prominence of this issue within the debate belies its relative insignificance, as demonstrated by the minimal consideration it is given in competing parties' same-sex marriage bills. More important is the low-profile matter of anti-discrimination law, where religious exemptions exist to allow discrimination against LGB individuals in work, education and service provision. Religious exemptions in NSW and Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation are too expansive and have, moreover, been interpreted too broadly by the courts. This poses a significant issue for the LGB minority as, through privatization, religious space increasingly moves outside of church walls and into the public space of secular employment, education and social service provision. Victory in the same-sex marriage campaign should spur activists to revisit the old battleground of anti-discrimination law, where religious exemptions render significant areas of public space unsafe for LGB individuals.

II SAME-SEX MARRIAGE AND RELIGIOUS SPACE

For some religious conservatives, the centuries of oppression experienced by LGB individuals pales in comparison to the tribulations that religious ministers might face once 'homosexual marriage' becomes law. In the *Herald Sun*, Andrew Bolt asserts that 'the whole idea of changing the *Marriage Act* is to force us collectively to bless same-sex unions.'[2] The Editor-at-Large of *The Australian* similarly fears 'the pressures all religions will face to perform same-sex wedding ceremonies against their will.'[3] This concern has been echoed in a report by the Centre for Independent Studies.[4] With this holy trinity of conservative political commentary speaking as one, it is unsurprising that at least one MP has made his support for any same-sex marriage bill conditional on express 'protection' of religious ministers.[5]

Accordingly, bills put forward by the Greens, Senator Leyonhjelm and Bill Shorten all seek to reassure religious ministers that they will not be forced to bless same-sex unions. Ironically, section 47 of the existing *Marriage Act* already provides that ministers of religion are not legally obliged to solemnise any marriage. Both the Greens' and Shorten's bills clarify that this section will also apply to same-sex unions.[6] By contrast, Leyonhjelm's libertarian inspired 'Freedom to Marry Bill' would extend the application of section 47 to any non-bureaucrat celebrant,

whether religious or not; meanwhile, it would amend section 39 to ensure that state celebrants could not refuse to solemnise any lawful marriage (including same-sex).[7]

Senator Leyonhjelm's ideological bent is clear. His justification, to 'not only [protect] religious conscience, but also conscience claims by those who are not religious,'[8] raises the question of why homophobia should be better protected merely because it is religious. Ultimately, the issue is academic and symbolic; it is doubtful that same-sex couples would choose to have their wedding solemnised by a celebrant opposed to their union, whether on religious or secular grounds.

Therefore, fighting the existing section 47 exemption, or Senator Leyonhjelm's extension of it, would be a considerable expenditure of political capital for a return of questionable practical value to same-sex couples. Furthermore, forcing a minister, imam or rabbi to consecrate a union against his or her religious beliefs would not only infringe on an important religious liberty, but it would also deepen the divide between religious and LGB communities.

'Religious bodies that engage in the secular, public space of education, service provision and employment should not be free to discriminate on the ground of sexual orientation.'

III RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAW

The religious exemptions that exist in anti-discrimination legislation are, however, of much greater practical concern to LGB individuals. Here, the status quo gives religious organisations wide discretion to discriminate as employers, service providers and educators. While same-sex couples may accept that they have to find a pro-gay celebrant, LGB workers and students cannot be expected to do the same when looking for work or education.

Anti-discrimination law protecting sexual orientation status exists at a state and federal level. Before the 2013 amendment to include sexual orientation in the Commonwealth *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (hereafter 'the Commonwealth Act'), the New South Wales *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (hereafter 'the NSW Act') already protected 'homosexuality' under Part 4C. Both Acts proscribe discrimination in employment, education and the provision of goods and services. However, both also contain broadly worded religious exemptions.

The exemption granted to religious educational bodies is concerning both for its breadth and because it primarily affects children. The NSW Act allows any 'private educational authority' to be exempt from Part 4C with respect to employment and education.[9] As outlined in the Explanatory Note to Alex Greenwich MP's failed 2013 amendment bill, private educational authorities include 'all non-government institutions at

which education or training is provided, such as private schools, business and coaching colleges and private universities.'[10] One in three[11] NSW school students are therefore not protected from adverse treatment (including refusal of admission, refusing access to a benefit, expulsion, or 'any other detriment') based on their sexuality, under the NSW Act;[12] teachers face a similar situation.[13] The Commonwealth Act provides a slightly narrower exemption, allowing discrimination by an 'educational institution that is conducted in accordance with the doctrines, tenets, beliefs or teachings of a particular religion or creed,' if the action is 'in good faith in order to avoid injury to the religious susceptibilities of adherents of that religion or creed.'[14]

While the exemptions for religious schools are the most expansive, a general exemption exists in both Acts to allow religious bodies to discriminate in employment and the provision of goods and services. Both contain a double condition before the exemption applies; the first relating to the nature of the discriminator and the second relating to the discriminatory act. Section 56(d) of the NSW Act provides that the Act does not affect any act: '(1) of a body established to propagate religion; or (2) that conforms to the doctrines of that religion or is necessary to avoid injury to the religious susceptibilities of the adherents to that religion.' Section 37(d) of the Commonwealth Act is almost identical, excepting its broad application to any 'body established for religious purposes,' and the requirement that the discriminating act conform to 'the doctrines, tenets or beliefs of that religion.'

How narrowly or broadly the Courts will interpret these provisions is an open question. In the 2010 case, *OV & OW v Wesley Mission*,[15] a same-sex couple was denied authority by Wesley Mission to foster children. The NSW Court of Appeal rejected a narrow approach to section 56(d); at issue was how to identify the 'religious doctrines' to which discriminating acts must conform in order to satisfy the condition for exemption. The court rejected the 'lowest common denominator' approach, which identified the religion as 'Christianity' and the relevant doctrines as only those that are common to all denominations of Christianity.[16] Instead, they approved of an approach 'that eschewed labels'; that is, an approach taking into account the particular religious practice and beliefs of the organisation in question.[17] Therefore, if heterosexual parenting were a doctrine of Wesleyan evangelicalism, actions in conformity with that doctrine would be exempt. The case was sent back to the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal, who then found in favour of Wesley Mission.[18]

The Commonwealth Act's section 37(d) exemption has not yet been judicially tested. However, a similar provision in Victoria's *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* was addressed by the VSCA in the 2014 case, *Christian Youth Camps v Cobaw Community Helath Services*[19] ('CYC' and 'CCHS'). CCHS, a youth suicide prevention organisation, called CYC to reserve accommodation for a weekend camp supporting at-risk youth experiencing same-sex attraction. An employee of CYC refused the booking, because, in his words,

> '[I]t offends my Christian beliefs that young people in particular are told that there is nothing wrong with homosexual sexual activity… Attempts to promote such relationships as acceptable do not conform to God's will.'[20]

The Victorian Court took a much narrower approach to the exemption than the NSW Court. Firstly, it was held that CYC was not 'a body established for religious purposes.' Maxwell P emphasised that constitutional documents requiring CYC to carry out its primary purpose of

providing campsite accommodation in accordance with the beliefs of the Christian brethren did not convert that secular purpose into a religious one.[21] Secondly, the kind of discriminatory action that would be in conformity with the doctrines of the religion or necessary to avoid injury to religious sensitivities was narrowly construed. The reasoning of Maxwell P and Neave JA was similar on this point, with both judges arguing that, for the exemption to apply, the action must be *objectively necessary* to comply with religious doctrine or avoid injury to susceptibilities.[22] Neave JA, perhaps with tongue in cheek, explained that to comply with the religious doctrine that homosexuality was a sin, all the male employee needed to do was abstain from sexual relations with men.[23]

IV CONCLUSION

Activists should use the momentum from the same-sex marriage campaign to focus on the significant holes in existing anti-discrimination laws that may allow private schools to expel gay students, employers to dismiss lesbian employees from secular roles, and service providers to refuse to assist bisexual clients. This issue will become more important as the privatisation agenda continues in Australia and the public space of employment, education and social services becomes increasingly populated by faith-based organisations.

It can be hoped that federal courts applying the *Sex Discrimination Act* will follow the Victorian example, and bring the NSW court into line. This would significantly limit the availability of the general religious exemption, ensuring it is applied only to organisations whose activities are intrinsically religious, and to actions that are central to religious practice. However, a better outcome would be a repeal of the general religious exemptions, along with the special exemptions for non-government schools. While a religious ministers' conduct of a wedding can be considered an action in 'religious space', properly free to operate according to religious tradition, religious bodies that engage in the secular, public space of education, service provision and employment should not be free to discriminate on the ground of sexual orientation. •

Segregating prisons based on transgender status or sexual orientation:

Problematic or progressive?

ADAM URSINO

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws II

Historically, prisons have been segregated along the lines of identity markers such as gender, race, sexual orientation and religion. With the exception of gender, most forms of prison segregation have receded. Recently, however, segregating lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) inmates to protect them from harm has been considered favourable. This essay will question whether segregating prisons on the basis of LGBT identity creates safer spaces for LGBT inmates.[1] While segregation of prisons based on transgender status or sexual orientation does harbour tangible benefits, it is a one-dimensional approach to a multifaceted issue. This essay will outline challenges faced by LGBT inmates, investigate how LGBT prison wings have responded to these challenges, describe common objections to segregation, and finally consider how to best harness the limited potential of segregation.

I LESBIAN, GAY AND BISEXUAL INMATES

The most prominent threat to LGB individuals in prison is that of sexual abuse. Inevitably, sexual abuse occurs in most prisons and is experienced by inmates of all genders and sexualities. Statistically, LGB inmates are more likely to experience sexual abuse; 67% of LGB inmates reported that they have been subjected to it.

There are two key reasons LGB inmates experience sexual abuse:

1. Gendered prisons arguably foster homosexual intercourse, consenting or otherwise. This is manifested by the fact that 'homosexuality runs rampant when options for 'normal' [heterosexual] sexuality are unavailable.'[2]

2. Gay men in particular are perceived as unrapeable[3] – their homosexuality symbolically prevents the withholding of consent and precludes any male-on-male sexual contact from being considered rape.[4]

Other threats to the safety of LGB inmates include torture, ill treatment and humiliation.

The legitimate possibility of all the aforementioned dangers is perhaps best illustrated by the treatment of U.S. prisoner Roderick Johnson. A gay man, Johnson was subject to multiple rapes over an 18-month period. His complaints about the sexual abuse were met with staff members asserting that 'he should not mind the abuse because he was gay.'[5] During his time in prison, he was also forced to perform tasks such as cooking, laundry and cleaning,[6] intended to cause humiliation through feminisation. Similarly, in Virginia's Fluvanna Correctional Center, perceived lesbians, arbitrarily determined by prison guards on the basis of 'masculine looks',[7] were placed in the 'butch wing', wherein they suffered verbal harassment and isolation from other female prisoners. This isolation was intended to curb sexual activity by ensuring those in the 'butch wing' could no longer

look at their 'girlfriends'[8] – a decision intended to humiliate by masculinisation and denaturalisation through the accusation of homosexuality. Both physical violence and the intention to degrade by inversion of gender roles function as techniques by which prisons are made unsafe for LGB individuals.

In the United States, gay and lesbian prisoners are often housed in separate wings or facilities to varying degrees of success. Fluvanna represents the hazardous implications of segregation. The 'gay wing' of Los Angeles County Jail (referred to as 'K6G') achieves the opposite; gay men and trans women are housed in a separate wing that has seen the significant reduction of sexual abuse. [9]

K6G's success arises not only from the removal of gay men and trans women from their most prominent threats, but also by fostering a sense of community by creating solidarity amongst its members. Gay men and trans women form a subjugated group in society and a hugely vulnerable group in prison. The wing is characterised by behaviours such as its inmates repurposing prison garb to create dresses and performing runway shows in the prison's narrow aisles.[10] Surveys of K6G's residents reported that overwhelmingly, they felt safer in the wing than amongst the prison's general population, with regards to physical violence, sexual assault and harassment.[11] Of course, it is not entirely safe, with some still fearing discrimination and violence from prison guards.[12] Still, many summarised their experiences with positive words, describing it as 'fun' or 'peaceful'.[13] It is worthwhile to note, however, that these positive experiences and descriptors may rise from the homogenous community in the wing, a direct ramification of the inadequate understanding of homosexuality and queer identities among the (heterosexual) prison staff who classify K6G's members through a test based on stereotypes;[14] this is discussed later.

Ultimately, if the criteria for safer spaces are based on the prevention of sexual violence, discrimination and humiliation, K6G is a colossal accomplishment. Nevertheless, the controversial prison wing cannot be understood through the lens of a dichotomous approach resting on intangible, impractical ideals of 'good' and 'bad' – factors inclusive of, but not limited to, its perpetuation of stereotypes and the resultant exclusivity. The question of whether propagating homogenous thinking is a reasonable sacrifice to make in order to create safer spaces for gay, lesbian and bisexual individuals remains one worth asking.

II TRANSGENDER INMATES

The treatment of transgender inmates is not unlike that of lesbian, gay and bisexual inmates; the systemised mistreatment of each of these groups binds together the LGBT acronym in unhappy solidarity. Transgender inmates present perhaps the most specific set of challenges for the prison system. The incidence of self-harm and mental illness is higher among transgender people,[15] and imprisonment exacerbates these risks.

Three of the most visible issues are as follows:

1. In Australia, prison policy pertaining to transgender individuals varies greatly. New South Wales, for example, has a 'comprehensive policy based on self-identification,' while the ACT bases accommodation on 'physical appearance at strip search.'[16] Often, therefore, trans men and women are not placed in prison facilities that correspond with their self-identification (or even their visible characteristics).[17] This reduction of transgender men and women to their genitalia is both dehumanising and symptomatic of a prison system ill equipped to deal with non-cisgender

inmates.

2. In male prisons many adopt hypermasculine identities to demonstrate their manhood. This hypermasculinity is pervasive and influences carceral sexual relationships. Hypermasculine inmates tend to 'sexually victimis[e] those culturally defined as female.'[18] This cultural definition applies to both pre and post-op trans women,[19] and translates into the status of male prisons as unsafe environments for the trans women who are wrongfully housed within them.

3. The denial of hormone treatments and sex affirmation procedures highlight the specific set of challenges faced by transgender inmates. In Australia, policy pertaining to hormone therapy is not consistent across the states, with most allowing the continuation of hormone treatments, but few allowing operations or the commencement of hormone treatments after incarceration.[20] Sex affirmation procedures are generally not allowed.[21] To illustrate the implications of this deprivation of medical treatment, in the United States a pre-op transgender woman attempted to cut off her own genitalia in prison because she was denied hormones and placed in a male prison. This behaviour was described as 'not extraordinary',[22] which explicates the genuine risks associated with misclassifying transgender inmates.

Transgender inmates are often placed in 'protection', or isolation, as an attempt to ensure safety from the aforementioned issues.[23] A New South Wales prisoner, Robin, recounted that isolation and its accompanying loneliness 'drove [her] mad, so [she] became a little suicidal.'[24] The counterproductivity of isolation begs the question of whether this logic applies with segregation. Trans women are placed in K6G alongside gay men, a decision made without regard to the fact that trans women are, in fact, women, and should not have been accommodated inside men's prisons. Nevertheless, the frequency of sexual assault decreased. California Medical Facility, a men's prison, lacks a dedicated wing for trans women, but has a notable trans population.[25] This population, like that of K6G, is underscored by notions of community and belonging: the transgender inmates refer to each other as 'the girls'.[26] It is this sense of community created by shared experiences that demonstrates how segregation may be advantageous.

There is significantly less literature pertaining to transgender men. Primarily, this is because they comprise a minute percentage of the prison population.[27] However, trans men continue to be placed in women's prisons, and are thereby misgendered, verbally harassed and denied hormone treatment.[28] Their treatment does not differ hugely from that of trans women. It is therefore likely that they would experience segregation in a similar way, but further research is required to determine this.

Fundamentally, while segregating transgender inmates would reduce the incidence of sexual abuse – K6G demonstrated that this may be the case – there remain unresolved issues such as misclassification and refusal of hormone treatments and surgeries. The capacity for segregation to reduce violence is commendable, but its inability to make significant steps towards solving issues unique to transgender inmates suggests that a more critical and consistent approach to penal policy (perhaps in coalition with segregation) is preferable.

III OBJECTIONS

There remain some legitimate problems with both the idea and the practicality of segregating prisons along the lines of gender and sexuality. It is important to understand this concept at its most basic level: it is state-sanctioned segregation on the basis of identity markers. It is reminiscent of Jim Crow laws, the 1980s segregation of Aboriginal Australians, and apartheid. K6G illustrates this clearly: its inmates wear light blue prison jumpsuits while the prison's general population wears dark blue.[29] Visually distinguishing inmates based on their sexuality disturbingly parallels the treatment of gay males during the Holocaust, who wore a pink triangle pinned to their clothes. Pink triangle wearers were often refused medical care and prioritised for medical experiments.[30] Whilst this is unlikely to occur contemporarily, the uncomfortable historical sentiment remains. This raises the question of whether segregating prisons based on sexuality or trans status is at all progressive or simply an anachronistic act superficially framed as a positive step towards protecting prison's most vulnerable.

An obvious argument against segregating prisons on the basis of gender or sexual identity is its contradiction of the doctrine of equal protection. The specific protection of LGBT inmates would ostensibly create two distinct classes of prisoners, which somewhat resembles a reversal of the treatment of homosexual prisoners in Nazi Germany. It is difficult to reasonably sustain this argument, as the United Nations stipulates that 'not every differentiation of treatment will constitute discrimination';[31] the law is not required to treat everybody equally. Rather, any differentiated treatment must not be discriminatory and must not negate the purposes of the ICCPR. Moreover, *The Crimes (Administrations of Sentences) Act 1999 (NSW)* provides for the segregated custody of inmates.[32] The Department of Corrective Services extrapolates on this provision, explaining that inmates may be housed with 'other like inmates'.[33] Therefore, legislative support for this type of segregation exists.

To illustrate the implications of this deprivation of medical treatment, in the United States a pre-op transgender woman attempted to cut off her own genitalia in prison because she was denied hormones and placed in a male prison.

As discussed earlier, the prevalent influence of hypermasculinity leads to those culturally defined as female experiencing heightened sexual abuse. When visibly feminine options are exhausted (trans women and gay men), other inmates are targeted:

> … young, small in size, physically weak, white, […] first offender, possessing 'feminine' characteristics such as long hair or a high voice; being unassertive, unaggressive, shy, intellectual, not street-smart, or 'passive'.[34]

'This raises the question of whether segregating prisons based on sexuality or trans status is at all progressive or simply an anachronistic act superficially framed as a positive step towards protecting prison's most vulnerable.'

While segregation may remove LGBT inmates from the immediate threat of sexual abuse, the abuse does not stop – it is simply redistributed. It is this reason that highlights the short-sighted approach of segregating prisons on the basis of identity markers.

K6G also illustrates the issue of underinclusivity. K6G's test to determine whether an inmate is gay relies on stereotypes, and includes questions pertaining to gay slang and naming local gay bars.[35] Though prison staff maintain that the system works, its visible effectiveness is felt only by a homogenised group; it is not a system that works for gay men who fail to adhere to ingrained stereotypes. Moreover, the test was 'specifically designed to exclude bisexuals'.[36] By perpetuating these stereotypes and emphasising K6G's functionality, prison staff are preventing autonomy and silencing the voices of LGBT inmates, echoing the problem that exists in civilian society.

The inconsistent approach to transgender inmates makes their segregation difficult. Most Australian states house transgender inmates in prisons corresponding with their gender only if they have had sex affirmation procedures.[37] Many transgender inmates do not seek these operations because they are costly and Australian medical professionals largely lack sufficient training.[38] Segregating transgender inmates solely on the basis of self-identification, though, would inevitably lead to some individuals attempting to 'rort the system'[39] – males potentially vying for accommodation in a female prison by self-identifying as a female, for example. This impedes the creation of safe spaces for transgender inmates.

IV HARNESSING THE POTENTIAL OF SEGREGATION

The previous objections were not intended to ignore the very real effectiveness of segregation, in the case of K6G, or to ignore its potential in the task of creating safer spaces for LGBT inmates. However, its effective implementation requires several considerations.

Firstly, a sufficient population of LGBT inmates is required to make segregation economically

viable. Women's prisons lack adequate resources,[40] because they make up 7.7% of the prison population;[41] if there were an insufficient number of LGBT prisoners in a segregated wing or prison, they would likely experience this same fate.

Secondly, a consistent approach to the classification of transgender inmates based on self-identification and their lived experiences of gender before imprisonment is required. Without a uniform approach, the segregation of transgender inmates is destined to fail.

Thirdly, prison officers and staff must have the best interests of LGBT inmates at heart. Fluvanna represents how negative intentions may create undesirable spaces for LGBT inmates. While problematic, K6G elucidates how genuine intentions can assist the development of safer spaces.

Fourthly, a reasonable effort must be made to classify LGBT inmates appropriately instead of simply relying on shallow stereotypes. A delicate understanding of queer identities is required.

Finally, a degree of autonomous contribution to the nature of the segregation (and obviously autonomous consent) would improve its effectiveness.

V CONCLUSION

K6G demonstrated the potential for segregation to improve the lives of LGBT inmates in prisons. However, its success is rooted in problematic thinking. While its accomplishments are admirable, it is questionable whether replication of such a wing that caters effectively to the dynamic community of LGBT inmates would be appropriate. There are various issues that require rectification before segregation becomes a viable option, such as the eradication of discrimination, classification of trans people into appropriate accommodation and the provision of medical treatment. Though clear benefits exist, including the reduction of sexual abuse, segregation on the basis of sexual orientation and transgender status would function merely as a band-aid solution to a nuanced problem.

Canyons

MACKENZIE NIX

Bachelor of Design and Architecture III

Canyons explores the exposure and rupturing of classical notions of ideal feminine and masculine beauty, underneath which the human body is pinned. The work communicates the paradoxical relationship between theory and the corporeal, wherein even progressive contemporary theoretical dialogue regarding gender and sexuality restrains the physical through the literal, the body both freed and imprisoned by the context of its existence.

Customary rhythms

A short story

JARED RICHARDS

Bachelor of Arts (Hon) IV

I arrive first. I am ten minutes late, but you have not arrived. My legs will dangle from the bar stool – the one you see as soon as you walk in – feet circling in the air, unable to land, for a little while longer. I am trying to drink slowly, so as not to get a head start. It is important we meet on the same level. Your profile just said 'Namaste'. I recognise the divine in you, you recognise the divine in me. But if I am drunk when you arrive, my divine will be closer to *Female Trouble*, though I say that like it's a bad thing. I go to take a larger sip than usual when I hear my name and swivel. Huh. A little different from the photos. It's ok. Namaste. You are more than ok, You are good. Namaste, 'I recognise the drag queen in you'. I stand up for a hug, which I instantly realise you weren't expecting. Your shoulder sharply hits my chin, and after we quickly break apart, I feel like we are standing too close together.

You point towards the couch in the corner, in a dark corner with a small lamp, creating a sphere of hazy light we can sit in, separated by a gap of darkness where our lamp refuses to collaborate with the others to form concentric circles of light, stubbornly separating us from everyone else.

After the rudimentary first and second round of drinks and questions (how was your day, how is your job, how is uni, what TV do you watch, what do you like doing), we advance. But I am unsure of where to steer the conversation, dizzied by the possibilities. Or perhaps I am dizzied by the dim light, or the alco-hey, you're pretty cute with your velvet tie. Oh no. I am staring blankly at your face. I hear myself landing on the words 'queer representation,' seemingly with no sentence or context attached.

But two words seem to be more than enough; you slur your words a little while you rant. We both scream 'yasssss' loudly when we quote bell hooks on Madonna, Laverne Cox on transgender rights, back and forth. Another couple glance over briefly and laugh together, bonding over, or against, us. But we can play too, voicing their conversations, watching as they awkwardly flirt: I'm the girl, you're the guy.

They have stopped talking, and the guy is scratching his palms underneath the table, looking around the room everywhere but at his date. He goes to speak; we are ready for our voiceovers.

'How good is… avocado?'

'It's, like, so good.'

'Yeah, avocado is the best.'

'I love avocado.'

'Yeah, avocado is the best.'

'Have you ever tried it …' You pause, and look deeply into my eyes as the guy reaches out to touch the girl's hair, '…with toast?'

'Toast! It has so many carbs!' She is flicking her hair in what, to anybody watching, seems like a painfully obvious and calculated move away from his hand.

'Yeah, carbs are good.'

'No.'

'Yeah.'

Their first fight and our first inside joke: 'the avocado couple'. I picture myself loosely referencing avocado in the future, whenever you and I are not getting along, as something I can pull out to remind us of better times. We always did connect from day one.

But we are not there yet, so we move onwards. We talk about coming out, going briefly back in, about how polygamy is ideal 'in theory' but how we 'couldn't do it, it's too complicated and messy' in real life. Brief glimmers of scars, we mention ex's with caution, littering them carefully throughout the night.

Later, I point towards the *Pink Flamingos* poster in your bedroom. You stand behind me, your arm reaches out with me, your hand over mine.

The next morning, I find myself saying to a friend, 'And, he's, like, really smart.' She smiles down at her coffee. Murmuring something indistinguishable about being happy for me, she swallows the rest of it while still looking down,

concentrating on the mug she's holding and its suddenly impressive clay red colour. I am trying for casual, but my words come too quickly. With a searing energy, they trip over one another to be the first expression of a future love, blurting out '…and I think he could be the one(!!!)'

———

I arrive first. I am ten minutes late, a bad habit. You chose the same place, I choose the same seat, and soon, when I hear my name, I swivel around. I don't go for a hug. You, Milos, point towards the couch. Rudimentary stuff: jobs, uni, school, childhood, travel. But I want more, and your olive eyes stare back when we somehow begin talking about our ex's. Brief outlines of other men, reaching out through your past then back to me, tracing your fingers up and down my spine. With reverse chronology, we land at the beginning – a high school crush – when your hand stops, resting on the arch of my waist:

'And, now, we're *here*.'

'Yeah?'

Your hand pushes against my back, pulling me in, away from everyone else, into the dim light of our own space.

The kiss is good. It is natural. It is less forced than the last time. This is my fourth drink. You drink gin so I do too, careful to match your speed. Namaste. No wait, that's not right, that was not you. I have finished my fourth drink. We go deeper, talking about 'problematic favourites' and the ability to like something critically. A squash game of opinions, hitting them back and forth against a shared, newly formed wall. I am wary of it cracking and falling in on me, of leaving the night on separate buses and bad terms. Yet we have to test it, to know if we can use it.

'I hate the way guys can be like, 'I'm gay but like I don't get why some guys are so gay like why is that their whole identity?"

'Yeah, me too.' My turn, return and serve.

'Do you think drag can veer into that casual misogyny that gay men can have?'

'Totally. I think there's a fine line between making fun of gender roles, and making fun of women.'

'Yeah! Did you see how that queen dressed up in black paint the other weekend as a 'panther'?'

'Yeah, god that was terrible. I have her on Facebook and she kept arguing it 'wasn't blackface'. People need to know when to apologise.'

'Learning how to apologise is so important; not that you made someone upset, but that your actions themselves were harmful, and you are sorry that you were thoughtless. Without making defensive excuses.'

'Yeah!!'

It's as if each 'correct' answer adds a layer of warmth and comfort, opening us up to the possibilities of each other. Yet it is unsteady growth. Each misaligned answer is like an awkward hug, or a kiss where our teeth hit; too awkward, too unsure. But we continue, burrowing further into our own private world, away from the rest of the room. The conversation loops back to travel when we realise we were in London at the same time. Scanning our memories to establish some momentary connection – were you at the Tate on this day? When did you go to the Globe? – we think we shared some stares from across Trafalgar Square.

'I … genuinely remember seeing that jumper … and thinking that guy … was hot.'

But I didn't take this jumper to Europe.

'Maybe…' I say. 'I remember seeing someone too, and looking at them looking at me.'

'Maybe,' you repeat, 'we checked each other out.'

'Maybe,' now we have a routine, 'it was our *Sliding Doors* moment.'

'Maybe,' unsure of how to keep playing, '…and now… we've reunited. Un-slid doors.'

'Maybe,' I lean in, as if to tell a secret, 'it's destiny.'

He leans in closer and plays with my tie.

'Topshop. I have this tie.'

Pulling me closer, 'We're twins.'

But this kiss isn't exactly between brothers. The bartender stares; I think he knows me by now. He smiles as I order more drinks. I wonder if they talk about me, like I'm a sitcom; set in a bar, just like *Cheers*, but gay. Gay Cheers. 'Cheers!' I say, before he pulls at my tie till he's in my ear, a whispered invitation to home.

The next day he is vague in my recollections; more a shadow in my image that will slowly fill in. I will learn his quirks, small inflections, those words he can't pronounce, the jokes he finds hilarious and those he finds annoying, darker fears, deeper secrets. Over the phone my friend tries to change our conversation. It's the same as always but just with a new name; yours, so I can't help dwelling, repeating. We text the next day, you reply instantly, writing you have 'no time for games ;)'.

——

I arrive first. I am fifteen minutes late, a bad habit getting worse. But I am more prepared this time. I suggest the same bar – a new episode of Gay Cheers – and have a checklist of conversations in my mind. The pleasantries are quick, the flirting is simple. The process begins.

'Gay.'

'Yes.'

'Yasss?'

'Yasss!'

'Queer.'

'Important.'

'Pride.'

'Proud.'

'Travel?

'Cool.'

'Capitalism.'

'Problematic.'

'Gay male misogyny.'

'Bad and real.'

'No Asians, no femme's.'

'Bad.'

'GAYtm's.'

'Troubling.'

'Katy Perry.'

'Pandering.'

'Boyfriend?'

'Yeah.'

I call my friend the next morning; it will be her final appearance in Gay Cheers; who needs a supporting cast when you've got two great protagonists? The bartenders will be sad; their favourite show cancelled.

———

We sit on our couch, watching *Q&A.* We are live tweeting it to see who gets on screen first; a little competition keeps a relationship alive. You have made a soup, we are wearing snuggies mostly as a joke, but also, they are really warm! Our apartment is slowly coming together: 'another IKEA trip soon,' I smile; one of our jokes. We are filming our audition for *The Block* this week: I am going to accentuate my lisp a little, and you will grow out your beard. The Cute Gay Couple on *The Block*. I think we could win; we have such a great eye for decoration. *Women's Weekly*: 'We Built A House, Now We Want To Build A Home – Mr. Abbott, It's Time For Marriage Equality!' Our French bulldog is sleeping on the couch. It's so hard to find someone so special, like you, with whom I share so much. 'Avocado', I say, and you laugh, because we are so in love. I forgot that that was the other guy who isn't you, but I cover it up really well – 'Paris Is Burning,' I say.

I call your name and you look up from your iPhone. 'Boyfriend,' I say. 'Boyfriend,' you say. Good.

Gendered knowledges and the importance of diversity in science

ANNA HUSH EGERTON

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science III

In May this year, two women submitted a paper to the Public Library of Science (*PLOS) ONE*, the world's largest online peer-reviewed journal. In their study, Fiona Ingelby and Megan Head found that men completed PhDs in biology with more non-first author publications than women, and tended to find jobs more easily afterwards perhaps as a result of having more publications under their belts.[1] The authors of the study suggested that the gender difference they observed was indicative of systemic sexism in science – hardly a radical notion, given the reams of evidence for gendered discrimination that women face in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. However, their study was rejected by one anonymous reviewer, who called it 'methodologically weak', with 'fundamental flaws and weaknesses that cannot be adequately addressed by mere revision of the manuscript, however extensive.[2] The reviewer further suggested that:

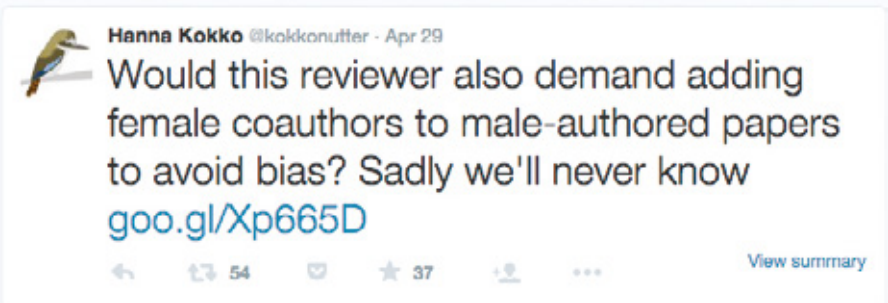
> It would probably also be beneficial to find one or two male biologists to work with (or at least obtain internal peer review from, but better yet as active co-authors), in order to serve as a possible check against interpretations that may sometimes be drifting too far away from empirical evidence into ideologically biased assumptions.[3]

One of the authors (@FionaIngelby) shared the reviewer's comments on Twitter, provoking an outpouring of support for the authors and condemnation of the editorial process at PLOS. While the comments evidently worked to prove the authors' point about endemic sexism in science, spawning the Twitter hashtag #AddMaleAuthorGate[4], they also disclose deeply held convictions about the inherent ineptitude of women for STEM careers. This article explores this anonymous reviewer's comments through the lens of standpoint epistemology. It focuses in particular on the question of whether it is at all possible to rid science of 'ideologically biased assumptions' when certain groups of people are systematically excluded from scientific practice.

I MASCULINE OBJECTIVITY?

The notion of transcendent, universal, disembodied, objective knowledge lies at the heart of science. The twin doctrines of positivism and empiricism firstly assert that there is a world 'out there', independent of human thought and sensation, and secondly that we can ascertain facts about this world through use of the hallowed scientific method. The knowledge thus created is generally taken to be objective, that is, untainted by human bias, and universal, that is, true everywhere, always and forever.

There is, undoubtedly, a gendered dimension to the ideals of objectivity and universality. Cultural stereotypes portray men as inherently more rational, intelligent and thus more suited to science than women. Aristotle argued that women are 'more mischievous, less simple, more impulsive… and more easily moved to tears' than



men.[5] 2300 years later, it seems that these views persist. Nobel laureate Tim Hunt's caricature of women in labs – 'you fall in love with them, they fall in love with you and when you criticise them, they cry'[6] – echoes Aristotle's sentiment. Women are apparently too emotional to be able to carry out the kind of precise, reasoned work that science requires. These stereotypes, promulgated by everything from children's toys to Nobel Prize winners, have the very real effect of driving women and minority groups out of science. Last year, 21% of students sitting the Higher School Certificate in Physics were female[7], and only 11% of research management roles at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) were held by women.[8]

II SITUATED KNOWLEDGE

The possibility of attaining transcendent, unbiased and disembodied knowledge has, however, been radically questioned. The constructivist turn in social theory, from the 1960s onwards, undermined confidence in the notion that *any* knowledge could be free of historical, cultural, political and personal specificity. For example, Michel Foucault, in his theory of power/knowledge, argued that 'there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.'[9] In much the same vein, the field of standpoint epistemology asserts that all knowledge claims are situated, embodied and local, produced in networks that also encompass the social, cultural and political.

Standpoint epistemology and feminist theory have had significant influence on the philosophy of science. In particular, these fields have called into question the value-neutrality of scientific knowledge. Under the traditional view of scientific epistemology, the identities of scientists are irrelevant to the knowledge produced as long as researchers abide by the scientific method, which supposedly serves to eliminate all forms of personal bias and subjectivity. However, if we understand science as a social institution, and scientific knowledge as collaboratively produced through interpersonal consensus, then the standpoints of scientists are not at all irrelevant to the production of knowledge. As feminist philosopher of science Sandra Harding writes:

[The] scientific method provides no rules, procedures, or techniques for identifying, let alone eliminating, social concerns and interests that are shared by all (or virtually all) of the observers… Thus culture-wide assumptions that have not been criticised within the scientific research process are transported into the results of research.[10]

Harding's point is that if the social institution of science is predominantly made up of people

from one standpoint (i.e. that of the White, wealthy, heterosexual, cisgender, neurotypical male), the distinct subjectivity emerging from that standpoint can permeate scientific knowledge, yet remain undetected. The 'cultural fingerprints'[11] smearing the surface of scientific knowledge are wiped off with the gloss of objectivity, and a socially, historically and politically local standpoint is elevated to the abstract realm of universality. Therein lies the epistemological power that is bound up with claims to objective scientific knowledge. As Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant summarise, 'cultural imperialism rests on the power to universalise particularisms related to a specific historical tradition by making them (mis)understood as universally true.'[12] Donna Haraway calls this the 'god-trick' – constructing the 'illusion of infinite vision' from a limited standpoint.[13]

III COLLECTIVE BIAS IN SCIENTIFIC THEORIES

Abstract masculine bias permeates theories across all disciplines of science. Neurological theorists positing essential differences between 'the male brain' and 'the female brain' (such as those of best-selling author John Gray[14] and Simon Baron-Cohen[15]), sociobiological theories of primate behaviour reifying masculine aggression[16], and the 'Prince Charming/Sleeping Beauty' model of fertilisation[17] are just a few examples. These theories are all borne of disciplines dominated by men, creating knowledge for men, and ultimately serving to perpetuate the interwoven systems of heteropatriarchy, white supremacy and capitalism. The limited demography of science explains the prevalence of sexist, racist, ableist and homophobic biases (which are, arguably, 'ideologically based assumptions') in what are supposedly objective, value-neutral theories. But at the same time, this observation also provides a solution for overcoming this bias, through changing the constituency of practising scientists.

Donna Haraway argued in 1988 for the 'privilege of partial perspective'.[18] Starting from the premise that all knowledge is embodied, situated, local and hence 'partial', Haraway argues that certain social groups have the 'privilege' of being able to identify oppressive and discriminatory bias more readily than others. For example, women can more readily identify sexist bias in scientific theories, whereas those without lived experience of sexism tend to be blinded to this bias. Therefore, if we see discriminatory bias as detrimental to the knowledge produced by science, one way to remedy this bias is to make science more diverse, ensuring that scientific knowledge is the product of a heterogeneous array of standpoints.

While 'universality' and 'objectivity' may be unattainable ideals, scientific knowledge is undoubtedly made more epistemologically robust when it is the result of collaboration between people with different identities and lived experiences. This principle is supported by studies of the effect that diversity in working groups has on the quality of research produced. An analysis of 157 working groups at the National Centre for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis in the US found that peer-reviewed publications produced by gender-heterogeneous research teams received on average 34% more citations than publications by gender-uniform teams.[19] Similarly, a study of over 2.5 million papers, conducted by the National Bureau of Economic Research, found that articles authored by groups of people from different ethnic backgrounds and locations were published in higher impact journals and received more citations.[20] Diversity, it seems, bolsters the success of research, at least as measured by the standard metrics of academic communities.

IV CONCLUSION

Returning to the original example of the PLOS reviewer, we can now see the irony in the suggestion that a paper authored only by women contains 'ideologically biased assumptions'. It is clear that *all* knowledge is embedded in social relations, and cannot be extricated from ideology. The gendered assumptions about mathematical capability and objectivity apparent in the reviewer's comments only serve to highlight this point.

However, if we aim to rid scientific knowledge of discriminatory ideologies on a collective level, we need to strive for diversity in the ranks of practising scientists. This is best achieved by creating supportive and non-hostile environments for the pursuit of scientific knowledge, and certainly not by maintaining the sexist and inaccurate assumption that men are uniquely capable of unbiased, objective data analysis.

We need scholarships for minority groups and affirmative action to push women, and crucially women of colour, up the ladder in the academic hierarchy. We also need platforms that allow people to engage with science by presenting information in a clear and engaging way, neither sensationalised and simplified, nor shrouded in impenetrably obscure jargon.

Science can never be inclusive or transformative until it is translated from 'academese'[21] to ordinary language, and thus liberated from the stronghold of the ivory tower. Ultimately we need to rethink the hierarchical, insular structure of science, promote communality, and recognise the many different and equally valuable types of knowledge that a diverse and passionate group of people can create together.

The 'cultural fingerprints' smearing the surface of scientific knowledge are wiped off with the gloss of objectivity, and a socially, historically and politically local standpoint is elevated to the abstract realm of universality

A male-only Chinese dream:

The regression of gender equality in modern China

The Communist Revolution of 1949 heralded significant change in China. Its ramifications were evident not only in the radical reorganisation of China's political and economic landscape, but also in the nation's social fabric.

HELEN XUE

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws V

I INTRODUCTION

Mao Zedong swiftly abolished foot binding and revised the national Marriage Law.[1] In 1968, he proudly declared that 'women hold up half the sky'[2] – words that have come to exemplify China's unwavering commitment to gender equality. However, the recent arrest of five feminist activists[3] seemingly point to the demise of the 'state feminism' championed by Mao. These arrests are only one example among many, confirming the 'toxic vitality of sexism' that now courses through the social fabric of modern China.[4]

Today, there undoubtedly exists an alarming disjuncture between the historical support for gender equality and the challenging realities Chinese women currently face. China has made remarkable economic, political and social developments over the last three decades, and it seems astonishing, perhaps even paradoxical, for women's rights to have regressed. This perplexing shift is highlighted by Xiao Meili, a feminist activist: 'Feminism was never a taboo topic in China … our messages were consistent with those of the government, which calls itself an advocate of women's rights.'[5] Yet the state's complicity in entrenching misogyny is at an all-time high, with traditional gender roles regaining sway in society. This article articulates the reasons for the resurgence of traditional gender norms in China, and explores the challenges facing Chinese women in their quest for gender equality within a particularly difficult cultural and political context.

II THEN AND NOW

Under Mao's regime, official state rhetoric celebrated women's work in the public sphere with the view to encourage labour participation. Brimming with youthful exuberance and strength, women were undertaking roles usually left to their male counterparts, such as harvesting produce, welding steel and brandishing weapons. The Constitution, introduced in 1954, expressly recognised equal gender rights, and government policies mandated 'equal pay for equal work.'[6] Similarly, the national Marriage Law Act was reformed, with marriages to be based on the 'free choice of partners, equal rights for both sexes, and the protection of women and children.'[7] Although the regime was also responsible for the one child policy, which led to decades of invasive monitoring of women's reproductive lives and countless cases of forced abortions, the general trajectory under the regime marched steadily towards equality. However, since Mao's death and China's economic liberalisation, there has been a steady shift away from such notions of gender rights.

On March 6 2015, Li Tingting, Zheng Churan, Wei Tingting, Wu Rongrong, and Wang Man were arrested for their plan to distribute stickers to raise awareness about sexual harassment on International Women's Day and charged with 'picking quarrels and provoking trouble.'[8] Their previous 'stunts' include the wearing of blood-splattered wedding gowns in 2012 to highlight the pervasive nature of domestic violence, and 'occupying' men's toilets to protest the unfair ratio of women's

to men's toilets in China. The arrest garnered international outrage, but it merely scratches the surface of state-facilitated gender discrimination. The pervasiveness of sexism runs much deeper in contemporary China and warrants much-needed attention.

Currently, only two women serve on the Politburo, and women accounted for just 4.9% of the latest Central Committee – down from 7.6% in 1969.[9] The situation was not aided by a skit that was shown on this year's 'New Year Gala' – the most-watched TV show in the world, according to the Washington Post, with about 690 million viewers. The Gala suggested that female officials traded sex for government positions,[10] while another skit ridiculed 'masculine' women for being unsuitable 'marriage material'. Additionally, beginning in 2007, state-sponsored campaigns have specifically targeted single, well-educated, professional women over the age of 27, pejoratively labelling them 'leftover women' or the 'third gender' ('sheng nu'). State media condemns these women for betraying traditional family values, deeming their 'singledom' as having a destabilising influence on society. Judicial reform in 2011 has also made it difficult for women to retain the marital home in the case of a divorce; settlement is now purely determined by reviewing the party named on the deeds, which, as per tradition, has almost always been in the man's name.[11]

III THE OPPRESSIVE PERSISTENCE OF CULTURAL NORMS

During my recent trip to China, I raised the topic of gender inequality with a group of law graduates in Shanghai, and another group of young beauty therapists working in Shenzhen.

Despite a growing feminist consciousness among young Chinese women, they continue to struggle to reconcile personal values with century-old societal, familial and cultural expectations.

Every woman I conversed with was not only aware of the widespread gender discrimination, but had personally experienced its effects. The desire to prioritise education and a career was a uniform response, and the women all spoke of the relentless family pressure to get married and have children.

'This is a constant burden on my conscience,' says Wisteria, a paralegal. 'My parents grew up without siblings of their own, so they yearn for a grandson of their own to hold.' When asked about her plans to study a Masters of Law in England, she says that she justified it to her parents on the basis that 'it improves my marriage potential, because many men prefer wives who can speak English.' Qi, a hairdresser, says that she had no intention to marry until she had saved enough money of her own (also known as 'si fang qian' in Chinese, which literally translates to 'private money'), because she feared for her financial position in the event of a divorce. Despite harbouring these sentiments, not a single woman was willing to identify as a 'feminist'.

Although it is clear that Chinese women continue to suffer the consequences of systemic gender discrimination, the vast majority do not voice their grievances. This is because China's transformation in the post-Mao era has done little to dampen the patriarchal mores that are deeply ingrained in the culture.

The patriarchal values that define marriage and family as a woman's paramount duty similarly dictate what constitutes appropriate 'feminine' behaviour. Wisteria says, 'Men dislike women who identify as feminists because they do not make good wives, for they are not submissive.' She adds, 'Women who protest are often ostracised in society because they're viewed as greedy and emotional.'

Social expectations thus force women to internalise their dissent. Despite a growing feminist consciousness among young Chinese women, they continue to struggle to reconcile personal values with century-old societal, familial and cultural expectations.

IV THE TRIUMPH OF POLITICAL CENTRALITY

Today, Xi Jiping's national agenda is defined by political control through social stability. The regime has realigned itself with traditional Confucian and Daoist values, which place emphasis on the social harmony that can be achieved by the balanced unity of the masculine *yang* (protector) and the feminine *yin* (creator). On multiple occasions, Xi's cabinet expressly stressed the importance of 'family values, education and traditions,' where women must 'carry forward the fine traditions of… being frugal and properly bringing up children.'[12] Currently, the tale of China's miraculous economy is largely a male-written narrative that seldom features women, apart from the value they have provided within the nuclear family unit. It is a story of 'real estate developers, the political celebrities, the dot-com CEOs.'[13] As journalist Evan Osnos explains, China's economic growth in the 21st century is a collective triumph that came at the expense of individual expression and self-creation, with gender rights falling squarely within this category.[14] In addition, Di Wang argues that women's rights were omitted in China's quest to

integrate itself into global capitalism and consumer culture, where the commodification of women is also rampant.[15] Thus, a reversion back to familiar cultural traditions is simply more convenient for the official narrative espoused by the Communist Party; Xi and his post-Mao predecessors have effectively abandoned state-feminism and replaced it with top-down misogyny, because patriarchy strengthens the regime's political trajectory.

Xi's arrest of the activists is also consistent with the recent escalation of crackdowns on public demonstrations and political activism. As noted by leading Chinese academic Li Yinhe, the Communist Party may not be targeting feminists per se, but are 'against any grass-roots reform.'[16] The state's attitude towards organised opposition is informed by its general fear of political unrest, and it is important to note that even in the era of state feminism, female emancipation was bestowed upon women by Mao, rather than gained at the grassroots level. In a context where civil society is severely curtailed by the government's monopolisation of social reform, there remains significant institutional barriers that prevent women's voices from being heard.

V WHERE TO FROM HERE?

In light of the current political environment in China, the activists should be lauded for their bravery in speaking out against gender discrimination. It is clear that the persistence of cultural norms grounded in the traditional conception of gender roles prevents improvements in gender equality. The continued centrality of politics in China also confines the amount of progress that can be attained through grassroots activism. Consequently, it is extremely difficult to counter the regression of gender equality in China due to the combination of cultural tradition, a weak civil society and external political pressures.

However, the media coverage of the arrest has created more public interest about the issue. This may provide a silver lining of sorts, as further discussion may nurture the growing feminist consciousness that is present among China's generation of young women. Ultimately, the march to gender equality in China faces long and difficult challenges. It will take time for women to navigate the cultural and political obstacles in their struggle for equality, which will no doubt challenge China's preferred mode of a top-down gradual reform along the way. The result will be a uniquely Chinese tale about feminism, women and equality.

Make yourself at home

YIU NAM

Bachelor of Design and Architecture III

Make Yourself at Home is a photographic series that explores the damaging intrusion of whiteness within contemporary society. The photographs present a linear narrative that aims to critique how the white oppressor exploits and takes possession of non-Western culture, though inevitably extinguishing all of its original fertility and lustre. The oppressor's lack of accountability in instigating this cultural devaluation continues the positionality of whiteness as hegemonic within our Western consciousness. Sadly, both the oppressor and their whiteness are granted agency to roam free without consequence due to privileges accrued through years of colonial imperialism; thus spawned the conceptual genesis of this piece.

As a Chinese artist, I have borrowed – albeit conceptually – the oppressor's way of thinking in appropriating elements of the Still Life and Vanitas genres to deceptively present a visual narrative that explores what seems to be solely the human form. As audiences break past the superficiality of the image and deconstruct the symbols employed within the work, obvious undertones of temporality, discomfort and death surface as insuperable tensions within the piece. In essence, *Make Yourself at Home* hopes to stir within audiences an uneasiness in recognising the damage whiteness has inflicted upon non-Western culture, and hopefully empower them with this realisation to dismiss and decentre the myth of white supremacy in contemporary society.

‘Electric ladies, will you sleep?’:

Afrofuturist feminism in the music of Janelle Monáe

JUDY ZHU

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws V

Like all popular culture, the realm of music remains marked by racial hierarchies, from the appropriation of musical forms to the ways musicians of colour continue to be marked by their race. Yet, black music in particular, has been a vehicle for social commentary. As Samuel Floyd writes, 'black music making is driven by and permeated with the memory of things from the cultural past.'[1] As a black woman, Janelle Monáe's music fits this tradition, using performance to resist cultural assumptions about black femininity (and indeed, gender roles and racial assumptions at large) by marrying Afrofuturism and black feminism.[2]

It must be noted here that as an Asian woman, I cannot speak with authority on blackness. As such, though this essay has attempted to draw on Monáe's own assertions where possible, given that a large part of the commentary draws from personal interpretations, my lack of lived experience must be acknowledged. I must also note that Monáe's music also engages with queerness, but due to the limits of this essay, I will not be substantively analysing this aspect of her music.

I BACKGROUND

A AFROFUTURISM AND MONÁE

Any discussion of Monáe's music requires understanding the common narratives that underpin her work. Her performance as an artist extends beyond her songs to the totality of her persona; most of her solo work has, thus far, centred around the concept album series Metropolis. This narrative casts Monáe into the role of Cindi Mayweather. Mayweather, according to the storyline, is one of a line of mass-produced androids from the year 2719. The society of the time is governed by oppressive rules, one of which forbids androids to find love, especially with humans. In contravention of this, she falls in love with a human named Anthony Greendown, and consequently runs away when she is sentenced to disassembly; her first album and the first 'suite' of the series setting up this storyline. The subsequent album The ArchAndroid sees Mayweather become a messiah figure (the titular 'ArchAndroid') for Metropolis, eventually helping free them from a secret, oppressive society called the Great Divide. The third and most recent instalment in the concept series is The Electric Lady, which serves as somewhat of a prequel to the The ArchAndroid, dealing with Mayweather before she became a messiah figure; Monáe describes it as an 'origin story'.[3]

It is not a leap of logic, then, to fit her work into Afrofuturism, which has been defined as 'African-American signification that appropriates images of technology and a prosthetically enhanced future'.[4] Indeed, Monáe herself has articulated that 'when [she] speaks about the android, [she is] talking about a form of the 'other", specifically citing black people (along with several other marginalised groups) as one such parallel.[5] Moreover, academic discussion of Monáe also places her within the Afrofuturist tradition.[6]

B A BLACK FEMINIST AFROFUTURISM

It is also important to note that Monáe's music is necessarily already embedded with the spectre of race and gender, given that Cindi Mayweather, though an android, has the appearance of a woman of colour, being a 'mechanised but still racialised' version of Monáe.[7] Indeed, she herself has emphasised that she identifies as a feminist and womanist, and that she seeks to fight against sexism.[8] As such, we must consider the role that black feminism plays in her music. As a field of theory, it seeks to give weight to the experiences of black women (and indeed women of colour in general) and to emphasise the importance of intersectionality by highlighting oppressions that are mutually constitutive.[9] It is thus self-evident how this plays into Monáe's work, since Monáe's music is arguably inseparable from her status as an African-American woman, and at times even explicitly references aspects of the lived experiences of black women.

As such, when talking about her music, we cannot talk about black feminism or Afrofuturism in isolation. Because the foregrounding of the black experience and the deconstruction of white hierarchies via futurity in Afrofuturism is parallel to many tenets of black feminist thought, it seems natural that the two can be reconciled.[10] We should therefore consider her work as a confluence of the two epistemologies – what Morris terms 'Afrofuturist feminism'.[11]

I ANALYSIS

A SUITE I. 'MANY MOONS', COLONIAL HISTORY AND DISTANT ANDROID FUTURES

We begin with 'Many Moons'. [12] The setting of the music video is an android auction, where all the models of androids are played by Monáe. Immediately, the video recalls black slavery, as the title card proclaims "Metropolis Annual Android Auction." From the outset, Monáe superimposes colonial history onto distant android futures. Yet it is not merely the referencing of racist American history here; rather, as a black woman,[13] Monáe presents Cindi Mayweather as literally commoditised and objectified, speaking to the specific way in which colonial legacies have played out for black women.[14] While one might take the varied race and gender demographics of the android buyers as evidence of a 'raceless' future but by invoking imagery of slave auctions, Monáe re-centres blackness within this setting, speaking to David's conceptualisation of Afrofuturism.[15] We cannot discount, either, the way Monáe presents Mayweather in this video (and indeed, Mayweather as a persona in general) in terms of dress and gender presentation. As an android clone, Mayweather is almost invariably clad in a tuxedo or suit, disrupting gendered dichotomies through androgyny. [16] Indeed, she herself has stated that she is evoking the imagery of the working class,[17] speaking to the intersectionality that is a central tenet of black feminism, given these laden intersections for working class black women.[18]

In addition to the video, the lyrical and musical composition of the song involves the same invocations of African-American marginalisation through an Afrofuturist feminism. Though the lyrics themselves may not explicitly speak of the future, and are based upon elements of soul and funk, its digital beat implies futurity. This futurity is made explicitly postcolonial by the opening line 'we're dancing free but we're stuck here underground' and closing of 'I imagined many moons in the sky lighting the way to freedom,' deliberately evoking the Underground Railroad. The line 'are you bold enough to reach for love', as a reference to a forbidden android-human relationship, recalls the ban on miscegenation.

From the outset, Monáe superimposes colonial history onto distant android futures.

This is answered with nonsense lyrics,[19] leaving the listener to make their own connection between future and past.[20]

This is only heightened by the 'cybernetic chantdown' in the middle of the song – Monáe recites, in an almost robotic voice, a litany of paired phrases. This spoken word verse becomes a homage to that which is Othered in society, speaking to the intersections faced by minorities. For example, "hood rat, crack whore" speaks to racialised narratives of class, [21] as emphasised by the later reference to "welfare, bubonic plague." "Black girl, bad hair/broad nose, cold stare," then, refers to societal narratives about black women and beauty, briefly referencing the politics of black hair[22] as well as the privileging of Eurocentric beauty standards and white femininity.[23] Though Haraway was speaking to a different issue, her conceptualisation of cyborg imagery as a way to deal with the dichotomies we impose on ourselves is apt here[24] – Monáe's voice in this verse is digitally remastered as what she refers to it as a 'cybernetic chantdown,' invoking the supposed flat affect of robotic voices. In doing so, she reinforces the duality between a posthuman android future and the lingering spectre of oppression, with her android identity exposing the ways that the oppressions imposed on minorities are cultural, not natural.[25]

B SUITE II. "THIS IS A COLD WAR": DOUBLE-CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE MINORITY EXPERIENCE

'Cold War'[26] continues on in the same vein as 'Many Moons', speaking to and about the minority experience, acknowledging Monáe's experience of the double jeopardy of race and gender.[27] As such, though she is speaking as Cindi Mayweather and referencing her Otherness as an android when she sings 'I was made to believe there's something wrong with me,' it is impossible to decouple this from the fact that Monáe is singing as a black woman.

The Afrofuturist disruption of time through recall between past, present and future is particularly pertinent here – as Redmond suggests – Monáe "reconfigures and substantiates… planes of existence for marginalised and alienated groups'[28] by recontextualising and appropriating the historical Cold War. Breaching the gaps between past and future, Monáe uses the imagery of the Cold War to articulate the lived experience of being Other – invoking W. E. Du Bois's 'double consciousness'. When Monáe sings 'When you step outside/You spend life fighting for your sanity,' she recalls the psychosocial alienation engendered by her status as an African-American woman, or, as Du Bois puts it, the 'sense of always looking at one-self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity… one ever feels his two-ness… two warring ideals in one body.'[29] The Cold War is therefore translated to the micro level – this duality of self-perception and social disenfranchisement is emphasised by the fact that the song is essentially an uptempo ballad, with

Monáe herself says of the song: 'I wanted to create something for people who feel like they want to give up because they're not accepted by society.'

a fast beat and guitar track – in contrast to the much more sombre subject matter of the lyrics.

C SUITE III. "I WILL LOVE WHO I AM": CELEBRATING BLACK FEMININITY IN 'Q.U.E.E.N.' AND THE ELECTRIC LADY

'Q.U.E.E.N.'(featuring Erykah Badu),[30] addresses gender more than some of Monáe's other music, making explicit references to feminism and blackness; as she says, the title stands for 'Queer, Untouchables, Emigrants, Excommunicated, and Negroid'.[31] The song is set in the earlier stages of the Cindi Mayweather narrative – taking place before the robot uprising that took place in the album The ArchAndroid. As such, while the albums Metropolis and The ArchAndroid functioned more so as almost serving as a 'call to arms', The Electric Lady as a phase in the narrative seems to have focus more on self-empowerment.

In contrast to 'Many Moons', which I viewed as a challenge the enforcement of white beauty standards on black women, Q.U.E.E.N. focuses more so explicitly celebrating black women by deconstructing and criticising social norms that do not. Monáe herself says of the song: 'I wanted

to create something for people who feel like they want to give up because they're not accepted by society.'

'They call us dirty cause we break all your rules down' immediately sets up the way that black women are repeatedly devalued in society;[32] Monáe challenges this, singing 'I'm cutting up, don't cut me down.' The central verse of the song has Monáe repeating, in spoken word: 'even if it makes other uncomfortable, I will love who I am.' All this takes place in the context of a future where an android uprising is in its formative stages, this contextual background functioning as a distancing device that allows Monáe to locate this self-empowerment in a different narrative, whilst still interrogating the policing of blackness.

Sonically, 'Q.U.E.E.N.' contains throwbacks to the past in its repeated use of jazz, which is accompanied with the occasional use of synth beats and a more explicit evocation of hip-hop than either of the prior two songs. Arguably even the choice of genres that Monáe draws on are symbolic, whether intentionally or not, given the way that jazz and hip-hop are both black music genres that were and continue to be appropriated.[33]

'Been 'droids for far too long" sings Badu, with 'droids' again being used as a stand in for 'Other'. Monáe's line 'or should I reprogram, deprogram and get down?' echoes this, speaking to expected conformity of black people in line with social expectations.[34] She even explicitly references Phillip K. Dick's 'Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep' when asking at the close of the song: 'Will you be electric sheep? Electric ladies, will you sleep?', reimagining Dick's classic text into a call for arms. This juxtaposition of android imagery and futurity allows Monáe to use lines that explicitly reference the oppression of minorities, particularly black people, while ostensibly commenting on the plight of androids in the future. She thus can critically engage with and deconstruct assumptions of race neutrality and colour-blindness[35] when she sings lines such as 'Add us to equations but they'll never make us equal.'

This is echoed throughout the album – see, for example, 'Dorothy Dandridge Eyes',[36] which is a play on the classic 'Bette Davis Eyes'. With Dorothy Dandridge being a black female actress from old Hollywood, she serves as a black counterpoint to Bette Davis, allowing Monáe to subvert the reinforcement of white beauty standards in the classic, instead constructing a black woman as a beauty icon. 'Ghetto Woman'[37] is a reclamation of the word 'ghetto', a word loaded with cultural assumptions about racially-coded class distribution[38] – instead, the phrase 'ghetto woman' is used in the context of an anthemic celebration.

III CONCLUSION

Monáe's music is necessarily imbued with her race and gender, from the colonial evocations of 'Many Moons' to the celebration of black femininity in 'Q.U.E.E.N.'. Through her music-making, both in terms of persona and actual music, she constructs an Afrofuturist feminism through her development of the Cindi Mayweather narrative. By transposing critiques of contemporary racial and gender dynamics onto these counterfutures, she is able to centralise the way that blackness is at once dehumanised but still necessarily real and embodied, going to the way that black music is a way of articulating lived experiences.[39]

Brick and mortar

A short story

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Ten years ago, Piero, old t-shirt and boxers, said to me – no, whispered, as if he were almost afraid of his own words – 'I don't love you anymore.' Now, he is sitting in the fourth chair of the third row, designer stubble, suit and Oliver Peoples glasses, staring intently down at the program in his hands. His face is almost foreign to me, worn by the lines of age, yet still retaining remnants of the youthful spirit that had graced him years ago.

I catch barely a glimpse of him from the small crack where the French doors meet, and he does not see me at all. Yet, I can't help but feel a strange yearning again, the kind of nostalgia that comes naturally with confronting memories of yesteryear. Do I regret inviting him? Perhaps I'm having second thoughts now. The original euphoria, the thrill of sending the reckless invite has faded, and in its place is a dull hollowness, a kind of guilt, almost –

A tap on the shoulder. I spin around, and it's David, his face flushed from alcohol or anticipation; I can't tell. He pulls me in for a congratulatory hug, but instinctively, I retract. Guilt, yes, a small gnawing in the recesses of my mind that starts to spread. I turn away and walk through the dim corridor, winding and narrow, into the humid night air.

I bend to pick up a program that has fallen on the ground.

'NADA EXHIBITION: BRICK AND MORTAR by MITCH RYDBERG,' I read. The brazen, all-caps text is accompanied by a photo of the house I have spent the past decade constructing.

'*Débutant Mitch Rydberg's acclaimed artwork (mixed media: primarily brick and timber) has been lauded by publications and critics. Tonight, NADA is proud to host a one-time exhibition, allowing privileged guests unbridled access into the interior of the work. Rydberg himself will introduce and explain each detail as he leads guests on a tour of the rooms. This remarkable work has established Rydberg as a classic*

contemporary American artist, drawing on architectural influences to present stark images of loss'.

I scoff silently at the description. It's almost ridiculous in its exaggeration (a 'classic American artist'?), but then again, I suppose the entire art world is built on foundations of pretense and façade. It is a truth that no artist can escape from – least of all me.

———

I:

This is the house that I built.

II:

This is the living room. This is the rug that we purchased at the stall in Morocco, which cost us $200 in shipping to the U.S. because you couldn't bear to part with it. This is the crimson wine stain where you spilt a glass of our favourite Bordeaux because you laughed so hard when I told you that story about Ursula and her desperate search for Jack. This is the vacuum cleaner that you used in an attempt to suck the colour out of the stain, and this is the coffee table you purchased to hide it when your attempt failed.

These are the dirt tracks Jack left on our carpet when we tried to keep him in a kennel but forgot to lock the door. This is the vase that Ursula gave us for pet-sitting Jack, and this is the rose you placed in it. (It wilted, perhaps ungracefully, under your care. You removed it, but the putrid odour lingered, an unwanted reminder.)

III:

This is the study. This is the book assigned to my art course that you scoffed at for its price ($72, 50 pages of worthless material). This is the book assigned to your literature course that I scoffed at for its pretense. (I had never been a fan of Nabokov.) This is the desk where we sat together and read together, on some nights quietly absorbed and on other nights vacantly distracted.

This is the Walkman that you owned in 1992, oft-borrowed by me, broken in 1997 when you tried to play 'Ray of Light' and the machine burned the disc in half. This is the blanket that your grandmother made for your mother, and that your mother passed onto you, a tiny fragment of the family history to which you never introduced me. (I found out much later, from a small note hidden between the pages of your literature novel, which you left untouched on the shelf.)

IV:

This is the bathroom. This is the sink where you brushed your teeth, separately from me, because you hated the way your teeth looked. This is the gilded mirror, framed with spotlights (a gift from Terry), that I combed my hair in every morning while you sat on the edge of the bathtub, watching me and waiting (for we would always leave together).

This is the clock you gave me when you told me 'I love you' for the first time, hair slicked back for the occasion, nervous and jumpy and eyes brimming with the euphoric anticipation that comes with a first-time lover. (The clock, you said, was a reflection of the time we spent together. It didn't last a year before failing. Perhaps I should have heeded the clock's warning.)

V:

This is the bedroom. This is your pillow, smelling of cologne. This is the rift in the bed that separated us, that only grew larger as bodies distanced themselves from entanglement to eventual estrangement.

This is the bed where you whispered, 'I love you' – a nightly ritual – words fading into a sullen silence that was broken only by shallow breathing and a steady ticking from our bedside clock. (Only now do I question the verity of your statements.) This is the bed where you told me about the roses you had bought for the co-worker whose mother had died, where you read to me from the novel you were writing. This is the bed where I had told you about the origins of my knee scar. (I had wanted to tell you more of my childhood but you looked at me with waning attention and instead all I said was, 'It smells funny in here.')

This is the bed where we spent 3 years together (summed and totalled). This is the bed where you told me, 'I don't love you anymore.'

———

I head back inside feeling oddly resigned, and lean against the wall of the dark corridor to collect myself. Muffled footsteps on carpet, and David's silhouette appears in the doorway. He beckons, and I walk towards him, noiselessly, slowly.

'David,' I say, barely audible, as I finally close the gap between us. He smiles, and I peek again in the small crack between the doors. Scanning across the crowd of 30 or so, my eyes finally settle on the fourth seat in the third row, expecting to see the face that had once been familiar.

It's empty. Piero is gone.

I turn back to brush my hand against David's face, and open the doors, stepping into the golden glow of the spotlight, welcomed by a warm applause that peters out into the static silence of the balmy summer night.

What kind of man-on-man contact is gay?

Inclusive masculinity and the decline of homophobia in mixed martial arts

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The cognitively dissonant, politically incorrect writings of 'ultra-masculine' Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fans defending a one-time gay porn star can tell us far more about the state of homophobia in Western culture than the mainstream media can. Societal attitudes towards homophobia have changed so drastically over the last twenty years that tolerance and acceptance of homosexuals is the attitude ostensibly held by the majority; therefore, in order to investigate where the fight against homophobia will next be taken, we need to shift our focus to the deepest corners of the internet, where niche, ultra-masculine subcultures may still prevail. This essay will investigate the various online responses to the revelation that Dakota Cochrane, an MMA fighter, had appeared in gay porn. Whilst many reactions reflected mainstream attitudes of acceptance, we will specifically interrogate those reactions which sought to defend Cochrane's heterosexuality whilst rationalising his homosexual acts. These rationalisations will reveal the ways in which attitudes towards sexual identities and homophobic slurs are becoming more inclusive, even in this extreme niche.

First, we must substantiate the contention that homophobia in mainstream Western culture is in decline. Eric Anderson, in his book, *Inclusive Masculinity* (2009), conducted extensive empirical research that showed that across a broad spectrum of Western mainstream society, outside of ethnic and religious minorities, homophobia has been decreasing. This is evinced in Anderson's 2007 ethnography concerning an English university rugby team;[1] whereas in a 2002 study he had found that individual team mates coming out in heterosexual-dominated teams helped decrease homophobic attitudes, the members of the team in the 2007 study had learnt inclusive attitudes from the broader culture.[2] More obviously, this trend has increasingly dominated mass media, where the number of TV shows featuring LGBT characters, such as *Orange is the New Black* and *Modern Family*, are rising.[3] The growing body of mainstream discourse in support of marriage equality reveals not only tolerance, but understanding and inclusion, of homosexuals.[4]

The significance of this trend for this essay lies in Anderson's proposition that homophobia is evidence of hegemonic orthodox masculinity.[5] He argues that masculine capital, broadly referring to the degree to which a man is perceived as 'masculine' against the then socially inscribed codes of behaviour, is traditionally won through dominating others.[6] Men in societies dominated by orthodox masculinity were obliged to frequently engage in zero-sum games, in which two men entered into a competition that engaged these behavioural codes and one emerged victorious, their masculine capital heightened.[7] In this context, homophobic slurs were a way for men to constantly call into question the masculine capital of others, and thus raise their own by comparison;[8] therefore, a society that is no longer homophobic is no longer dominated by codes of orthodox masculinity.[9] While orthodox masculinity may still exist in niches and subcultures, it no longer has a hegemonic quality; rather, men only participate in orthodox masculine 'competitions' if they choose

to do so. Anderson terms this situation, in which multiple ideals of masculinity are equally valued, 'inclusive masculinity'.[10]

Therefore, let us turn our attention to one of the most prominent bastions of orthodox masculinity that remain – Mixed Martial Arts. Many sports are a kind of violent competition by proxy.[11] MMA is such a competition; a combat sport that valorises violence, strength and physical domination, it is an apt expression of orthodox masculinity.[12] We shall investigate whether, even in this highly traditional theatre, homophobia is also on the decline. It is pertinent to analyse online spaces because, as a general rule, the availability of anonymous expression invites more extreme expressions of any given ideology.[13] We will use the results of Channon and Matthews's study, which analysed the flashpoint of homosexual issues in the MMA subculture after, in 2012, fighter Dakota Cochrane was revealed to have acted in gay pornographic films.

The object of this analysis will be to penetrate the cognitive dissonance and see whether Cochrane's past homosexual acts were rationalised by the MMA public within the perception of a masculine fighter. What is important to note is that, although the rationalisations of Cochrane's heterosexuality and thus masculinity by the public are quite cognitively dissonant and not politically correct, they arise out of Cochrane's own choice to represent himself to the public as heterosexual.

I CASE STUDY

Mixed Martial Arts is a particularly brutal form of fighting which can include moves from a wide range of disciplines, including kickboxing, wrestling and judo; additionally, because it takes place in an octagonal cage, it is often referred to as 'cage fighting'. When in February 2012 it was revealed that Dakota Cochrane, a contestant on reality show *The Ultimate Fighter*, had acted in gay porn scenes and was now denying being homosexual, a media firestorm erupted.[14] MMA involves much bodily contact between men, and having a contestant whose previous on-screen male-on-male bodily contact had resulted in orgasm, rather than knock-out, was polarising.

The ensuing debate splintered into two main camps, whose distinct approaches hinged essentially on whether the writers believed it was problematic that Cochrane was potentially homosexual, and thus ignored his homosexuality, or whether they actively supported homosexuals in the sport.[15] The head of the sport, Dana White, was accepting of the idea of Cochrane being potentially homosexual and urged viewers to adopt the same attitude; from his statements, we can conclude that mainstream, inclusive views are becoming more prevalent in the MMA subculture.[16] However, since we are searching for evidence of the very extreme of orthodox masculinity, we should direct our focus away from this camp. Rather, we must look to the responses of an even smaller subset of the MMA subculture – one which, on the face of things, retained a general suspicion of homosexuality.

A HOMOSEXUALITY AS PROBLEMATIC

> 'Dakota Cochrane Is Not a Gay Man.'[17]
>
> 'Gay fighters are nothing new. The Spartans were so tough the form of Pankration they practiced allowed even biting and eye gouging in competition, and were encouraged to enter homosexual relationships as a way to build military cohesiveness.'[18]
>
> '… gay-for-pay.'[19]
>
> 'It's definitely a decision I regret ... I had money issues and I needed help ... I didn't really think.'[20]

> 'The reality of it is that there are predatory people in our capitalist society who will take a young person, boy or girl, as soon as they are eighteen and they will try to ... exploit you as hard as they possibly can, as young Cochrane found out.'[21]

> '[Watching gay porn] was brutal ... I dare any straight guy just to look at gay porn ... I think my eyes were just traumatised.' [22]

> '[T]he decision he made years ago was a selfish one, made for money, but this opportunity to be on TUF isn't just about him; it's a chance to enrich his family.'[23]

> 'Speaking to well-established images of morally courageous, blue-collar fighter constructions of Cochrane's 'true' identity depicted a moral, straight man who owns his mistakes while struggling to provide for a young family.'[24]

> 'Beating someone up, it's pretty exciting.'[25]

These quotes, extracted from various online sources, raise a number of issues. The most obvious is the issue of denial – Cochrane's and that of other writers. Whilst Cochrane may, in fact, not be heterosexual, and whilst his statements expressing regret may have been partially motivated by shame or pressure, this particular question is moot in this discussion; what is cogent is that Cochrane was empowered to choose how he would represent himself to the outside world, and that external commentators sought to accommodate this heterosexual self-representation, constructing an image of a blue-collar hero when faced with the 'problem' of his appearance in gay porn. Two notable areas therefore arise for analysis: sexual identities, and homophobia as a dominating tool.

B SEXUAL ACTS AND IDENTITIES

How do the writers reconcile Cochrane's homosexual acts and his purported heterosexual identity? The writers argued that Cochrane could still claim a heterosexual identity whilst having had homosexual encounters in the past, through a distinction between sexual acts and sexual identities – whilst the sexual acts were voluntary, Cochrane's 'true' heterosexuality was evinced by his embodiment of an orthodox masculine identity in other ways, such as his physical strength and traditional family-oriented values.[26] Although the writers needed to resort back to masculine stereotypes in order to defend Cochrane,[27] and his homosexual acts were viewed as transgressions from the orthodox norm,[28] the distinction between sexual acts and identities is a clear shift towards an ideal of inclusivity, because it shows a departure from the 'one time rule'.[29]

The 'one time rule' functions in this way. In a society in which males feel that they are constantly at risk of attracting suspicion of being homosexual – what Anderson describes as 'high homohysteria' – a single transgressive homosexual act is sufficient to remove a male's masculine capital.[30] In fact, no act per se is necessary to attract suspicion of being homosexual; in a society in which every male is at risk, even relative effeminacy was sufficient to elicit bullying.[31]

An entirely different process is demonstrated in the case of Cochrane. Cochrane was not merely suspected of engaging in homosexual acts in the past. That he had was public knowledge, and furthermore, these acts were available to be viewed in a relatively public way. The distinction lies in that Cochrane did not have to fear being suspected of being labelled a homosexual, because claiming a heterosexual identity was enough to retain his masculine capital;[32] having done so, others rushed to defend his masculinity in myriad ways.[33] Cochrane's motivation for his own denial might form the subject of separate debate, but

what is important for our purposes is that, having declared a sexuality, there no longer existed a poisonous atmosphere of suspicion, fear and dominance that surrounded his actions and how they reflected upon his sexual identity. Rather, writers like Chiapetta compared Cochrane with Spartan fighters who were, according to him, powerful and heterosexual, while nonetheless engaging in homosexual acts.[34]

MMA involves much bodily contact between men, and having a contestant whose previous on-screen male-on-male bodily contact had resulted in orgasm, rather than knock-out, was polarising.

It is necessary to moderate this approbation by saying that Cochrane and his apologists needed to embellish his heterosexual identity with orthodox credentials.[35] It was not merely enough for Cochrane to claim a heterosexual identity. Rather, he and his apologists needed to bolster the case by appealing to Cochrane's orthodox virtues, such as his role as the provider for his family.[36]

Nevertheless, the departure from the 'one time rule' is significant enough that we can conclude, even in the MMA subculture, that homohysteria is no longer a dominant force in assessing and censuring certain behaviours.

C HOMOPHOBIA

The absence of the 'one-time rule' is significant because it indicates much about the way that homophobia functions in any given society. Anderson distinguishes between two kinds of homophobia. The first kind is a homophobia motivated by genuine hatred, and which is to a greater extent agentive;[37] it therefore does not tell us much about the state of the society from which it comes, because even the most progressive society can sustain such individual views.[38] The second kind is a homophobia used as a tool for social control; this is by far the more widespread, and therefore problematic.[39] Anderson argues that the majority of uses of homophobic language do not arise out of genuine hatred, but rather arise out of a feeling of obligation to reproduce orthodoxy;[40] in an atmosphere of high homohysteria, men need to label other men as gay in order to dissuade suspicion that they themselves might be gay.[41] Having proven that sexual acts and identities are seemingly no longer conflated even in the niche MMA subculture, and that levels of homohysteria are low, we should be able to predict that the use of homophobic slurs as a tool of social control will decrease.

Cochrane, Channon and Matthews argue, was uniquely placed within this dialogue, and therefore his case tells us much about the move away from homophobia.[42] Dana White's statement, 'Any guy who has anything to say to [Cochrane], he gets to kick his fucking ass two days later!' underscores

the bottom line that those who would seek to gain masculine capital through a feminising, homophobic slur against Cochrane would risk being emasculated themselves in a fight governed by physical prowess.[43] His statement and its underlying threat turns the use of homophobic slurs on its head. Previously, men risked little by using homophobic slurs, but when faced with a potential target of homophobic slurs who was also a skilled fighter, the antagonist risks their strategy backfiring.[44]

Masculinity, in certain areas of society, has shifted from hegemonic orthodox masculinity to inclusive masculinity. This has been positive because, in general, men can choose any one of myriad alternative masculine ideals. Furthermore, a significant decrease in homophobia and increase in inclusive attitudes within orthodox masculinity itself have been evinced. It was established earlier that hegemonic orthodox masculinity is linked to homophobia; however, from the analysis of the second 'camp' of MMA fans which lies above, it is clear that orthodox masculinity, deprived of its formerly hegemonic element, can take on an increasingly inclusive quality. Therefore, orthodox masculinity itself is not necessarily a negative societal influence as regards to homophobia: rather, it is the hegemonic aspect which had been problematic, and is seemingly on the decline.

11 CONCLUSION

It has been shown that even the subset of the MMA subculture which was not willing to accept the possibility that Cochrane was potentially on the LGBT spectrum has exhibited signs of an 'inclusive masculine' attitude. They no longer conflate sexual identities and acts – an extremely significant point, because of the bearing it has on the second indicator, the decrease in homohysteria. Homophobic slurs are no longer seen as an obligation of being masculine, although this relegation will not prevent its use by those who intend to express a genuine, targeted hatred. In this way, inclusive masculinity has begun permeating even the most orthodox spaces.

Of course, this does not mean that orthodox masculinity has ceased to exist. Rather, progress is evinced in that it has ceased to be hegemonic over other masculine ideals. Whilst the archetype of the working class, physically dominant fighter is still a masculine ideal, the difference is that men are increasingly able to opt out of this 'game', with a decreased threat of being attacked should they opt out. Ultimately, inclusive masculinity does not eradicate all issues surrounding the social censuring of certain types of behaviour, but it provides for a plurality of gender ideals that are nevertheless normative.

Substance use & queer spaces

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Every few weeks I end up on the floor of a bar somewhere, usually the Imperial, covered in what I thought was my drink, but at a point at which I was well past caring. Although I do not recall most of my visits there, I was upset to hear that police again closed the Imperial Hotel for license violations after staff were seen openly consuming and encouraging the consumption of illicit drugs. While the Imperial probably needs to be more tactical in its drug use, it is not surprising that police target gay bars like it, which are well known sites of queer drug consumption. This article will briefly examine the trends in drug use among queer individuals, offering some reasons for their prevalence. Moreover, whilst intending to retain an attitude of drug positivity and without stigmatising drug users, will seek to analyse the effect that the prevalence of illicit substances has on the culture of queer spaces, highlighting the normative force that high consumption rates can have in shaping them. It will finally consider, through an intersectional lens, the degree to which the abuse of illicit substances may exclude certain groups from some queer spaces.

For the purposes of this article, the term 'queer' will refer to any LGBTQIA+ person. Although a historically derogatory term, many queer people in the Australian context have sought to reclaim this term.[1]

Numerous studies have documented the trend of disproportionately high queer drug use.[2] In Australia, queer people are almost 6 times more likely to use ecstasy, and more than 4 times more likely to use meth/amphetamines, than the non-queer population. Queer people also experience higher alcohol and tobacco usage rates.

There are a number of reasons that drug use in queer spaces is disproportionately high. Drugs are often used to self medicate and alleviate the stress associated with oppression.[3] Given the generally unsupportive culture that queer people encounter, and the impact that ubiquitous discrimination and stigma have on their lives, substance use can serve as a mode of escape. The fear of experiencing this stigma and discrimination after the coming out process results in these pressures being felt even more acutely by young queer people.[4] Gay men with AIDS may use methamphetamines to facilitate sexual pleasure.[5] Where already using or addicted to substances, queer individuals are less likely to seek help managing their use.[6] The fear of outing themselves to doctors, previous poor encounters with the health system, or knowing people who have had poor encounters, makes them less likely to seek medical assistance.[7] As substance use becomes more common in queer spaces, its presence places normative pressure on individuals within those spaces to participate in their usage.[8] This article will concern itself mostly with the last of these reasons.

> 'Once, at a queer party, a guy I sort of knew came up to me with a bottle of Ritalin and a zip-lock bag of assorted other pills. He was very high, to the point of yelling dramatically to bystanders about his suicidal ideation. He offered me a bunch of pills, saying he didn't know what they were but that they were going to 'get us fucked up.' When I refused

> multiple times, he ended up downing half the bottle and wandering off. It turned out fine on that occasion, 'fine' here meaning that I was sober enough at the time to repeatedly refuse and get out of there, but it's a weird and uncomfortable experience, and not uncommon in queer party spaces. It makes acquaintances and strangers very unpredictable. I'm always a little on guard about it.'

When substance use is pervasive, it begins to seep into queer culture. In the spaces we examine, it becomes an integral part of what it means to participate as a queer person.[9] The ubiquity of drugs in gay bars, and the fact that many queer youth identify their first encounter with drugs as having occurred in these or similar spaces, is testament to this. Given that collective identity is largely a product of experience, it may be perceived that understanding that identity can only be gained by participating in the performative aspects of it – in this case, substance use.[10]

For a young queer person entering these spaces, often with limited experiences of the diverse range of queer identities, the influence that observing other people who claim that identity using drugs has on their perception of their own queer identity cannot be understated. Drug use, and the pleasure associated with it, becomes inseparable from the 'vibe', or culture of the space where the drugs are consumed.[11] Drug use becomes expected, and begins to shape participants' approaches to the space.[12]

As distinct from cis/hetero-normative spaces, there is pressure on participants in queer spaces to define against the dominant norms, and adopt the norms of the queer space.[13] Where those spaces are autonomous, participants may feel a need to demonstrate or prove their queerness, so as to be seen as legitimate participants within those spaces. Where those spaces are non-autonomous, participants may feel a need to distinguish themselves from non-queer participants in those spaces, in order to feel more accepted. This often takes place by altering modes of performance or comportment, so as to make visible their queer identity. To the extent that the dominant discourse is a substance normative one, it is common for participants in these spaces to incorporate these discourses into their own performance as a queer person.[14]

The effect of this is twofold. Firstly, as a queer person, the belief that substances are needed to engage in queer spaces, or that substance use is in some way tied up in queer identity, starts to form.[15] This, to some extent, coerces queer individuals into consuming substances they would not have otherwise consumed.[16] This is usually a socially coercive norm, but can also manifest as a more physical peer pressure. These coercive pressures can operate more intensely on queer people of colour and working class queer people, given that structures of oppression can work to limit agency in queer spaces.[17] Secondly, and conversely, those that do not, or cannot, participate in that culture, feel pressured to consume substances, or, to the extent that they abstain, become ostracised from queer spaces.[18]

People with less access to capital – those from poorer backgrounds, for instance – have less access to a culture that values drug use. The opportunity cost of purchase and consumption is relatively higher for those individuals. To the extent that they must make some measure of sacrifice in order to participate in these spaces, they will often find themselves excluded by factors that they cannot control.

This is particularly problematic given the intersection of their class and sexual identity. Depending on their location, they may have

suffered from discrimination or stigma, without access to spaces that accept their identity. Moreover, queer spaces have a history of excluding people on the basis of class, and their capacity to consume.[19] Drug consumption can be an indicator of class, and the embodied nature of participation in queer spaces means that a lack of access to drugs in queer spaces can be alienating, particularly when it is framed as an important part of queer identity.[20] It is important that queer spaces cater to the needs of these individuals, as they often lack access to alternative spaces, and their perspectives and inclusion are important in fostering a nuanced and intersectional approach to queer politics.

At some level, given that people of colour, particularly Indigenous people in Australia, disproportionately suffer from poverty due to systemic economic discrimination, the above-mentioned problems associated with class may also be applicable. However, there are a number of other factors that problematise access to substance normative queer spaces. For reasons that are broadly analogous to those which explaining the disproportionate use of illicit substances in the gay community, drugs tend to be more common among people of colour. Moreover, Indigenous people are commonly stigmatised as drug users in political and social spheres. It is this rhetoric, for instance, that seeks to justify paternalistic welfare systems in the Northern Territory.

The experiences of queer Indigenous Australians are a testament to this.[21] 'Sistergirls' are Indigenous transwomen and 'brotherboys' are Indigenous transmen.[22] Sistergirls and brotherboys speak of the colonial legacy of strict gender performance that can lead to exclusion from their communities. The dominant whiteness of many queer spaces also prevents them from seeking support there. As such, queer Indigenous Australians disproportionately turn to drug use and self harm in order to cope with the discrimination that they experience.[23] Given those individual experiences, and often compounded with negative familial or community experiences with drug abuse, sistergirls and brotherboys can become adverse to participating in queer spaces that are drug normative.

Drug use, and the pleasure associated with it, becomes inseparable from the 'vibe', or culture of the space where the drugs are consumed. Drug use becomes expected, and begins to shape participants' approaches to the space.

Given these patterns, people of colour are more likely to have had negative experiences with drugs – in their families or communities, for instance – and, given those experiences, wish to avoid spaces where drugs are regularly consumed. In some instances, internal cultural pressures also act to exclude people of colour from participating in queer drug culture. This is especially true in cultures with strong anti-drug sentiments. The normative pressure to consume drugs, given broader cultural

pressures, may also be compounded in queer spaces, and that pressure can be alienating.[24]

> 'My family, like many Asian families, was quite conservative. My upbringing was both anti-gay and anti-drug. This means that, as a gay Asian man, queer drug culture can sometimes be quite confronting. At times, you feel adrift–caught between a gay culture that is confronting on some levels, and a home Asian culture that struggles to deal with diverse sexuality.'

Systems that exclude people of colour from queer spaces are especially problematic. Queer people of colour have incredibly important perspectives on queer issues and identity that can only be drawn from their complex, intersectional experiences. More importantly, to the extent that they can be ostracised from their community for their queer identity, and broader social and queer spaces for their racial identity, progressive queer spaces must seek to provide a safe space for these individuals who lack that space elsewhere.[25]

Queer people who have previously been addicted to certain substances, and find the use of drugs in queer spaces to be triggering, are also excluded by a drug normative culture.[26] In order to access queer spaces, they must risk relapse and stress. Often, the factors that lead to addiction, like self-medicating against discrimination, are exactly those that queer spaces seek to remedy; it is perverse that these are exactly the spaces that exclude them.

More radical queer voices have called for the removal of drugs from queer communities.[27] They see them as poisons that have been thrust upon queer people by a white, cis/hetero-normative society, providing the only means of escape, but in doing so poisoning the minds and bodies of queer minorities. Although these voices exclude queer people who have chosen to use drugs, rather than continue to suffer near constant stress and oppression, they point to a need to diversify the kinds of spaces that are available to queer people.

Given the complex and diverse experiences of the individuals that they seek to serve, queer spaces that seek to be progressive and inclusive must strike some balance between competing claims of access. Here, drug positivity is taken to be an important goal, in order to encourage access on the part of individuals who have queer identities and consume substances. However, as a consequence of this policy, many individuals who have had negative experiences with, or cannot access, drug culture are excluded from these spaces. It so happens that often these individuals also suffer from complex intersections of oppression, such that their voices are incredibly valuable to progressive queer spaces, and those spaces ought to provide them safe refuge. Participation in leisure spaces can shape approaches to the political, as it is there that identities and relationships between queer people of diverse backgrounds are formed.[28] It is important, then, that queer spaces are as diverse and inclusive as possible, so as to facilitate participation in discourse about the broader political goals of the movement.

Those involved in queer spaces should be more aware of the effect that policy and culture within those spaces operate to include and exclude various classes of individual. They should seek to incorporate to a greater degree the voices that are currently excluded. Where possible, they should also seek to create a larger number of sober queer spaces, where sober people can participate and share their experiences.

Within

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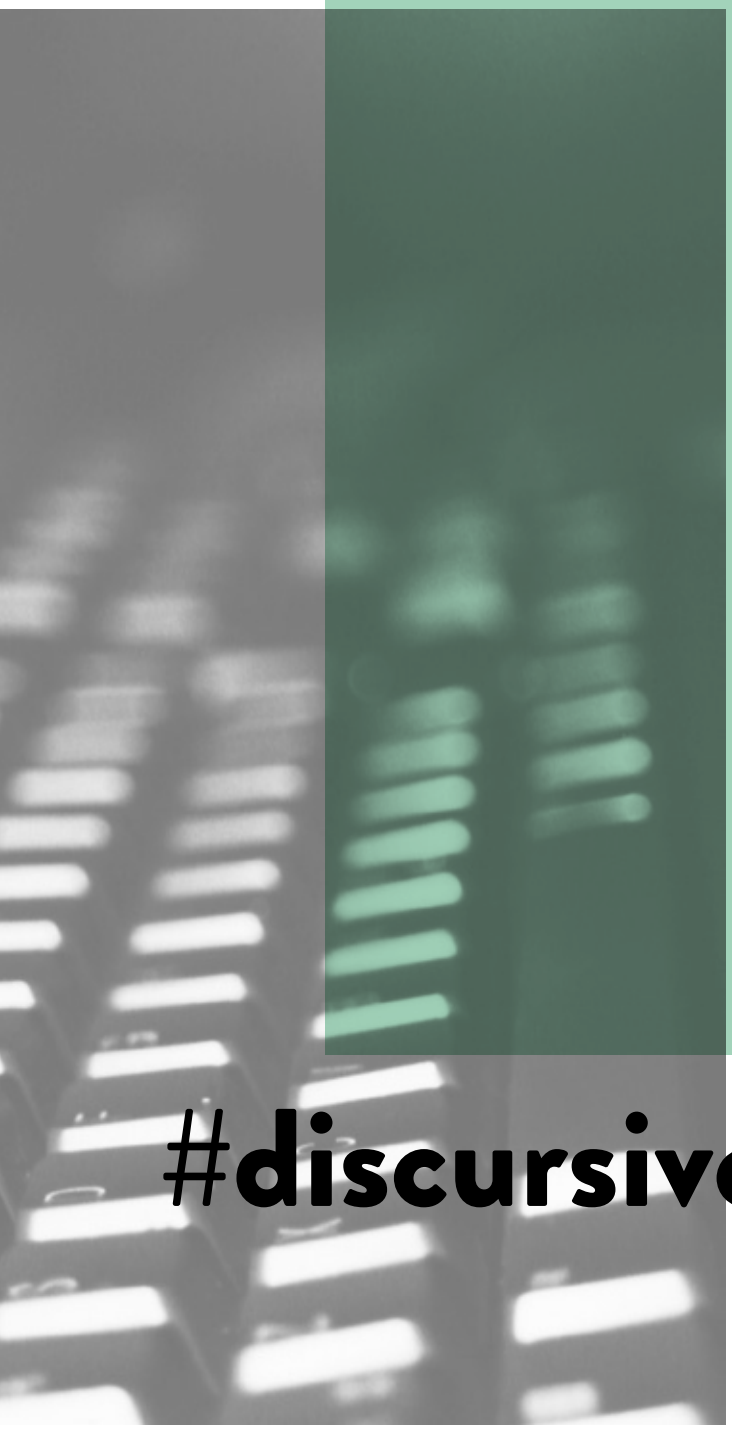

#discursivecolonisation:

Representation in ‘human rights’ spaces

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Chandra Mohanty introduced the term 'discursive colonisation' in her 1984 analysis of feminist scholarship, '*Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses.*[1]' The term refers to the homogenisation of the 'third world' person, and more specifically the 'third world' woman, as a single category, devoid of agency and bound by shared victimhood.[2] In a period of rapid global decolonisation, Mohanty responded to the reductionist and colonising tendencies of Western feminist scholars, and other global south scholars, who researched the 'third world' and its 'subjects.' It is important to understand that 'third world' or 'majority world' refers to 'oppressed nationalities'[3] that lack a degree of political, social and institutional development. The 'three worlds' jargon of the Cold War continues to be used in development discourse, human rights spaces, and even in popular vernacular, perpetuating a monochromatic view of the world that promulgates colonial mentalities.

It is imperative to continue decolonising human rights discourse, especially in an increasingly globalised context where information is digested, recycled, and shared rapidly. An international audience, made available through social media and the World Wide Web, engages with human rights movements in an easily and seemingly 'accessible' online format. Discursive colonisation is therefore a substantially unchecked reality in many of our Facebook and Twitter feeds. Seemingly progressive campaigns such as the global education movement, which includes the #iammalala hashtag sparked from the shooting of Malala Yousafzai in 2012, continue to construct the 'third world' woman through visually and discursively colonising strategies.

Unraveling the complexities of these online human rights causes, spread through 'international' platforms with a large western audience, reveals the pervasive depth of discursive colonisation, which is not just limited to 'the girl who was shot by the Taliban.'[4] The most pertinent example is the Ferguson shooting and subsequent twitter handle #blacklivesmatter, intended to raise awareness of the daily and institutional discrimination African American people face in the US, and soon after co-opted by #alllivesmatter.[5] Assuming universalism in #alllivesmatter, though it may be an objectively true sentiment, ignores the underlying issue of erasing African American people from the narrative of the common 'all.'[6]

Similarly, #bringbackourgirls was a campaign started by a group of Nigerian campaigners in support of the Nigerian families whose girls were kidnapped by the Boko Haram. The campaign gained global popularity in 2014, with over 1 million people tweeting about the cause, including various Western celebrities.[7] The Western outcry has created awareness on one hand, but also militarised the #bringbackourgirls campaign in a neo-colonial manner by pressuring Western powers, primarily the US, to involve itself in African affairs.[8] Furthermore, once the hype dwindled, there has been little attention paid to the now 2000 women and girls abducted since April 2014, with only 700 returned home;[9] their

memory will seemingly only remain in our browser histories. These are obvious forms of colonisation: Western actors dominating spaces of minorities to override existing grassroots movements with their own perspective. However, the more insidious and unspoken form of discursive colonisation is in the

assassination attempt on October 10th 2012.[11] It sparked the 2012 #iammalala campaign, mobilised by Gordon Brown, then UN Special Envoy for Global Education.[12] The campaign, however, discursively colonised Malala and Pakistani women and girls in three ways; by promoting a

Discursive colonisation is therefore a substantially unchecked reality in many of our Facebook and Twitter feeds.

semantics. The Chibok girls are not the possession of the global commons, yet they are assumed to be the world's – 'our' – girls. While it may seem like mere pedantry, when 1 million people collectively perpetuate this unspoken truth, it is cause for concern. This is not an indictment on people in the West who engage with human rights movements through social media, but rather the unconscious and uncritical approach that perpetuates discursive colonisation in this space.

Admittedly, the brevity required in social media essentialises many complex social justice campaigns. However, it still discursively colonises the 'subjects' of these campaigns, revealing problems with the assumed universalism in progressive human rights spaces.[10] #Iammalala is a relevant event, narrative and campaign to interrogate as it reveals how easily people in the West discursively consume and spread Malala Yousafzai's narrative and project for global education, without critical thought about the substance of the movement. Malala was publishing an online blog via the BBC about her life under the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in the Swat Valley, resulting in an

western model of education reform in Pakistan that silenced other initiatives; by perpetuating the victim narrative of 'third world' women who need 'saving',[13] and re-creating Malala as an 'exceptional' third world woman, palatable to a Western audience and agenda. This does not deny the importance of her cause, the universal right to education or the brutality of the event, but rather unravels unspoken issues. Just as Mohanty examined feminist scholarship, which had, and still does have, broader normative impacts on society, this education campaign is equally important to examine in an increasingly globalised world.[14]

Firstly, Malala's attempted murder was not a watershed moment for global education reform. The western media's[15] portrayals of the Swat valley event and Malala have overwhelmingly silenced existing non-Western education movements in Pakistan. There is documented evidence of women's organisations dedicated to educating Pakistani women and girls as early as 1949, such as the All Pakistan's Women's Association,[16] with further evidence of women's education on Pakistan's social reform agenda since 1975, albeit

with limited results.[17] On a broader conceptual level, the silencing of these Pakistani initiatives reasserts the value of a western education model, as it is the only one given currency through Malala's story.

Prior to the shooting, a framework of global education initiatives emerged from the 2002 Millennium Development Goals and has been championed by the UN, led largely by western actors such as Gordon Brown.[18] Malala and the subsequent #iammalala campaign were co-opted into the existing Western understanding of education, as evinced when Gordon Brown announced in 2012 that in time Malala will join '*our* campaign.' Malala's own understanding of education is through an atomised and individualistic Western conception, exemplified in her UN Speech[19] when she prioritises educating the individual – 'one child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world.'[20] The slogan capitulates to the existing UN framework of global education, which targets education institutions separately, often without consideration for the nuances of a 'third world' country's social and political context. This representation of Malala ignores existing Pakistani education movements and efforts,[21] some of which include reimagining the role of women in Pakistan's public sphere, which is more likely to create more sustainable education reform in Pakistan.[22] This demonstrates how #iammalala, and ongoing initiatives that herald universal reform, perpetuate colonial understandings of the subaltern, are limited in their understanding of the idiosyncrasies of 'third world' countries,[23] and potentially silence and discursively colonise the 'subaltern' yet again.[24]

Secondly, the majority of 'third world' women and girls for whom Malala's global education campaign 'acts for,' continue to be represented as 'traditional' victims without agency.[25] In the West, there is ample evidence that women's roles in Islamic societies are conceived in relation to religion.[26] A quick examination of newspaper titles demonstrates this frequent cultural and religious reductionism, especially when it comes to the fight for women and girls' education in Pakistan.[27] While it is true that Pakistan has been slow in reforming the gender gap in education, as exemplified by the country's 56th rank (out of 58) in the World Economic Forum 2005 report,[28] the media representations of Pakistan ignore *any* institutional changes, such as the reduction in the education gender gap from 27% to 24% between 2000 and 2005.[29] It also perpetuates the idea that Islam is homogenous, that all Pakistani women and girls are religious, and that this makes them victims of their own culture and religion.[30] Nandita Dogra argues that human right's advocates, and NGO's more specifically, use the language of victimisation in order to control subjects and strategies intended to aid these people.[31] The correlation of victimhood and religion assumed in the media's representation of Pakistan provides a cathartic and emotional reaction that engages a western audience. When using #iammalala and engaging with Malala's narrative, an unspoken implication is that of perpetuating the unspoken 'victim' narrative of Pakistani women and girls.

The final point is that, at first glance, Malala, as the 'subaltern,' can speak and is therefore divorced from her 'third world' peers;[32] however, she is reduced to a figurehead, compliant with the specific ideals of the 'first world.' The 'first world' woman is often conflated with modernity, and therefore implicitly characterised as more evolved than the 'third world' woman, vis-à-vis the ideal model.[33] Despite technically being a 'third world' woman, Malala is 're-presented'[34] through the tropes of the articulate, independent, and liberated 'first world' woman.[35] #Iammalala and Malala's personal biography[36] present a young girl who was able to develop an articulate and critical view of the world in English

(read: 'progressive'), in the 'backwards' Swat Valley, and all with her pencil. This reinforces the colonial narrative that education 'liberates' women in the third world so they can modernise and reach the progressive stage of the 'first world' woman. By focusing on Malala's exceptionalism against other 'third world' women, achieved through her personal engagement with 'first world' education, and recognition in global forums such as the UN and as a Nobel Prize award recipient,[37] the western representation of her personal narrative reinforces the divide between 'first' and 'third world' women. Focusing on Malala's narrative of 'liberation,' and conflating this with education reform, masks the geopolitical and institutional atrocities caused by Western powers in the region, exemplifying what Dogra argues is the exploitation of empowered 'third world' women for neoliberal campaigns.[38]

Human rights spaces are frequently influenced by colonial hangovers that insidiously influence our understandings of 'social movements' and progressive action. In an age where the media perpetuates these representations, it is imperative to remain critical of what is both said and omitted, as well as the underpinning colonial assumptions in development studies and human rights spaces. Malala may at first challenge the homogenous representation of Pakistani women and girls as traditional and victims, but on closer inspection, she is still 'discursively colonised' through her western-circumscribed identity. These colonial understandings are a persistent obstacle to a coherent education movement in the 'third world,' and unfortunately continue to perpetuate mythologised understandings of 'third world' women. We must therefore continue to deconstruct and engage with online human rights movements in a critical and informed way to change the dialogue about the multifarious 'third world woman.'

Sexual violence and war:

Bodies and meaning

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The body has been a central aspect of armed conflict since it began. Armed conflict is essentially the manipulation of bodies, to either maim or destroy the bodies of others. A somatic analysis assists in understanding the nature of the body as a space through which meaning can be inscribed to display messages during armed conflict. Violence of a sexual nature has a particularly strong effect on bodies, and is able to convey strong messages regarding social and cultural norms from the perpetrator to the survivor and their family, friends and society. In any analysis of sexual violence in armed conflict, there are three primary frames through which these acts can be analysed: firstly, sexual violence as the (re) production of military masculinity on female bodies (essentialism); secondly, sexual violence as an attack on an intersectional female body (structuralism); and thirdly, sexual violence as a performance of gendered power on bodies (social constructivism). Most theorists broadly conform with one of these categories as they attempt to ascribe meaning to sexual violence. In doing so, theorists seek to understand the perspective of the perpetrator, and their role, as they see it, in relation to the victim, based on the meaning that can be projected through their body. All three approaches have strengths and weaknesses and have impacted upon the development of international criminal law. I will argue that social constructivism is the best approach to understanding how meaning is inscribed upon the body in armed conflict; it allows for a malleable and nuanced way to understand the power dynamics which are inherent within sexual violence. While essentialism and structuralism seek to promote a unitary narrative for explaining sexual violence, social constructivism allows for different meanings to be conveyed through the body as a space for socio-cultural construction, and instead focuses on the power dynamics which can be created.

I ESSENTIALISM

Essentialists create an account of sexual violence grounded in universalised views of masculinity, femininity and the prevailing patriarchy. The broad perspective of essentialists is that 'women in the war-zone are victims of sexual violence in order [for the perpetrator] to assert military masculinity'.[1] Cynthia Enloe asserts that this approach is based on the gendered stereotypes that men are either aggressive actors and war wagers, or the subject of violence.[2] Conversely, women are expected to maintain the household,[3] and belong to their husbands or male relatives.[4] This is the narrative of the 'militaristic men'.[5] Accordingly, sexual violence is 'a way of reaffirming patriarchal hierarchies between men and women. The strategic purpose of using sexual violence is to manifest the militaristic masculine identity of the male perpetrator.'[6] Essentialism assumes that perpetrators believe that men are universally powerful and violent, while women are universally submissive.

On an essentialist account, the attack occurs not because of some personal issue between two intentional agents, but rather because women

'are the objects of fundamental hatred that characterises the cultural unconscious and is actualised in times of crisis [sic]'.[7] Accordingly, women are targeted because of their role as victim within a wider patriarchal society. Historical accounts of sexual violence, such as that of the Bible, can be accounted for with an essentialist frame of reference. Principally, Deuteronomy stated that the Israelites can either rape or sell their enemies' wives.[8] It was a fact of war that women would be either raped or enslaved, not because of any personal issue between the perpetrator and victim, but rather because it was a norm that when women – who were viewed as precious and protected objects – were left without their protectors, they became vulnerable and subject to violation without impunity. Essentialist accounts were included in the international criminal law through laws protecting feminine honour and preventing outrages of personal dignity.[9] The *Geneva Conventions* codify gender essentialism by specifically mentioning women, and not men, as the sole subject for protection from sexual violence.[10] Specifically, gender-neutral crimes were only implemented following the conflicts in Rwanda and Yugoslavia;[11] thus, the essentialist account dominated international criminal law for a substantial period.

However, there are flaws within the essentialist account. It emphasises that all women are the victims of military masculinity within a patriarchal society. Put differently, the prevailing structures of society are so patriarchal that all women are victims of the gender stereotypes and sexual violence of military masculinity. However, this is not always the case. In Rwanda, Tutsis constituted the overwhelming majority of victims, while only a small number of Hutu women were attacked.[12] Conversely, there were female Hutu perpetrators of gender violence.[13] The essentialist analysis of Rwanda does not accord with empirical evidence suggesting that sexual violence targeted particular ethnic groups; therefore, emphasis on gender alone and women as universal victims of sexual violence does not always provide the most convincing explanation. In other words, it fails to properly interpret the way that the perpetrator seeks to convey meaning through the body of the victim. These flaws do not render the account useless, but prevent it from being universally effective by failing to accord with the lived conflict experiences of women.

II STRUCTURALISM

Structuralism draws on theories of intersectionality. According to structuralism, 'persons' have multilayers of meaning and identity, constituting the 'self'.[14] In other words, characteristics like race, religion and political affiliation intersect with gender in creating risk of sexual violence. A structuralist account can explain more instances of sexual violence than an essentialist account because it can accommodate alternative explanations based on factors other than gender. Put briefly, structuralism explains that 'women in the war-zone are victims of sexual violence in order to attack the[ir] ethnic, religious, [or] political group'.[15] Thus on a structuralist account, clear messages can be conveyed through the body regarding which specific groups within a given conflict are dominant, and which are oppressed.

Structuralist accounts do not dismiss essentialism or the militarised gendered roles outlined above as a way of explaining the incidence of sexual violence. Elshtain argues that war is 'the cultural property of peoples, a system of signs that we read without much effort because they have become so familiar to us.'[16] These signs are firmly grounded in essentialised masculinity and femininity, where the masculine is 'life-taking' and the feminine 'life-giving'.[17] Perpetrators internalise these views which play a causal role in sexual violence. However, for

a structuralist, the crucial element causing sexual violence is an attack on the victim's intersectional identity; an attack on the victim is also an attack on the cultural, religious and political components of their identity. This is because women are seen as the creators of life within culture, as cultural meaning is often inscribed upon female bodies.[18] Decisions like *Akayesu* or *Kunarac*, which accept that rape can be a constitutive element of genocide, accord strongly with a structuralist approach.[19] This deeper analysis renders structuralism more useful in accounting for sexual violence in war as it does not view women as the universal victims of male violence.

However, a significant flaw in structuralist analyses is the assumption that perpetrators perceive women as bearers of cultural meaning. A worrying implication of this is that women have cultural value which can be objectified and protected.[20] The protection of women in armed conflict can lead to negative outcomes through regulation of bodies and restraint of movement and freedoms. Likewise, vesting women with cultural qualities and symbolic importance can perpetuate gender violence against them. If the perpetrator's goal is to destroy culture, and women are its bearers, then their violation will become a military objective. A structuralist account can risk perpetuating a narrative which may lead to greater levels of gender violence because of the way that meaning can be inscribed and conveyed through bodies.

III SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

Social constructivism builds on the foundations of essentialism and structuralism. It attempts to resolve flaws in their analyses by drawing on notions of 'power'. Social constructivism seeks to understand why *both* men and women are victims and perpetrators of sexual violence. Social constructivism holds that victims are targeted in order to 'masculinise the identity of the perpetrator and feminise the identity of the victim [sic]'.[21] This differs from essentialism, insofar as the body is not inherently masculine or feminine, but instead is constructed as such through a performance of gender. Accordingly, social constructivism, through theorists like Zarkov, explains sexual violence across genders in terms of the ways that gender can be used and manipulated through bodies to inscribe hierarchies of power.

For social constructivism, gender roles are created based on the performative theory of gender. Performativity holds that gender roles are attributed to persons based on the way that they perform within society.[22] Performance is demonstrated through the way that people present themselves and interact on a daily basis.[23] Social constructivism holds that gender roles are constructed through 'transactions that are understood to be appropriate to one sex'.[24] This approach is different to essentialism and structuralism, which hold that people's perceptions of gender are based upon inherent characteristics of masculinity and femininity. Gender performativity has significant implications for the way that social constructivists theorise sexual violence.

From this foundation, sexual violence becomes a tool to enforce the performance of gender upon bodies. Social constructivists, like Zarkov, note that sexual violence bears a relationship whereby the 'masculine = heterosexual = power[ful]'.[25] Accordingly, through the transaction of identities in sexual violence between perpetrator and victim, the former adopts the powerful masculinised position and feminises the victim.[26] In this way, sexual violence is particularly damaging to a victim's sense of self, because the perpetrator enforces gender and inscribes meaning upon the feminised, and often homosexualised, body.

This is exemplified through the infamous cases of sexual violence at Abu Ghraib. Private

Lynndie England perpetrated sexual violence against male inmates,[27] forcing them to perform sexual acts such as forced fellatio, and to pose for naked sexualised photos.[28] Both structuralist and essentialist analyses are required to overcome the burden of explaining a female perpetrator. Conversely, a social constructivist explains this through the forced performance of femininity and homosexuality, which demonises the victims based on the current negative stigma towards these attributes.[29] Therefore, sexual violence is about exercising power, not the domination of female or ethno-cultural bodies. This social constructivist approach is codified mostly through legal decisions such as *Muhimana*, which privilege the universally coercive nature of armed conflict over a search for lack of consent when proving rape.[30] These tests predominantly look for an asymmetry in power relations between perpetrator and victim, and do not mention specific genders or bodily organs.

A significant critique of social constructivism is that it can objectify people through marginalising human agency. If the body is merely something through which meaning is inscribed by the manipulation of power, it becomes a tool for exploitation.[31] It is therefore open to a similar critique as structuralism through its view that women are bearers of culture. If people are reduced to being tools for achieving a purpose, they can become the target of violence. Social constructivists themselves are not attempting to marginalise victim's agency, but rather depict the perspective of the perpetrators of these crimes. Nevertheless, any theory which tacitly marginalises agency can be problematic, and social constructivism is not above critique. Nonetheless, social constructivism remains a very useful framework insofar as it allows for the analysis of meaning conveyed through bodies, without making assumptions regarding the inherence of gendered, racial or religious characteristics.

Accordingly, the body is a space through which meaning can be conveyed in times of armed conflict. These three theoretical accounts which attempt to explain sexual violence provide important insights into the reasons that people may engage in these acts to discipline and control bodies through the socio-cultural construction of meaning. The body can thus become a space through which sexual violence can convey meaning regarding gender, race or power relations. This in turn becomes an integral part of the way in which sexual violence is conducted. Social constructivism is the most useful account of sexual violence insofar as it allows for a multiplicity of meanings to be inscribed upon bodies. It does not foreclose any empirical reality, and instead emphasises the inherence of power relations to sexual violence. These power relations become evident through the meaning that can be inscribed on bodies as a space for socio-cultural construction. Therefore, the body itself becomes a seminal space for contestation during armed conflict.

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[23] Ibid [433].

ADAM URSINO

[1] As the QIA+ elements of gender, sex and sexually diverse inmates form a complex and detailed part of this topic, I am not able to explore it in the space of this essay.

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JOSH PALLAS

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