DISSOLVING BOUNDARIES

Fifth Annual Undergraduate Research Conference

April 12-13, 2002

Conference Co-coordinators
Lauren Alexander
Devon Bratton
Ananda Jacobs
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Conference Schedule

Friday, April 12, 2002

4:00 p.m.   Welcome and Introduction
                   Seely G. Mudd 101

                        Katharine Harrington, Associate Vice Provost, Academic
                        Initiatives

                   Keynote Address
                   Seely G. Mudd 101

                        Reforming the Boundary Makers
                        Steven Lamy, Director, School of International Relations

5:30 p.m.   Reception

Saturday, April 13, 2002

9:00 a.m.   Check-in and Breakfast
                   Mudd Hall of Philosophy Courtyard

9:30 a.m.   Panel Discussions

11:00 a.m.   Panel Discussions

12:30 p.m.   Lunch

2:00 p.m.   Panel Discussions

3:30 p.m.   Panel Discussions

Background and Purpose

The purpose of this event is to give undergraduate students an opportunity to experience a conference setting and to emphasize the importance of public presentation of scholarly ideas and academic work. In response to a general call for papers, Thematic Option students developed one-page proposals summarizing the topic and argument for a paper to be presented on a panel. Students submitted proposals under the theme "Dissolving Boundaries." Each panel is made up of two to five students with a faculty member or a Thematic Option writing instructor serving as the chair and respondent.

DISSOLVING BOUNDARIES

Activity/passivity   Sun/Moon   Culture/Nature   Day/Night   Father/Mother Head/Heart Intelligible/Palpable Logos/Pathos   Man/Woman   Always the same metaphor: we follow it, it carries us, beneath all its figures, wherever discourse is organized. If we read or speak, the same thread or double braid is leading us through literature, philosophy, criticism, centuries of representation and reflection. Thought has always worked through opposition.

—Hélène Cixous, Sorties

He who will one day teach men to fly will have displaced all boundary stones; the boundary stones themselves will fly up into the air to him, and he will rebaptize the earth—as "the weightless."

—Friedrich Nietzsche

Music is your own experience, your own thoughts, your wisdom. If you don't live it, it won't come out of your horn. They teach you there's a boundary line to music. But, man, there's no boundary line to art.

—Charlie Parker

Distinctions of time, class, nation, race, gender, religion, style, genre, knowledge: what functions do such delineations perform? Boundaries, as Cixous suggests, make thought possible. They help us define who we are, what we know, what we want. Yet as they help us organize ourselves and our worlds, boundaries also limit our capacity to know, to love, to create. How do boundaries both shape and shatter the individual, the social, the political? This conference asks you to explore what the dissolution of boundaries might engender or eradicate. The range of possible topics is limitless . . . really.

Pop Elation: The American Culture Club MHP 101

Two Tales of One City: Swingers' and Go's Los Angeles
Steve Kang

Although every city possesses its own unique qualities, Los Angeles seems especially distinctive in a number of ways. The Los Angelian stereotypes in all its forms are widely known and easily recognized. These generalizations include the perennial sunny, bright weather; the denizens' obsessive superficiality; the casual atmosphere; the active nightlife; and the ubiquitous violence. Since Los Angeles has such a subtle, yet powerful presence, films set in the city often reveal a number of its distinguishing characteristics; specifically, Doug Liman's <u>Swingers</u> (1996) and <u>Go</u> (1999) are vivid exposés of L.A. Interestingly, the two films do not fit into a specific genre and consequently are not restricted to a particular format; instead, the governing and guiding force for both movies is the city and its distinct elements. Both films, despite narrative and stylistic dissimilarities, still contain and support the famous Los Angelian myths of hipness, violence, and casual liveliness at their core.

Beneath the Sequins and Tuxes: Prom Night Revealed
Sara Mack

> Carrie: Tommy, why am I here?
> Tommy: Because it's the prom.
> Carrie (1976)

The prom is deeply rooted in American culture and often defines the teenage experience. But why do we elevate the prom to a mythic dimension? In my paper, I will explore how the prom presents conflicting ideas to teens. Through analysis of several films, a television series, and my own interviews I will investigate how the prom is a place of social restraint, but also a place of opportunity and self-invention. Teens can dissolve the prom's written and unwritten barriers by resisting through alternative means. Thus, teens continue to glorify traditional prom ideas while using the prom to dissolve those traditions in order to make room for the creation of new ones.

American Families and The Simpsons: The Apex of Average
Jan Epstein

> Marge: I sense greatness in my family.

Woman: Your family?
Marge: Well, it's a greatness that others can't see... but it's there, and if it's not true greatness we have, we're at least average.

The television program <u>The Simpsons</u> presents a skewed view of the American family, placing each of the members into a distinct category. The show bends stereotypes for comic effect, creating an off-kilter American ideal. Overall, these carefully bounded family positions allow the Simpsons to take on the guise of normalcy. Each member exemplifies and refutes numerous stereotypes, overlapping reality and fiction. In this way, the Simpsons, a group of eight-fingered yellow-skinned cartoons, have somehow become the apex of average, the American family that is both typical and unreal.

Sex! Violence! Censorship! The Debate Over the NC-17 Rating
Danny Wind

The original purpose of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA)'s movie rating system was to prevent censorship of filmmakers while still protecting children from inappropriate material. However, in the past decade, an intense debate has arisen over whether the MPAA's application of the NC-17 (adults only) rating is fulfilling the system's original mission. Since most major theaters and video chains will not accept NC-17 rated films, filmmakers are often forced by studios to trim NC-17 rated films to more profitable R rated ones. Many filmmakers and critics have argued that this pattern, combined with what they see as the MPAA's bias against sexuality in comparison to violence results in de facto censorship, while actually making it easier for children to view adult material.

Moderated by Frank Mabee, Department of English

Monkeys and Messiahs: Science and Religion
MHP 102

Top of the Mind Chain: Language and the Divide Between Man and Beast
Mike Miller

The goal of this paper is to explore the reason why humans have been able to evolve an astoundingly complex level of consciousness in very little time. The key, as many neuroscientists now agree, lies behind the human's marvelous faculty for language—no other animal, for instance, has demonstrated the ability to develop syntax. It is language that has facilitated the lightning-fast development of the human mind over the last 30,000 years. This essential separation—the "divide between man and beast"—is as important to understanding human consciousness as any concern of evolved biological superiority.

I will argue that 1) the human language faculty is the essential difference between human consciousness and all other forms of consciousness, and 2) the human evolutionary prospect lies in cultural and, now, technological advance. I will also propose a theory on the probability that continued lingual adaptation and categorization of cultural advance (adapting and contriving words to describe newly invented concepts and relationships) is equivalent to the recoding of human consciousness--in a sense the evolution of humanity itself.

The New Age Movement: Mainstreams Ideas with Fringe Applications
Danny Nielsen

Many people scoff when they hear of anything connected with the 'New Age' movement. This can be misleading, though, as the term New Age, and the form of thinking it involves, actually incorporates an eclectic mix of practices ranging from the semi-mainstream to the utterly bizarre. From the more occult disciplines of 'neo-paganism' and Wiccan ritual, to eastern methods of Zen meditation, and even mere 'positive thinking' workshops and seminars—all fall under the 'self-seeking' attitude of New Age teachings. What is the common thread binding the many practices that fall under 'New Age,' and what can New Age beliefs tell us about more mainstream religious and spiritual movements? I will be looking into the New Age as it manifests itself in modern American culture, its origins, and its similarities to other movements such as 'self-help' and the 18th century Enlightenment.

The Evolving Self: From Darwin through Divinity
Sarah Van Hazinga

How do we explain or define the boundary between the material self and the spiritual self? Religion has attempted to explain the soul or spiritual self through the concepts of divinity and immortality, offering salvation from human suffering and promise of an eternal harmonious existence. Meanwhile, scientific study attempts to reduce the human body to a molecular level, in hopes of comprehending its function and purpose. Then science aims to apply these neurological findings to answer broader questions about human capability of thought, cognition and consciousness. I will explore both scientific and religious fields in an effort to extract the polemic understandings we have of human consciousness, along with the various definitions of the self in respect to its material counterpart. In addition, I will posit that neither one of these paradigms achieves a thorough comprehension of man's innate ability to reason, judge and detract meaning from our environment. I will argue that the true essence of the human composition of self is neither bound completely in the material body nor exists independently form its physical host.

Moderated by Professor John Crossley, School of Religion

The Politics of Necrophilia: Eva Peron, Her Body, and Her People
Megan Wygant

Eva Peron's 1952 death had a drastic effect on her country. The unions declared several days of work stoppages, and Argentina shut down. Congress moved the time of the national newscast to reflect her time of death. Her husband, the president, ordered his wife's body rendered incorruptible so she could be placed on permanent display. When the body, a political liability, was removed from public view, political splinter groups committed acts of terrorism in Evita's name, and held their victims' corpses hostage, demanding her body in exchange. Was this fanaticism a testament to the overwhelming popularity of this beautiful and charismatic woman? Or was something else at stake? Examining the political, social and economic needs of Argentina at the time offers interesting insight into the creation of this 'cult of necrophilia.'

The Female Voyeur
Jade Werner

The position of voyeur is a position of power. When we watch someone else without the implicit threat of being watched in return, we are put in control of the situation. Our society in terms of gender, I propose, can be examined through this power struggle between "watcher" and "watch-ee." Despite advancements toward gender equality, women are nonetheless consistently placed in the object position. Perhaps the only advancement that has been made in empowering women, when viewed in this way, is that women have come to embrace being the object; that is, she chooses to be the object, she chooses to be watched. The choice is liberating and empowering, but regardless still perpetuates the gender roles of the woman-object and male-voyeur. Illustrating this phenomenon best is the popular TV show Sex and the City as well as magazines aimed for a specific gender, for example Cosmopolitan and Stuff. Thus, the dichotomy between voyeur and object and how it relates to gender is the aim of my study.

Why I Wanna Do My Teachers (Even the Mediocre-Looking Ones):
The Power Structure of Sexual Fantasy and Social Role-Play
Jody McVeigh-Schultz

Clearly there is more to teacher/student consensual sex than simply a dominant male teacher who seduces his adoring female student—termed the heterosexual paradigm. That's obvious. But that doesn't mean that policies against consensual sex in universities make no sense. There is still a dangerous power structure at work in these relationships that is unavoidable. Part of this structure has to do with the fact that, whether or not it violates policy, these relationships violate tacit social rules. Interestingly enough, society tempts us, while admonishing. Subversive sex is everywhere in our culture and yet "pedophile" is about the worst label you can give someone. Well, I think that anyone who's ever itched for a teacher, a student, a friend's younger sibling, cannot blame a pedophile for his own itch. How are all these desires connected? They originate in subversion of the norm. The new power structure created isn't necessarily a complete reversal of the heterosexual paradigm but it complicates things. I think that part of the attraction between the student and teacher is that they can play the teacher/student roles and then violate those when no one is watching. The teacher student relationship becomes a sexual role-play of sorts. Part of the fantasy involves attempts to just barely hide the encounter-- the sexiest thing is toeing the line between the traditional roles and their shattered counterparts. To me, it is clear why one would pursue such a sexual encounter: on the grounds that the traditional social rules would help fuel desire, just as teacher/student roles will be part of the sexual fantasy fulfilled in those consensual sex cases. Thus the classroom cannot be separated from the relationship because it is part of the power structure that itches us.

How Naked Go the Sometimes Nude: The Thinning Boundary between Art and Pornography
By Sushma Subramanian

The unclothed human body is a subject of both art and pornography, and the boundary of the two lies in the arguable boundary between nakedness and nudity. Art theorist John Berger defines nakedness as the truth of the body and the nude as images presented to be displayed. Two artists who challenge the idea of the posed, nude body meant to capture the naked spirit are Robert Mapplethorpe, who depicted homosexuals in bondage equipment and Helmut Newton who presented pictures of large, bare women in heels. Modern art photography is no more provocative than pornography, but still questions what art shows can present and what high culture should leave to the edges of society in porn magazines according to notions of class and taste.

Moderated by Michael Miklos, Department of English

Hedwig and the Angry Inch in Relation to the The Rocky Horror Picture Show:
The Significance of Transgressing Boundaries in Cult Films
Karen Barnard

Often critics refer to <u>The Rocky Horror Picture Show</u> as the greatest cult movie. Ever since <u>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</u> came out critics have compared it to <u>The Rocky Horror Picture Show,</u> already entitling <u>Hedwig</u> as a cult movie, though only time will show if a well established cult following actually develops. These two rock musicals have many differences, but what ties them together is the common theme of challenging societal boundaries. I believe this element of transgressing boundaries plays a key role in the films' developments as cult movies. I will explore <u>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</u> by comparing it to <u>The Rocky Horror Picture Show</u> and determine for myself whether <u>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</u> truly falls under the title of a cult movie.

The Homo Thugz' Influence on Black Identity
Katie Coman

The world of hip-hop, dominated by artists who rap of vulgar, phallic images, asserts a strong sense of masculinity associated with the black, male identity. In African American culture, homosexuality is considered taboo, and therefore lacks representation in entertainment and the media. Nevertheless, a new group of hip-hop artists, dubbed the "Homo Thugz", are rising despite the controversy surrounding their sexual orientation. The NWA-rooted rap lyrics are used as a declaration of the plight of the black male. Social criticism set the tone for rap music. As a result, the emergence of the "Homo Thugz" is expected, for they are also rapping about the plight of the black man, expanding their message to encompass the homosexual black man. This expansion is a valiant effort to dissolve the boundaries created by the phallic and harsh rap image. However, their limited success and questionable survival in the hip-hop world assesses the limits of the genre as a discourse.

Classical vs. Jazz
Lucas Wallis

I will be discussing how stylistic boundaries in classical and jazz music serve to create order within the two types of music, but have a number of interesting side effects. The boundaries that define classical and jazz also stereotypically define the type of musician who plays either

style, as well as the culture that surrounds the music. Classical folk tend to be thought of as snobby, uptight and boring. "Jazzers," as they are called, are believed to be dirty, alcoholics, drug-addicts who lead poor, bleak lives. My evidence of the existence of these stereotypes comes from a poll of USC students and music students, as well as research of chat rooms that war about which style is superior. Examples of what constitutes jazz and classical music will be provided, along with examples of music that merges the two styles.

Moderated by Molly Engelhardt, Department of English

11:00–12:30

Beyond the Battlefield: Representations of War
MHP 101
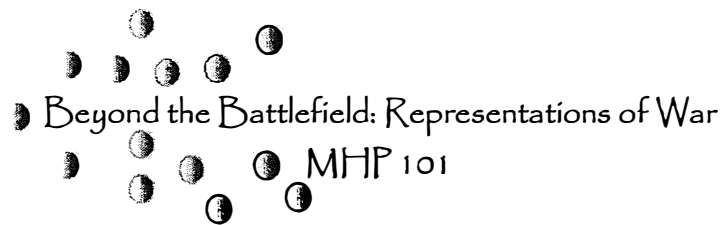
Innocence vs. Guilt: Where does silence become criminal?
Michelle Zehner

Bad things happen in war. Sometimes silence is all it takes to be part of a criminal act. Sometimes there is nothing to do but remain silent and pray. The question is: how do we know when silence becomes criminal? Where does a person change roles from innocent bystander to passive conspirator? It's easy to sit on the sidelines, outside of the situation with 20/20 hindsight, and declare you would have behaved a certain way. The real issue is: at the moment of truth what would you really have done? It's easy to point the fingers at others, but sometimes we need to look in the mirror first.

(Insert Verb) the Veil
Kathleen Choi

Pervasive stereotypes of the "exotic" Orient have long lingered in the productions of Western media. But the events of September 11th supposedly changed everything. Never again would Americans look inward with calm complacency, confident in their ability to ignore the foreign. The "news" channels flooded with "information" pertaining to every possible aspect of radical Islam and Afghanistan, with one becoming synonymous with the other. And yet, in spite of this media onslaught, little differentiates one special report from another, with all of the "facts" going to build and support a monolithic view of a foreign subject. In my analysis of this myth and nation-making process, I will examine the techniques and power wielded by mainstream Western media in constructing their image of the Orient...of Afghanistan.

11

Eyes of the Beholder
Crystal Lauderdale

It is often assumed that photographs are the most honest representation of any situation - that they represent the scene plainly without the hindrance of subjective words and slanted stories. It is true that photographs allow us to take in a scene frozen in time and make our own assessments, but we are limited by the personal censorship of the photographer. How does the view change through the photographs of different people? The Vietnam War was controversial to people of the United States. It was essential to the Vietnamese. How do the photographs of American and Vietnamese photographers compare? How do cultural and political differences affect the images captured on film? How is one story shown in two different ways?

Modern Man and Communication Boundaries Through the Lens of a Soldier
Seth Mearig

I am a man. I live in a heavily post-modern influenced society. I have never fought in a war, yet am strangely attracted to and intrigued by soldiers. Sometimes I find it difficult to discern how to communicate my experiences with different groups of people. Should I share everything, embracing a complete lack of delineation between my friends, parents, colleagues, and self? Should I share nothing, again treating all as equal? I believe it is highly probable that I am not the only man that has entertained these thoughts. I also believe the experience of soldiers in communicating their thoughts and actions with discrete groups can provide valuable insight to men living in a post-modernistic society. Somewhere between the living and the dying, the letters home and the shouts to comrades lies information for men that may never see combat.

Moderated by Kate Canada, Department of Political Science

Preservation, Progression and Decoding the Present
MHP 102
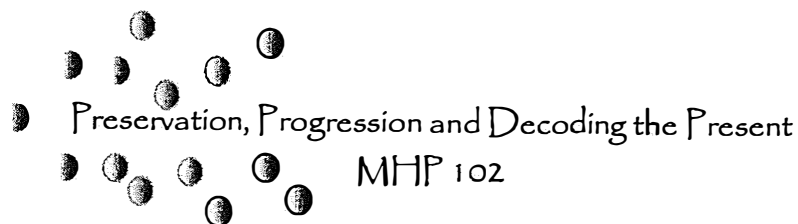
Class Boundaries in Austen
Melinda Wu

Watching an increasingly powerful middle class attempt to cross the boundary into upper-class status, Jane Austen explores the question of class boundary dissolution in her works. Through Emma in <u>Emma</u> and Sir Elliot in <u>Persuasion,</u> Austen presents her analysis of the

costs and benefits of maintaining the rigid British social structure. In <u>Emma</u> she concludes that the benefits, especially order, outweigh the costs, particularly the injustice of a birth-based society. But in <u>Persuasion</u> Austen suggests that the injustice has intensified since the time of Emma so that, as a cost, it now outweighs the benefits of order. Austen's analysis of class boundary dissolution is relevant today, when we must determine whether the benefits of living in an ordered international system outweigh the cost of injustice to the less fortunate who are denied social mobility.

The Euro: National vs. Global Culture
Lianna Chang

My paper will look at the euro through the lens of increasing globalization and the subsequent loss of cultural identity and diversity. Another step in the general trend of unification, Europeans view the euro as necessary to continue competing in an increasingly United States-centric world. However, uniting countries with strong backgrounds of tension and war is no easy task. The euro must bridge cultural and national animosities, and attempts to do this with strong visual symbolism suggesting the blending of cultures without dissolving individual national identity. In the face of increasing US hegemony, the euro attempts to unite Europe and create a comparable entity by prominently featuring symbolism designed to appeal to the nations involved, supplementing the inherent loss of national identity with European culture. Though by no means perfect, the euro manages to accomplish many of the goals set before it, bringing a disjointed Europe one step closer to cooperation and unification.

A Modest Proposal: The Transformist System
Daniel Barnes

A system of iniquity never becomes equable through reform because those responsible for change are also responsible for the injustices. This paper does not argue whether or not the people of the United States should abolish the current government (or a reformist system in general). Instead, this paper examines the concept of a transformist system - including requirements and principles - and proffers three transformations whose result is a radically different foundation and organization of power within the United States, one that may be more likely "to effect ...Safety and Happiness. Although socialism is economically unworkable, and capitalism is socially inequitable, the ultimate result of a transformist system will be a synergistic unification of capitalist and socialist principles because the former energetically benefits individuals while the latter aims to benefit society. At the core of this transformist system lies the assumption that a large majority of human beings desire both wealth and status, and that the antithetical distribution of the two will lead to a more equitable system.

"Say Cheese!" Redefining Identity in a Recorded World
Andrea Gudis

In modern culture, external memories of the past such as photographs, scrapbooks, videos and diaries, have a dynamic impact on our sense of identity in the present. With numerous and immediate reminders of previous endeavors, chronological boundaries are distorted. The ability to highlight pleasant memories while omitting painful ones empowers the individual to create his or her past and ultimately redefine identity for others as well as herself. Likewise, the distinction between the remembered versus the repressed is artificially influenced by recording technologies. In modern culture, the unrecorded lacks significance because it does not provide a tangible proof of existence. This trend in popular culture puts pressure upon the creation of identity and the power of genuine memory.

Moderated by Stephen Ross, Department of History

Close Encounters with the Mind: Our Mental Landscape
MHP 105

In Bed with Yourself: Living a Dream Within a Dream
Suzanne Davis

"The worst mistake that you can make is to think you're alive when really you're asleep in life's waiting room."
-Waking Life

Is this my dream or my reality? Which one truly exists and is my life? And if we can't identify our consciousness, will we ever identify ourselves in a larger context? Such are the questions of the individual, specifically white teenage males, wavering in and out of consciousness and the dreamlike states induced by drugs, biological dreaming and daydreaming. Sometimes dreams are a necessary escape from society's construction of the individual in order to process the world and discuss "reality." Rather than dreams transporting your mind from the lucid to the absurd then, perhaps these dreamlike states are, instead, a rational response to an irrational society. Through use of various films such as Waking Life, Requiem for a Dream and Virgin Suicides, which illuminate the constant white, teenage, male struggle to discover a consciousness and subsequently, an identity, this paper will focus on how society shapes and creates teenage boys.

Three Joints, Eight Thorazine, and a Pair of Prada Shoes: Exploring the Purpose of Mental Illness and Addiction

Erin Flynn

Addiction and mental illness are seen as volitional disorders, where the patient brings their own fate upon themselves. Yet madness and addictions surround us; from the compulsive shopper to the anorectic to the beggars in the street. The question that has never been answered, is why? The source of mental disease and addictions, contrary to popular pseudo-science, is unknown, and we might be treating these problems much like ulcers were treated once: blame is assigned to every possible cause but the correct one. Here the relationship between mental disease and addiction will be explored, as well as the possible reasons for the evolution of both as means of survival.

Vanity and Insanity: The Narcissistic Crisis

John Zhu

Narcissism, a powerful, subversive force that finds expression in every human being, is as enigmatic as it is ubiquitous. This paper analyzes the amorphous threshold of narcissistic insanity with respect to The Picture of Dorian Gray. To anchor this study on scientific grounds, the paper connects expressions of acute narcissism with symptoms of pathological deviance, primarily those embodied by fin-de-siècle hysteria. Through this psychiatric lens, the paper derives a clinical portrait of narcissism that is transposed on to the novel, elucidating the threshold of Dorian's degeneration into insanity. However this very boundary whose newfound clarity determines Dorian's narcissism is pathological and thus potentially treatable, also limits human expression and advancement.

"Shut Up and Eat Your Peanuts"
## How America Can Learn to Stop Worrying and Love Plane Flights

Jacob Blunt

It is a well-known fact that many more individuals die in car accidents than in plane crashes every year. Yet, why are many individuals that are terrified of air travel perfectly comfortable while driving? Perhaps it has something to do with the images of twisted metal and smoking luggage that permeate our memories through the man-made channels of our media. Rationality is one facet of human judgment, but are we really safe from the viscerally engaging images that media infect our minds with, or are we susceptible to phobic contamination? I will look into this phenomenon and parallel it with some diseases that are spread primarily by man-made channels, and the self-interested motives of media men and businesses that lie at the core of both.

The Philosophy of Pill Popping
Aaron Pollock

My paper seeks to examine the philosophical boundaries both created and destroyed by the widespread prescription and use of antidepressants in the latter half of the twentieth century. In his novel, <u>Brave New World,</u> Aldous Huxley foretells and criticizes the use of an extreme antidepressant called Soma, his protagonist ultimately choosing "grief" over "nothing." However, John Stuart Mill, in his essay, "Utilitarianism," proposes a philosophy which values bringing the most happiness, or the least unhappiness, to the most people. Such a philosophy would seem to allow, and in fact endorse, the use of antidepressants. Existentialism, the prevalent philosophy of today, possesses a nonjudgmental quality, but Sartre also calls for something like Kant's "principle of universalizability." When making a decision for oneself, one, in effect, makes a decision for all people. Ultimately, antidepressants question the modern conception of the Self and what we mean by "the human experience."

Moderated by Jennifer Raphael, Department of English

Stage Name: Finding Identity through Performance
MHP 106
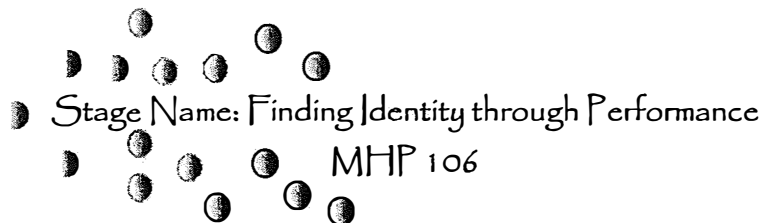
The Gender of Shakespeare's Heroines
Caroline Burrell

The theatre has long been a place for controversy, for overstepping the lines that society had previously deemed not-to-be-crossed. In his time, when gender roles were so sharply defined, William Shakespeare gave females more power through the stage, creating heroines who were resourceful, witty and powerful. Examining his texts closer, however, he may have gone one step further -- did Shakespeare not only empower his female characters but go so far as to present some of them as androgynous figures? An answer may be found by deconstructing the heroines from two comedies, <u>As You Like It's</u> Rosalind and <u>Twelfth Night's</u> Viola, both of whom disguise themselves as males, and comparing their thoughts, actions and relationships to Virginia Woolf's definiton of androgeny described in <u>A Room of One's Own.</u> These two characters have been placed on a pedestal as being revolutionary for their time -- they are 'modern' woman during an archaic era -- and are some of the most beloved characters in literature. If they do indeed exemplify androgeny, according to Woolf, what does that say about society's perception of women? To determine whether this characteristic is present, I intend to use, besides the actual plays and Woolf's work, studies

done on the two characters of Rosalind and Viola to decipher traits in their personality that may point to androgeny. I also use other studies that examine gender in Shakespeare's works, as well as how women were perceived during his era.

"Well, It Worked in Blazing Saddles": Art and Authority in Color-Blind Casting
Alicia Hogan

This paper examines the role that an actor's race does play, and should play, in American theatre. On the one hand, traditional casting, where race is taken into account, sets boundaries for the minority actor. Live theatre requires a suspension of disbelief on the part of the audience, but traditional casting assumes the audience is incapable of ignoring race. On the other hand, theatre is an art-form that relies greatly on visual stimulus. Forcing directors and writers to accept color-blind casting puts boundaries on their freedom of expression. After all, nobody questions a painter for painting a white woman instead of a minority woman. Who should be allowed to make the call? Where should the authority to control casting lie? Could you accept a black Sheriff of Rottingham?

Dancing Around the Closet
Jennifer Noble

Clive Barnes, a renowned ballet critic, once said, "Every male dancer is accustomed to having his heterosexuality at least held questionable by the world outside dance." Whether gay or straight, the male dancer faces culture's imposed sexual stereotypes in all of his daily interactions. Oftentimes, gay males discover a sense of freedom in such defined roles; by perpetuating the idea of pervasive "gayness" in the dance world, many men find themselves more able to expressive sexual freedom. Yet other male dancers feel trapped by the narrow binds of this stereotype. Both straight and gay males rebel against this effeminate image of the male dancers as the dance world attempts to free itself from the clutches of an inaccurate public perception.

## Asian, American, and Acting: Perpetuation of Stereotypes and Separation
Linda Lee

Asian Americans have not been very vocal in expressing their outrage at the way they have been portrayed in all sorts of media. They have been so unnoticeable, with a few exceptions, that they may come across as indifferent, or even receptive, towards these stereotypes. In some cases, Caucasian actors in "yellowface" assume the part, while other times, Asian Americans play the roles. However, as long as the part still demeans Asians, both options are dangerous to societal perception of Asian Americans. What has held Asian Americans back for so long from protesting the undignified portrayals of Asians in the media, specifically film and theatre? Admittedly, "yellowface" is definitely less prevalent today than it was before the 1970s, but most representations of Asians today are still based largely

on harmful stereotypes. This paper will discuss these issues and explore why the differentiation between "American" and "Asian" in acting has not truly dissolved.

Moderated by Heather Osborne-Thompson, Division of Critical Studies

2:00-3:30

It Wasn't Me: Reevaluating Guilt
MHP 101
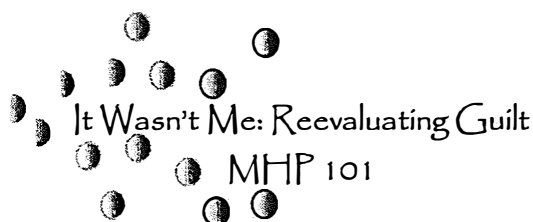
Lines of Addiction
Lea Smith

Drug addiction is often separated from almost all other forms of addiction by imaginary lines that stigmatize these addicts as evil, dangerous, or criminal. The abuse of this substance is not allowed the same compassion or understanding as others, though it stems from nearly identical sources. Society's inadequate satisfaction of all one's needs and a psychological trigger can force people to search elsewhere for fulfillment. People turn to gambling, food, sex, and many other things, but none of those affected by these addictions are as ostracized by society as drug addicts. The imaginary binary separating "druggies" and other addicts is an arbitrary boundary created to maintain a feeling of security and superiority in those with other addictions, but can be easily bent or even erased.

Universal Criminal? The Impact of the Milosevic Trial on the Question of Nationhood
Nick Martin

Punishing the captured leaders of a warring body is hardly a modern development- the winners have been hanging the losers since before the rise of the Roman Empire. But the World Court at the Hague, now trying Slobodan Milosevic for crimes against humanity, claims to be something different. My presentation will explore the explosive impact of the Slobodan Milosevic trial on the continuing definition of "nation" and "world community". Specifically, it will deal with the legal mechanics of the charges, prosecution, and defense, the unfolding drama of the actual trial, and the turbulent political situation in the now-defunct Yugoslavia, and relate them to ideas in Benedict Anderson's Imagined Communities and similar texts.

Raising the Threshold:
The Evolution of Capital Punishment Abolishment in England, 1764-1964
Katherine Vang

Capital punishment represents more than the simple, dichotomous pro or anti arguments that seem to dominate the current debate on the issue. The notion of capital punishment traces back to the very roots of human criminal justice systems, and represents many boundaries on many levels; religious, political, moral and philosophical outlooks each have affected society's stance on the issue. Essentially, the debate stems from disagreement over the placement of a theoretical boundary -- for what crimes is the death penalty an acceptable punishment, and for what crimes is the practice unacceptable? Throughout time in different societies, this threshold has undergone volatile transitions, shifting from liberal use of the death penalty to an absolute ban. In just under 200 years, England has undergone a dramatic reversal on the issue -- consequently, its history serves as an ideal case study to analyze the causes and social effects of repositioning the threshold of capital punishment acceptability.

Ted Bundy: The Model American Serial Killer
Ryan Drake

This paper explores society's misconceptions about the serial killer and why we have constructed the picture of serial killers which popular culture carries. The failure to recognize serial killers for what they are can have dangerous consequences such as class divisions, racial and sexual discrimination, as well as wrongful allocation of resources on the part of the police. This paper also implies that when we turn serial killers into celebrities, we use them to ignore our own desires and tendencies. For if we make a serial killer an "other", someone away from normality, we can overlook the fact that our own society is what created the killer. We do not want to look in the mirror, for we would see the Ted Bundy in all of us, staring back.

Moderated by Matthew Manson, Department of English
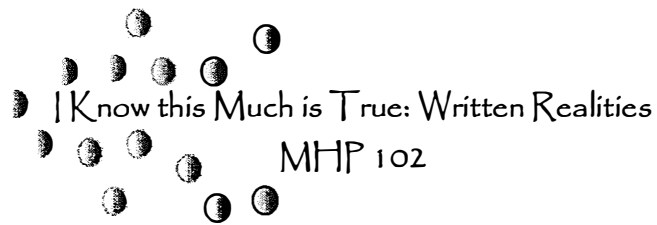
Word and Flesh in Umberto Eco's Name of the Rose
Abe Kazemzadeh

Umberto Eco's historical novel, Name of the Rose, dissolves many boundaries. It defies genre by at once being a scholarly exploration of medieval notions of religion, knowledge, crime, punishment, and the apocalypse while at the same time telling a gripping detective story. The almost pedantic depth of Eco's medieval scholarship is both in contrast to the visceral thrill of the murder mystery and also intrinsic to it, for the mystery is centered around the forbidden library of a 13th century Tuscan monastery and the gruesome murders revolve around a forbidden book. This paper looks into the implications of word and flesh in Eco's novel. The notion of word and flesh interact strongly in this novel where, in the philosophy of *liber mundi* (the world as a book), murdered corpses are seen as signs in a system of signification, and where, in the supposedly asexual environment of a monastery, books are objects of transferred lust and at time traded for forbidden sexual favors. This interplay of word and flesh will beget discussions on the philosophy of realism, nominalism, and belief, and shed light on the gothic politics of knowledge and power during the dark ages and the Inquisition. I will also argue, against Eco's statement in the prologue, that this novel is not "gloriously lacking in any relevance for our day, atemporally alien to our hopes and our certainties," but applicable to the world of today in real and important ways.

The Boundary Between Author and Character
Kristen Schwarz

Where does the author end and the character begin? How much autonomy does any created character have over his creator? Kurt Vonnegut pushes the limits of our constructions between author and character in dealing with his recurring creation, Kilgore Trout. Not only does Vonnegut enter the literary realm he creates in order to talk to Trout directly, a convention used to some extent by writers such as John Fowles in the <u>French Lieutenant's Woman,</u> Trout manages to leave the fictional world to write a book called <u>Venus on the Halfshell.</u> Written under the name Kilgore Trout, the book lists on its inside cover Trout's supposed other works, recounting all the different snatches of science fiction stories that Vonnegut describes as Trout's works in his various novels. The book is available per order at any Barnes and Noble. So, what is real? And what does the extent of Vonnegut's powers over his creations reflect about our own free will?

## Revealing Hemingway's Iceberg: The Reader and the Hidden
Tristan Stein

Ernest Hemingway claimed "[T]o write on the principal of the iceberg,"eliminating that which is "known" and leaving sparse prose defined by what is hidden. Consequently, the act of reading becomes a dynamic process as the reader searches for the excluded, especially with regards to the emotions of the characters. However, was this "iceberg" an entirely artistic invention, or did it reflect a psychological need of Hemingway's to distance himself from the events he described? Or are the two inseparable? Either way, the reader's response to the work results from the interplay of his memories and Hemingway's. With this, the barrier between author and reader appears to weaken as the two find a potential emotional connection within the text.

Living in the When: An Exploration of Self-Imposed Boundary in Literatures
David Radcliff

Our temptation to expectantly look upon the future in lieu of building our own present is not an unfamiliar one. While we may take some comfort in theorizing on what is yet to happen, such preoccupation holds the potential to restrict us from present, immediately accessible achievement. This paper aims to explore and contrast the pitfalls of obsession with the unforeseen, specifically in Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett, Before the Law by Franz Kafka and The Beast in the Jungle by Henry James. Characters in these texts are obstructed from progress, not by physical boundaries, but by personal fixations with their futures. Rather than live 'in the now', they trap themselves 'in the when' – preoccupied by a need to grapple with the transcendent and, consequently, with themselves.

Moderated by Professor Anthony Kemp, Department of English

Overthrowing Biology, Moving Towards Androgyny
MHP 105
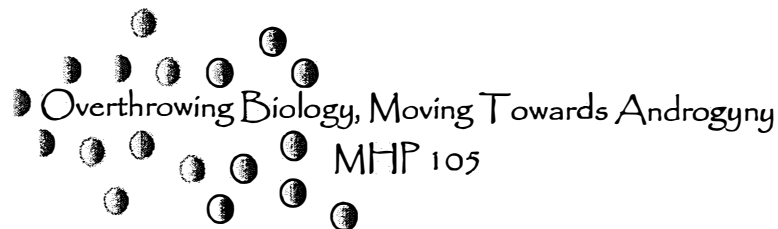
Taking the Man out of Manifesto: Feminist Use of Political Declarations
Kelly McElroy

Whether used by Karl Marx, the founding fathers, or the Unabomber, the manifesto is a traditionally masculine political tool. However, American feminists have made careful, often subtle, use of it. From the 1848 Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments to punk fanzines, their proclamations have defined and been shaped to the needs of American feminism.

Reexamining these documents within their historical context reveals a new guide to the evolution of feminism. Feminist manifestos have changed with the needs of their authors, from contained political goals to vaguer cultural aims. From Seneca Falls' imitation of the Declaration of Independence to the free flow of Kathleen Hanna's Riot Grrrl Manifesto, these documents express a uniquely feminine interpretation of the form.

Let Me Be Your Sex Slave
Jenny Hung

Western culture paints an image of the Asian woman as an object of eroticism; she is the ultimate representation of the Oriental "Other." She is often portrayed as a timid, servile creature or as a kung-fu fighting femme fatale. Her femininity is undeniable; the Asian woman on film made for Western audiences carries few masculine traits. The misrepresentation of Asian women in the entertainment industry perpetuates pre-existing stereotypes in the general public, making it difficult to dissolve the boundaries of race and gender. I intend to examine the construction of the Asian-American woman's identity in Western (American) culture through film. Two movies in particular that I would like to focus on are Charlie's Angels and Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon. Using these films and texts on Orientalism and feminism, I hope to illustrate that being Asian and female creates a constant struggle against not being written off as "just another sexual plaything" and being taken seriously as a thinking, breathing human being.

Gender Terrorists: Breaking Down the Boundaries of a Two Gendered World
Jessica Appler

Del LaGrace Volcano said, "A Gender Terrorist is anyone who consistently and intentionally subverts, destabilizes and challenges the binary gender system."[1] This characteristic of conscious defiance distinguishes Gender Terrorists from other groups who do not fit into the binary gender system. Using this definition, my paper examines Gender Terrorism's role in determining the current popular views of gender flexibility. To determine these views I examine popular entertainment, specifically, box office movies from the past ten years. Using To Wong Fu, Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar, I show that the concept of Gender Terrorism is inconsistent with this portrayal of gender flexibility. This inconsistency demonstrates that popular views avoid acknowledging direct attacks on the current gender system by categorizing instances of gender flexibility in the binary categories of masculine and feminine.

Moderated by Annalisa Zox-Weaver, Department of English

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[1] http://www.disgrace.dircon.co.uk/page1.html

Operation De-emasculation: American Men Go to War
Angelique Robold

My paper will discuss the ways American males are currently rejecting their socially constructed identities as a result of the discrepancy between their traditional roles and the validity of those roles in a modern setting. Specifically, I will argue that when the expected identity of American males collides with the traditional male image, there is a violent reaction; violence is being used as a means to reconcile the division between the American masculine image and self.

American culture, media, and capitalism have embraced the violent rejection of the traditional male and is now repackaging and reselling this image to American men. As men struggle to define themselves in this new testosterone saturated culture, they are failing to realize the inevitable failure of their efforts, the inevitability ultimately lying in the fact that men are attempting to reclaim their masculinity in a hierarchy where they no longer dominate.

Form a Union or Blow Up the Building:
Employee Dissatisfaction and the Psychology of Repetition
Julia Kirsch

Marx argued that the problems of industrial labor: alienation, exploitation, and saturation, would ultimately bring about the downfall of the capitalist system. Martin Ritt's 1979 film Norma Rae shows these problems in action and offers revolution on a smaller scale. I have analyzed the film's depiction of the struggle to unionize in a small factory town by exploring the resistance from the workers themselves and questioned whether a revolution, which is instigated by a third party, is valid in a Marxist sense. Concluding that Norma Rae ends with unionization as both triumph and redemption, I have examined how the problems of the information age workplace, as played out in Mike Judge's Office Space (1999) compares. If the happily ever after in a factory town was unionization, why doesn't it work for a software corporation? Throughout this paper I explore the contrast between the industrial and information ages.

The Cuckoo Can't Chime: The Marginalization of Native Americans in American Society
Park Eaton

The persecution of Native Americans began when the Europeans decided to conquer the Americas. Prior to their "discovery," these indigenous peoples spoke hundreds of different dialects that stemmed from several different mother languages. The invaders killed off many tribes and their languages went with them. Their respective voices were further lost with the organization of the reservations, where many different tribes had to live together and they could no longer maintain complete individuality. The film "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" illustrates the situation perfectly with the character of Chief. He was marginalized so completely by society that his lack of voice was actually seen as a psychological disease that had to be contained within a mental institution.

Unreal City Under the Brown Fog: The Struggle to Define Los Angeles
Anna Roth

Los Angeles -- "The City of Angels." Whether you love it, hate it, or love to hate it, the appeal of the city built on dreams is undeniable. Part sheer urban power, part Hollywood glitz, and part untamed frontier, the lure of Los Angeles lies in the fact that it promises a new beginning or a final swan song for those who come here. The danger in confusing LA with El Dorado, however, is that it will fail to live up to the hype. This inevitable disillusion is what many characters in Los Angeles fiction explore, and what makes these stories so uniquely LA. Living in a city made up of façades, smoke, and mirrors but lacking a clear center, it should come as no surprise that characters in LA fiction lose their spiritual centers and palpable identities, just as Los Angeles lost its definable identity a long time ago.

Moderated by Julia Colyar, School of Education

3:30-5:00

Race Matters
MHP 101

<u>Understanding the Rapist: Representations of Black Masculinity in The Bluest Eye</u>
Thaddeus Pham

Society and the media often portray black men as angry, physically violent, and sexually aggressive. According to bell hooks, these stereotypes contribute to the perception of black men as criminals, as the "ultimate 'traveling men'." These misleading representations suggest that black men can ignore social and geographical boundaries by assuming the roles of the black male transgressor, of the border-crossing rapist. In <u>The Bluest Eye,</u> Toni Morrison presents Cholly as a rapist who believes that violating his daughter somehow liberates him from the boundaries of society. However, Cholly's transgression merely entrenches him further in the restrictive role of the black male rapist. Clearly, crossing borders does not eliminate them. Ultimately, stereotypical representations of black masculinity are destructive illusions that harm black men and black women.

<u>Passing into Oblivion</u>
Jonathan Brent

The idea of "passing" is the act of pretending to be, on either a short- or a long-term basis, a member of another. In the movie <u>Pinky</u> (1949), a black woman returns to the South after spending years passing as white in the North. The whites around the woman exhibit a fear of blacks that can pass, and many of the blacks display a feeling of betrayal that one of their own would deny her identity. The film's message, that passing is morally wrong, could be seen as being the leading view of Hollywood at the time. I will use literary and cinematic sources to examine the attitude of society and the media towards passing, as well as using actual recorded instances of passing to examine the real-life act itself.

<u>Moving Past the Past: American Indians in Modern America</u>
Julia Falcone

The boundary between American Indians and American society is largely a creation of history. While granting the atrocities committed against American Indians in the past, I look at their modern political situation, and, as a necessary consequence, touch briefly on today's social situation as well. To do this I examine as a case study the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, a group consisting of 481 members of the Washoe, Shoshone, and Northern Paiute tribes of Northern Nevada. My paper incorporates an interview with their grants writer as

well as discussion of a current event - their battle with Oil-Dri Corporation over kitty litter mining. From this case I explore the peculiarities of sovereignty (the central principle of American Indian politics) and the problems faced by American Indians, concluding that the key to breaking down this boundary is the ability to overcome the past. While history cannot be ignored, moving beyond it is essential to changing a failing system.

Applying for the Black Card: Postmodern Black Identity
Brittany Hall

When black peers hear my vocabulary, they question my ethnicity. The investment of identity into speech perpetuates the stereotype that academia is associated with whiteness, and ignorance, blackness. The work of bell hooks and Percival Everett, two black scholars, highlights society's resistance to black intellectuals. hooks laments the distance that intellectualism sets between the academic world and the black community while in Everett's novel Erasure, the protagonist finds his work classified under African-American Studies although his books do not involve race. Both hooks and Everett view postmodernism as a way to break our society's tendency to apply a single identity to the African-American race. I use personal experiences to reveal the persistence of socio-linguistic stereotypes.

Moderated by Professor Viet Nguyen, Department of English

Through the Looking Glass: Lipstick, Limbs and Liposuction
MHP 102

The Enfreakment of the Disabled in the Jerry Lewis Telethon
Kevin Kaplowitz

The telethon presents those with disabilities in such a way as to engineer the viewer's emotions until they want to give their money to help the cause. By analyzing some of the motives behind both the modes of presentation the telethon invokes and of the people giving away their money, this paper will explore the ethics involved in the charity out of pity. How do the pleas from the kids elicit such an outpouring of sympathy and generosity? Even though many have called for the abdication of the king behind it all, Jerry Lewis is still running the show after so long.

As Simple as Black and White: The Boundary of Beauty and Ugliness in The Bluest Eye
Cameron Biscay

Pecola allows the societal boundary of beauty and ugliness to completely shape her perception of herself in Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye. She accepts the racial boundary that forces her, as an African-American, to see herself as ugly. Rather than speak out against this discriminatory boundary, Pecola hopes to change herself, specifically her eye color, to conform to the boundary. Her obsession with having blue eyes, and in turn being seen as beautiful, drives her to the point of insanity. George Yancy's article "The Black Self within a Semiotic Space of Whiteness: Reflections on the Racial Deformation of Pecola Breedlove in Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye" suggests that the idea that the irrational and insurmountable racial boundary between beauty and ugliness can threaten the sanity of those unable to conform to it. Only the dissolution of this boundary would allow Pecola to see herself as beautiful without crossing the boundary over from sanity to insanity. Thus my paper discusses the extent to which the racially impacted boundary between beauty and ugliness can harm the self-image and mental health of black children such as Pecola.

Dropping the Bombshell: Making the Case for Beauty
Molly Claflin

Beauty is power. Many women see beauty as their greatest and most potent asset -- the very thing which will allow them to overcome the boundaries life has set before them and gain power over men, other women, and other aspects of society from employment to Hollywood fame. This paper will begin by delving into the roots of beauty, deconstructing it to its anthropological core and defining what is beautiful. It will then go on to discuss the positive and negative aspects of beauty in modern society, focusing on the advantages it holds for the wearer of a beautiful face. Questions that may arise include, to what extent does beauty define a woman's role in society? And what price will one pay to obtain it? This paper will attempt to answer those questions, and to explore both the appealing and ugly sides of beauty. It will look at its fragility, its short life, and its damage to the female psyche. But it will also acknowledge the many temptresses in history and today who have used their beauty to transcend the boundaries they saw around them, or within themselves.

The Art of Finding Yourself: Going Under the Knife With Orlan
Katie Dunham

Can cosmetic surgery be empowering? Women, following the lead of performance artist Orlan, have begun to view their bodies not as objects of desire but for themselves to delight in. Plastic surgery is no longer a whispered taboo but a way, in the words of essayist Kathy Davis, "to intervene in nature and develop our capacities in accordance with our needs and desires." Using critical feminist works, contemporary news articles, and various pieces on

body image, sexual politics, and cosmetic surgery, I seek to show how these lifts, tucks, sucks, and implants challenge the boundaries between the aterial and immaterial, the conceptual and actual, the real and imaginary. Orlan's "Carnal Art" may seem bizarre but is, in fact, more mainstream than you just might realize.

Prosthetic Limbs: The Boundaries of Identity Formation in Disabled Adolescents
Priya Gupta

Youth growing up struggle enough with the changes in the physical self, and its relationship to their changing psyche. However, those adolescents with prosthetic limbs are faced with an entirely different realm of challenges. While the limb provides the ability to assist in functioning, it does not have the ability to *feel*. Furthermore, the body continues to perceive the presence of the old, natural limb, thus sending phantom pains to the area where the prosthetic limb resides. For children growing up, the limb does not grow to fit their body, and hence, they must acquire a succession of new limbs to accommodate their larger frame. This paper will examine how these and other issues create boundaries of the self that differ from the "normal" adolescent.

Moderated by Professor James Kincaid, Department of English

Nothing to Lose: The Powerless Fight Back
MHP 105
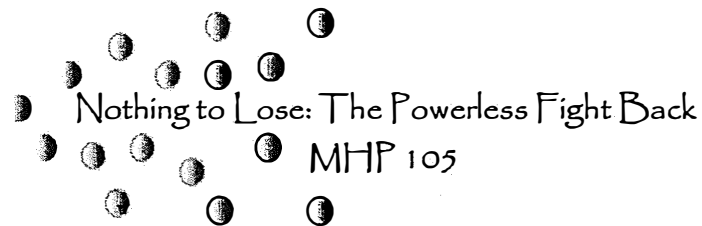
Two Men Shackled to a Dungeon Wall
Ken Basin

In Two Men Shackled to a Dungeon Wall, I will be examining the comedy of the underrepresented and the persecuted, using combinations of comedic works from minority artists who turned their pain into their comedy and a series of theoretical examinations on the nature of popular culture and comedy. Why do comedians focus on certain aspects of their upbringing for the heart and soul of their material? Why do they turn to comedy in the first place? As well analyzed as popular culture is, comedy has often been dismissed as a "low-culture" aspect of popular culture. Two Men Shackled to a Dungeon Wall provides a long-overdue examination of the way that stand-up comedians fight the system and invariably fall to the system for your entertainment.

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A World Without Collisions: How Culture Can Break Racial and Political Barriers
Anna Van Sant

In Athol Fugard's play "MASTER HAROLD" . . . and the boys, the character Sam describes the world of the dance floor as "a world without collisions" in which racial and political harmony can exist. Though the events of the play take place in Port Elizabeth, South Africa in 1950 shortly after the policy of apartheid was instated, a world far less perfect and egalitarian than the one Sam dreams of. I argue that while those who were subordinated in South African society may have dreamt of a harmonious society epitomized by ballroom dance, actually dissolving the boundaries of race and class that the imperialistic structure imposed proved to take much more than practice. By trying to adapt themselves to the imperial culture, they hindered their movement for equality. In contrast, the jazz movement in the United States aided African Americans in breaking down the barriers imposed by white society in the United States by transforming the dominant culture themselves, showing that by slowly implementing one's self into the dominate culture and transforming it, a minority group can begin to tear down boundaries that prevent them from living in a free and equal society.

What's Making You Sick? Stigmatizing the Poor as Diseased
Cynthia Koploy

During the Industrial Revolution in England, cities grew at exponential rates as factories and pollution saturated the landscape. Infrastructure couldn't keep up with the population growth and thus, sanitation and living-conditions suffered. Elizabeth Gaskell's Mary Barton was written in Manchester during this time of social and political turmoil, and reveals many of the underlying socioeconomic conflicts that resulted in a fiercely class-segregated society. In this environment, the poor working-class suffered most as disease proliferated the city. They became so marginalized from the rest of society that the poor became labeled as sources of urban problems and filth. The stigma of the poor as contaminated grew, and the culturally imposed view labeling them as the diseased "other" created both social and physical boundaries between classes.

Women: Power and Submission, Drawing the Swords of Battle
Aarthy Kannappan

From the ancient civilization of Athens to the 21st Century, drawing the lines of battles has ironically enough meant erasing the lines of civilization. The purpose of this paper is to define the benefits and consequences of erasing those societal boundaries, specifically with regards to female power. Using Odysseus' Helen as a female prototype, this paper analyzes

the means by which Helen uses her beauty, temptation, and intelligence to obtain power during the bloody battles of the Trojan War. It further uncovers the rather subtle means by which Helen attempts to retain that power, and how it changes the dynamics of her marriage. Projecting Helen's epic onto a more universal level, issues of post-war disorders in males that contribute to the complications of post-war marriages are addressed. In essence, this paper attempts to prove that a war that obliterates existing norms often redefines them in a way less constrictive to the female gender.

Moderated by Ned Schantz, Department of English

Living on the Edge: The Struggle for Validation
MHP 106
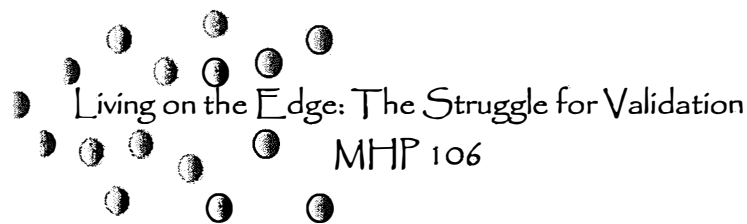
Color vs. Colors
Steven Jones

Julien Schnabel's Basquiat (1996) is one of my favorite movies that I feel like no one else has ever seen. It didn't find a huge audience, maybe because no one really knew what to make of the life story of a mildly obscure New York street artist. Certainly I had never heard of Jean-Michel Basquiat before I saw the film. I came away convinced of his artistic talent, but wondering whether the film's assertion -- that he was famous more for being a "black painter" than for merely being a painter -- was true. I decided to discover for myself whether this was an accurate portrayal. Today, I will present my decision about the distance between the truth of the film and the truth of real life.

Who's Laughing Now?
Jeffrey Rich

Comic strips may have little or no effect on some people, while sparking great interest or outrage in others. The daily comic strip is pushing and dissolving boundaries on all sides. It is becoming more editorial, being produced on the web, and the public is accepting a wider and wider range of appropriate content. In my paper I seek to address the problems created by these changes in the daily comic strip. I focus mainly on comics which are currently addressing or have addressed social issues, such as Trudeau's "Doonesbury" or McGruder's "Boondocks." I also seek to determine the future of comics as well as their place in society and in the papers.

Moderated by Lauri Mullens, Division of Critical Studies