Embodied Persistence: Corporeal Ruptures in Modernist Discourses of Material Language and Cultural Reproductive Futurity

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is an examination of a modernist desire to construct future materiality via material language, which represents a desire to overcome biology and the biological body. As such, modernist discourses of material language must be understood within their broader historical context, as these textual constructs developed against a cultural backdrop replete with eugenicist ideologies. Modernists wielded discourses of material language to determine via cultural reproduction which futures might materialize, as well as which bodies could occupy those futures and in what capacities. This dissertation argues that these modernist constructs contain their own failure in their antibiologism and their refusal to acknowledge the agency of corporeal materiality before them. Unlike language, the body expresses biopower through its material (re)productivity—its corpo-reality—which, though it can be shaped and repressed by discourse, persistently ruptures through the restraints of eugenicist ideologies and the autonomous liberal model of white masculine embodiment they uphold. This work analyses sexually marginalized bodies in texts by Mina Loy, Djuna Barnes, Nathanael West, and Ernest Hemingway that, through their insistently persistent biological materiality, disrupt modernist discourses of material language that offer no future for feminine, queer, and disabled corporeality. By exploring how intersecting issues of gender, sexuality, and disability complicate theories of language's materiality in modern American literature, this dissertation brings attention to writers and texts that challenge broader attempts in the early decades of the twentieth century to subvert the biological body through eugenicist projects of cultural reproduction.

To Ann Bingham and Dean Johnston

Thank you for caring

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Introduction:

The Thing-ness of Words and Bodies

> If what had happened to him for fooling with the open gate had happened to me, I never would want to see another one. I often wondered what he'd be thinking about, down there at the gate, watching the girls come home from school, trying to want something he couldn't even remember he didn't and couldn't want any longer. And what he'd think when they'd be undressing him and he'd happen to take a look at himself and begin to cry like he'd do. But like I say they never did enough of that. I says I know what you need you need what they did to Ben then you'd behave. (Faulkner 297).

Jason Compson's proposal from the third chapter of William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), that castration ("what they did to Ben") should serve as a means to remove transgressive social behavior along with the troublesome organs, appears flawed from the start, since Jason contrives it as he spies Benjy clinging to the same gate where, fifteen years earlier, he broke through to chase and grab Mr. Burgess's daughter, the very behavior that led to his castration. The containment of Benjy's desires through the removal of his flesh proves a failure in part because his desires are misunderstood to begin with. A developmentally disabled adult described as having been "three years old [for] thirty years" (17), Benjy's relationship with language is as fractured and disjointed as his relationship with time, and he is unable to communicate through his "bellowing," "moaning," and "slobbering" that his desire for the Burgess girl is relational rather than sexual, the passing of her body by the gate in the evening recalling the past returns of his sister Caddy, now physically and nominally absent from the Compson household.

The slippery yet persistent way Benjy clings to signification across bodies and time is but one of many modernist expressions through which writers aimed to represent their aesthetic navigations of ruptures in language, culture, and embodiment in a world of rapid change, where “reforming, revising or inventing new linguistic paradigms became crucial to the strategies by which modernism achieved self-definition” (Thacker 41). Akin to T. S. Eliot’s shoring up of fragments against his ruins, the inexpressible loss of a sense of order and control modernists sought to convey through these experiments in language is reflected in Benjy’s impotence, making the “Great American Gelding,” as Jason christens him, a moniker for larger modernist failures and in particular a form of frustrated modern masculinity (Faulkner 310). In the same way that today’s ubiquitous chants of “Make America Great Again” voice a masculinist desire to regain the imagined control wielded by men of previous generations made to embody the ideals of liberal autonomy (and, in a sense, a futurity in which men give birth to their grandfathers), Ezra Pound’s modernist dictate to “Make it New” expresses not simply a break from the past but a desire to discover new expressions of an old power, the power of language to shape culture and thus the material future. “[N]ot only the best, but the most individual parts of [a poet’s] work,” Eliot asserts in “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” “may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously” (37). Yet the power of this tradition cannot be inherited, Eliot insists, and while the poet’s “own generation” lies “in his bones,” the dead poets’ immortality can only be “obtain[ed] by great labor.” The modernist writer’s inarticulate impotence might be reversed then not through a resurgence of genealogical biopower, but through the preservation and perpetuation of culture through language’s own materiality.

The modernist desire to construct future materiality via material language is therefore a desire to overcome biology and the biological body, a project that must be understood within its broader historical context, as these textual constructs were developed against a cultural backdrop replete with eugenicist ideologies. Just as Jason Compson seeks to correct and control his family's legacy by restraining not only Benjy's but also Caddy and her daughter Quentin's deviant sexualities, modernists wielded discourses of material language to determine via cultural reproduction which futures might materialize, as well as which bodies could occupy those futures and in what capacities. But like Jason's insistence that castration be the cure for deviant behavior, that "they never started soon enough with their cutting, and they quit too quick" (310), these constructs contain their own failure in their antibiologism and their refusal to acknowledge the agency of corporeal materiality before them. For unlike language, the body expresses biopower through its material (re)productivity—its corpo-reality—which, though it can be shaped and repressed by discourse, persistently ruptures through the restraints of eugenicist ideologies and the model of white masculine embodiment they uphold. This dissertation is a consideration of the sexually marginalized bodies that, through their insistently persistent biological materiality, break through modernist discourses of material language that offer no futurity for feminine, queer, and disabled corporeality. By exploring how intersecting issues of gender, sexuality, and disability complicate theories of language's materiality in modern American literature, I bring attention to writers and texts that challenge broader attempts in the early decades of the twentieth century to subvert the biological body through projects of asexual cultural reproduction. Throughout my research, I examine interplays of texts, bodies, and environments situated within specific historical and technological assemblages, where the manifesto, the advice column, and the manuscript stand beside new developments in plastic surgery and prosthetics as significant textual/medical interventions in the construction of modernist bodies. By focusing on the agential biopower held within forms of queer and disabled embodiment overlooked and unaccounted for in most modernists' constructs of material language, forms targeted for erasure by the eugenicist, nationalist projects within which they are embedded, I aim to innovate and complicate broader approaches to whiteness, gender, and the material body in literary modernism and American studies.

Understanding the Thing-ness of Language in the Modernist Text

Modernist approaches to language's materiality, what we might think of as the thing-ness of words, developed along multiple aesthetic, ideological, and geographical points into a range of differing iterations, though what limited focus there has been in English literary scholarship on understanding the sources and implications of modernist theories of material language tends toward the outsized influence of T. E. Hulme and Ezra Pound's collaborative work in defining Imagism and promoting imagist ideals in Anglo-American poetry. During his on-again, off-again studies at St. John's College, Hulme developed a materialist philosophy of language within the tension between Henri Bergson's continental intuition and Bertrand Russell's positivist rationalism that consumed Cambridge in the early decades of the twentieth century. Andrew Thacker notes that, though there is no evidence of their having met, Hulme moved in the same Cambridge circles as Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose broadly influential *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921) outlines a visually-based approach to language's structural relationship with reality, which he equates with an object-ive materiality "comprised of irreducible, atomic things" similar to the atomistic constructs in Hulme's theory of material language (42-43; Sheppard 100). Across his philosophical and critical writings, Hulme repeatedly deploys words such as small, dry, hard, metallic, and sculptural to define his theory of material language, as can be seen in his *Collected Writings*. Pound builds on this construct in the vision of a scientifically precise, concrete poetic language freed from ornamental sentiment and abstraction delineated in "A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste," which appeared in the March 1913 edition of Harriet Monroe's little magazine *Poetry*. He would later write that "[l]anguage is made out of concrete things," and, in documenting his shift from Imagism to Vorticism, would describe how words form verbal images that function as a "node or cluster […] from which, and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing" (*Letters* 469). In modernist poetry, distilled, concrete language can be seen functioning "like collage or photomontage elements or found objects," the individual words serving as atomic building blocks "totally disposable for the poet, raw material which the imagination could deform, shape, and use as it pleased" (Sheppard 123), granting him access to agency and a measure of control unavailable in the more resilient substance of the material world.

While Hulme and Pound's Imagist vision of language's materiality advances a pre-Sausserian idea of reified nominalism "where language is treated as a set of discrete entities or atoms, to be pinned onto objects in the world" (Thacker 47), they and their contemporaries simultaneously, somewhat paradoxically used their poetry to work through the gap between signifier and signified, words and things, made increasingly tangible through the discontinuities produced by a culture and a world in flux. Wallace Stevens voices this modernist desire to "Let be be finale of seem" in "The Emperor of Ice-Cream" (68), while William Carlos Williams in *Paterson* repeatedly labors to convince himself that there are "no ideas but in things" (1, 4, 168). These poems may disclose a broadening rupture between language and reality, but they also communicate a dimensional, "sculptural" relationship, in Hulme's word, between shifts in modernist language use and the disruptive instability of the modern landscape.

Hulme and Pound undoubtedly held significant and indelible influence over literary modernists' constructs of material language, although as the monolithic importance formerly attributed to a small number of elevated figures across all aspects of modernism has given way in more recent scholarship to broader, more nuanced understandings of modernism's plurality and diversity, I aim in this dissertation to amplify the multiplicity of modernist theories of language and materiality, particularly those at work in texts by writers marginalized by gender, sexuality, and disability. Iterations of theories of material language were circulated not only among writers but by a number of European avant-garde artistic movements as well, including the Dadaist practice of "poème statiste," a collaborative work of performance art for which a number of Dadaists held large squares or cardboard, each marked with a single letter that, though initially arranged to spell out a word, dissolved into disorienting absurdity as the artists circulated about and among each other, and the Futurist practice of Parole-in-Libertà, a typesetting method aimed to replace language's traditional linearity and syntax that I discuss at length in my first chapter. The sculptural relationship between words and things Hulme envisions is perhaps made most visible through typesetting if we consider the small press printing technology that made modernism's little magazines possible. Oftentimes the publishers of these presses collaborated through their intricate typesetting labor in the literal construction of poems, contributing the visual design so important to free verse poetry where white space holds as much signification as the printed word[1]. The finished product's two-dimensional surface belies the sculptural process of fusing individual pieces of movable type to create not only words but also the spacing that appears on the material surface of the page—the white space that in many ways defines modern poetry. In today's digital world where font size can be adjusted with the swipe of a finger, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that one point is 1/72nd of an inch, or that individual letters and spaces were once measured in ems, ens, and quarters. Throughout this dissertation, I consider such material processes of text production alongside more theoretical constructs of material language, and I read visual art pieces—sculptures, collages, and games—in conjunction with written texts to make visible the assemblaged material processes behind the construction of modernist texts.

Beyond such continental influences, it is important to acknowledge more global contributions to modernist constructs of language's materiality. Through trade and colonization, the influx of Asian art and culture impacted European aesthetics of the fin-de-siècle in both visual and literary expression. Japanese poetry and sinologist tracts on

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[1] I wish to thank Melanie Micir and Anna Preus, who shared their project of digitizing Hope Mirrlee's *Paris: A Poem* at the "Seeing Modernist Reading" seminar during the Modernist Studies Association's 2018 conference. The poem was originally published and typeset by Virginia Woolf, and their description of the labor-intensive process of translating individual pieces of type into code to preserve Woolf's precise spacing of the printed poem in the digital text contributed greatly to my understanding of the sculptural aspects of typesetting.

Chinese ideograms had as marked an impact on Pound's approach to poetry as did Hulme's philosophy, although as in the case of Ernest Fenollosa's essay "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry," which Pound published in *Instigations* in 1920, this influence was often shaped by inaccurate translations and cultural misunderstandings (Sheppard 102). African art and aesthetics likewise worked their way from the visual arts of sculpture and painting into modernist literary expression, though, as Michael North notes, they were valued by white modernists primarily for the constructed representation of a primitivism they perceived of as "thrillingly crude" and "more naked than any merely unadorned face" (71). And while Zora Neale Hurston, a trained linguist as well as an accomplished literary artist, traced African art's similarly sculptural influence on African American dialects in her ethnographic writing, as in "Characteristics of Negro Expression" (1934) where she notes the materiality of black oral culture in its adornment, angularity, and asymmetry, this work was largely neglected when not actively suppressed by her male contemporaries in her own lifetime. Wittgenstein implies in the *Tractatus* that the link between language and materiality might simply reflect an interpretation of reality dependent on the perspective of the subject (4.01), and while both literary and visual modes of artistic modernism highlighted the fragmentation and plurality of perspective, as art historian-turned-standup comic-turned-cultural critic Hannah Gadsby hammers home in her scathing critique of Picasso's cubism, this multiplicity excluded women's perspectives and, I would add, distorted the perspective of non-white, non-European contributors.

Cultural Reproduction and Modernism's Eugenicist Legacies

As I previously alluded, this materialist view of language stems from a sense of a modernist world in which structures of logic and meaning had fragmented in the face of growing urbanization, commoditization, mechanization, and the First World War, resulting in a crisis of dispossession and alienation that has been most frequently represented and understood through white men's experience. This "quintessentially modernist sense that the world has, at every level, come off its hinges" extended to the body's own materiality, which was likewise changing through its relationship with modern technologies (Sheppard 107). As Tim Armstrong posits, "modernists with quite different attitudes to social and technological modernity saw the body as the locus of anxiety, even crisis; as requiring an intervention through which it might be made the grounds of a new form of production" (4). Early twentieth century medicine opened the body's previously impermeable boundaries through technologies including "the stethoscope, opthalmoscope, laryngoscope, speculum, high-intensity light, X-rays" (2). In the same way these scopic devices penetrated corporeal surfaces to produce a fragmented view of the body as "a complex of different biomedical systems" (Ibid.), literary modernists employed material language as a "substitute for a more [complete] corporeal discourse," which "seemingly reduc[es] the sensuous capacities of bodies to the faculty of sight alone" (Thacker 52). From this corporeal fragmentation the word emerges as the concretized molecule not merely of signification, but also of the body made open by both medical and discursive technologies—though those same technologies also claimed the progressive potential to produce more complete, newly perfected forms of embodiment

(Armstrong 3). Discourses of material language would function alongside prosthetic technologies and eugenicist ideologies to make not just poetry, but the body, new. Although the initial aim of literary modernists' theories of material language was a revolution in poetry, the influence held by Pound and his inner circle as gatekeepers of the modernist community through their formal and informal editorial work ensured that their materialist constructs of language would distill throughout transatlantic modernism and be taken up by writers working in a range of genres, including journalism and the novel, where writers would further "flesh out" the material word's relation to the body through complex, corporeal narratives.

In the specific context of transatlantic American modernism, discourses of material language were widely employed to define white cultural and corporeal normativity and to regulate the nation's cultural reproduction, reifying the nativist ideologies of the Progressive era through their far-reaching embodied effects. Walter Benn Michaels posits that modernists' "interest in the ontology of the sign—which is to say, in the materiality of the signifier, in the relation of signifier to signified, in the relation of sign to referent" serves to promote "a certain fantasy about the family—that it might maintain itself incestuously" through what he terms nativist modernism (2). Across a multiplicity of modernist texts, Michaels reads various instances of white men passing on American identity to each other through culture rather than heredity, particularly in instances where women are shown as not to be entrusted with the responsibility of preventing black blood from flowing through white bodies. Culture, it turns out, is easier to control than sex. Through nativist modernism, Michaels sees both modernist discourses of material language and nativist attempts at defining and preserving whiteness as “efforts to work out the meaning of the commitment to identity—linguistic, national, cultural, racial” aimed at delineating proper citizenship through discourses of corporeal difference (3). This nativist modernism functions through a masculinist antibiologism, the materiality of language displacing the open body’s disruptive, often transgressive reproductive agency through a closed system of cultural reproduction: “Culture, put forward as a way of preserving the primacy of identity while avoiding the embarrassments of blood, would turn out to be [an] effective […] way of reconceptualizing and thereby preserving the essential contours of racial identity” (13). In attempting to preserve the whiteness of American identity, cultural reproduction eschewed and curtailed women’s sexual agency by rendering their chaotic reproductive biopower to men’s discursive control. Yet like the modernists he analyzes, Michaels too often dodges issues of sexuality and the insistently material reproductive biopower of bodies through the language of culture, family, and heritage, so while his analysis provides a valuable understanding of literary modernism’s complicity within systems of white nationalism, it does not go far enough in examining its ramifications for women, queer, and disabled subjects within broader eugenicist ideologies. In this dissertation I insist on understanding material language as an essentially sexual discourse with demonstrably material, readable, corporeal effects. By furthering consideration of the sexual marginalizations produced alongside racial marginalizations through discourses of cultural reproduction and nativist modernism, I aim to shed new light on the inherently sexual nature of material language and the insistent biologism that ruptures through the suppression of corporeality in the modernist text. Armstrong argues that "Modernist writing does not simply incorporate bodily metaphors, it operates on them" (7), and I further posit that modernist discourses of material language operate *through* the body itself—in all its constructions and permutations. By focusing on feminine, queer, and disabled embodiment suppressed by modernist constructs of material language and the larger nationalist projects within which they are embedded, I aim to better understand how the materiality of language and of the sexual/sexualized body operate with and against each other through larger systems of modernist production.

In his analysis of material language's role in cultural reproduction, Michaels places Jake Barnes, the protagonist of Ernest Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises*, alongside Benjy Compson as an exemplary "Great American Gelding": the wounded and impotent Jake, he argues, represents not only the Lost Generation's fragmentation and disillusionment, but also the loss of the *next* generation, which Jake no longer has the capacity to father (29). I want to make an important distinction here between Jake's impotence, which is portrayed as a tragic loss to the nation's reproductive future, and Benjy's castration, which was forced by Mr. Burgess as a necessary means of preventing the dissemination of Benjy's disabled corporeality into the community—lest Burgess be the grandfather of idiots. This distinction better reveals that the preservation of whiteness through nativist modernism aimed to (re)produce only a specific, limited and idealized form of the white body, one that excluded those made different and therefore "inferior" by disability and queerness—a sort of culling the herd to maintain heteronationalist white supremacy. Key to my analysis is an understanding of America's extensive eugenicist legacy of removing multiple forms of undesirable corporeality from the body politic, a practice that persisted throughout the long twentieth century and that by design targeted poor, disabled, queer, and racialized individuals—primarily women—for forced sterilization in order to cut these categories off from the nation's reproductive futurity. Nancy Ordover argues of America's eugenicist history that "[t]o grasp the resiliency of this often discredited but never dormant philosophy is to understand the consolidation of race, gender, class, sexuality, and nation"—and, I would add, disability—"not only as categories but also as ideological weapons of a state committed to eugenic curatives" (xiv). I would further posit that beyond a persistent ideological presence, these eugenicist weapons of the state continue to have corporeal substance in which black, queer, and disabled bodies are perpetually made prone to state violence and white state agents are perpetually exonerated from the consequences of carrying out violent actions.

In producing a national identity synonymous with white male liberal autonomy, a topic I return to below, eugenicist ideologies distinguish not only the citizen from the racialized other, but also aim to reify white supremacy and cultural reproduction through the violent suppression and control of queer and disabled corporeality: as the distinction between Jake Barnes's and Benjy Compson's impotence makes plain, eugenicist ideologies do not simply aim at defining whiteness in opposition to the racialized other, but also with identifying whiteness through an idealized heteronormative, non-disabled body, rendering queerness and disability, along with blackness, forms of transgressive corporeality incapable of citizenship. Odover further suggests that the "champions of eugenic sterilization were driven by liberalism's elevation of the individual and by a persistent reliance on what I refer to as the 'technofix'" (xxv), a faith in the same medical-technological understanding of the body promoted by discourses of material language for its ability to repair the embarrassments of biology, a larger iteration of Jason Compson's castration cure. By inventing a biological etiology for poverty and criminality and investing in a remedy based on removing individual undesirable bodies from the body politic rather than correcting inherently unequal social structures, proponents of eugenics could sidestep the systemic inequalities that liberal democracy was ideally supposed to correct but that it perpetuates in practice.

Despite his repeated claims to the power of castration as a social corrective, Jason Compson in fact sees the removal of Benjy's testicles as inadequate and longs for a more complete disappearance of his brother's disabled body:

> [W]hy not send him down to Jackson. He'll be happier there, with people like him. I says God knows there's little enough room for pride in this family, but it don't take much pride to not like to see a thirty year old man playing around the yard with a nigger boy, running up and down the fence lowing like a cow whenever they play golf over there. I says if they'd sent him to Jackson at first we'd all be better off today. (260).

While it may be easy to read Jason's desire to ship his brother off to the state-run asylum in Jackson—a desire that complicates and is complicated by Jason's own impotence—as further proof that he is the most deplorable Compson, it is important to keep in mind that this desire to remove disability out of the public eye was and in many cases still is commonplace[2]. I would argue that the desire to contain disability and anxiety over the reproductive capacity of disabled bodies remain among the most virulent and socially acceptable strains of eugenics today—take, for example, anti-vaxxers, those parents who prevent their children from receiving lifesaving vaccines out of fear they'll be contaminated with Autism. As Janet Lyon suggests, "to be nonverbal or atypically verbal in a normate culture is to be presumed incompetent in the language of agency and therefore unintelligible as a political or moral subject; it is to be a non-subject" ("On the Asylum Road" 554), and so those individuals made linguistically and politically impotent by disability are perpetually seen as prone for removal from the public body in the service of some greater good. Yet within the Anglo-American literary tradition, modern subjectivity is often represented symbolically through disabled corporeality, as in the case of Benjy Compson. "Given modernism's insistent experimental forays into territories beyond reason and its languages, beyond the proscriptive discourses of the symbolic realm, beyond normative models of subjectivity" Lyon posits, "we might expect to find the figure of mental deficiency somewhere along those frontiers" (552). While I frame my analysis of modernist discourses of material language and the bodies that rupture their antibiologism through an intersectional lens that considers the inextricable and co-constitutive relationality of race, gender, sexuality, and disability (as I further elaborate below), because of the vital role disability plays within "volatile codes of modernism" and the still emerging focus on disability within the larger field of modernist studies, it will be a particular focus of my dissertation (560).

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[2] A particularly jarring representation of this desire that is frequently cited by scholars of modernism interested in disability comes from Virginia Woolf's private diary, in which she recounts coming across a line of disabled men on a towpath near the Thames. "It was perfectly horrible,' she writes. "They should certainly be killed" (13).

Bodies that Persist: From Curing to Care

The nationalist construct of a political body comprised of a very particular, very limited form of individual embodiment produced through eugenic ideologies is tied to a key aspect of liberal citizenship, one that it is forged from an abstract construct of personhood disengaged from the body's fleshy materiality. To understand the antibiologism at work in modernist discourses of material language and cultural reproduction, it is essential to keep in mind this distinction between the abstract body of liberal citizenship, "the vehicle that enables liberal individualist self-possession" (Schuller 118), and the living corpo-reality of the material flesh. Modernist cultural reproduction operates along the lines of classic liberalism as it seeks to displace the flesh with an abstracted public body, and the modern subject, like the autonomous liberal subject, remains contingent on a particular construct that equates personhood with white masculinity, taking the white man's body as the neutral starting point from which all corporeal and social difference is defined. As scholars of race, gender, and post-colonialism have shown time and again, white masculinity, which abstracts itself by rendering its own construction invisible, renders forms of corporeal difference as more deeply rooted in the flesh and thus more difficult to discard to the strictures of abstract liberal personhood. And as Kyla Schuller further elaborates, liberal citizenship thus functions as yet another antibioligist construct aimed at containing and controlling the sexual body's reproductive capabilities:

> A conduit for the penetration of capital and culture, to be flesh was to be vestibularity, to be a permanent antechamber unable to gather any material into itself. … Sexual differentiation works to tuck away the reproductive residue of

> flesh in the vagina […] thereby securing [for men] the rational disembodiment of civilization, the subject of reason. (Ibid.).

While white male modernists sought to recreate this liberal ideal of abstract personhood out of the fragmented ruptures of modern subjectivity, to make of the white male body a once again complete and inviolable individual capable of transcending the flesh, they in turn reinforced and reified the opposite proposition, that to be racialized, gendered, queered, or disabled is to be dangerously open and primitive, inhibited by the flesh from attaining the autonomy key to liberal citizenship. Still, while it remains structurally more difficult for women, people of color, and queer and disabled folk to access the citizen's abstract personhood, the atomized fragmentation and malleability of modern materiality seemed to promise that these bodies too might yet be made to progress, that their open corporeality might yet be cured.

With the promise to fix or remove undesirable, non-normative corporeality from the future nation, broader nationalist projects of cultural reproduction advanced by modernist discourses of material language offer a futurity based on what Alison Kafer names curative time: "a time frame that casts disabled people (as) out of time, or as obstacles to the arc of progress. […] Within this frame of curative time, then, the only appropriate disabled mind/body is one cured or moving toward cure" (28). The futurity enacted by curative time operates through an antibiologism that denies the materiality of those fleshy bodies—disabled, feminized, or queer—that will not or cannot be cured and so brought into the progressive state of liberal autonomy, drawing parallels once again to Jason Compson's futile castration panacea. Yet as his father, the elder Jason Composn, insists, "Bad health is the primary reason for all life. Created by disease, within putrefaction, into decay" (Faulkner 49). If the very materiality of life is indeed shot through with disease and decay, as is generally represented by the fleshy body's openness and subjection to "periodical filth," then the reconstruction of the complete liberal body cannot be as straightforward as proponents of cultural reproduction had hoped. The disruptive openness of Benjy's corporeal difference, represented primarily through his loose grasp of language and time—his "moaning and slobbering"—appears to operate even at the molecular level: Benjy "appeared to have been shaped of some substance whose particles would not or did not cohere to one another or to the frame which supported it" (323). Denying cultural reproduction's promise to grant the modernist agency to rearrange the atomized fragments of words and bodies to a restored order, Benjy's corporeal materiality holds within itself a different set of principles resilient to curative futurity at its core, this despite the fact that Faulkner represents Benjy almost wholly through language. As this insistently material corpo-reality ruptures through the modernist text, it demands not a cure, but care.

While care of an abstract notion of the self has played a role in defining citizenship since Greek and Roman civilization, as Foucault discusses in the third volume of his *History of Sexuality*, conspicuous care of the material body is made suspect by its association with commoditized femininity—take the dandy and the metrosexual, derisive terms deployed at opposite ends of the long twentieth century for men whose meticulously groomed appearance puts their heterosexuality into question. Throughout this dissertation I will assert that it is at the location of bodily care, where the care work involved in protecting and maintaining disruptive corporeality comes up against discourses aimed at social reform through projects of cultural reproduction and eugenicist repression, that the material body ruptures through the modernist text. The care I examine takes several different forms, including the mother's biological and cultural labor in producing children, Magnus Hirschfeld's surgical and educational efforts to bring sexual intermediaries into the public, and role of the "agony aunt" advice columnist's discursive engagement with the public in the labor of Americanizing the body politic. The return to biologism that frames my analysis underscores that all bodies receive care, although some bodies—those white male bodies most attuned to abstract personhood—are supported by social structures and institutions that render the care they receive invisible or taken as given. The difference then lies not in which bodies need care, but rather in the type and duration of care they require and have access to: it is the difference between the asylum, the clinic, and the health spa.

In addition to examining conflicts between the discursive care of the body politic and the care that sustains endemic embodied difference, this dissertation will also address the unequal burden of care work demanded of women, since despite late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century reforms aimed at modernizing and institutionalizing the care of bodies, "[i]n the United States the social organization of care has been characterized by the reliance on the private household, feminization and racialization of care, devaluation of care work and care workers, and abnegation of community and state responsibility for caring" (Glenn 6). Consider the double burden Faulkner's Dilsey undertakes in providing not only contractual care to the Compson household in her servant's role as housekeeper, but also the maternal, familial care she alone offers Benjy after Caddy is barred from the homestead, a burden that is compounded by the care Dilsey’s own aging black body requires but does not receive. “I seed de beginnin, en now I sees de endin” Dilsey remarks on her walk back from Reverend Shegog’s Easter sermon (351), indicating the integral role her caring labor has played in perpetuating the Compson family line. My research pays special attention to the individuals and communities that, like Dilsey, resist the repression produced by institutionalized systems aimed at fixing or removing deviant corporeality from the public body, and who accept the unequal burden of care work required to protect and maintain queer and disabled embodiment.

Bodies that Matter, Bodies as Matter: An Intersectional Approach to New Materialism

This project began as an exploration of the material implications of twentieth century gender constructs that developed alongside modernist discourses of material language through a denial of the biological body. Initially, I planned to utilize material feminisms’ focus on systems and assemblages to draw connections between those material components of discourse and gender that modernists conceived of as fragmented and atomized, yet resistant and malleable, in order to furthering an understanding of the role discourses of material language played in the complex interaction between modernists’ literary experimentation and the material conditions of lived, gendered experience. As my research progressed, it became increasingly clear that my focus had to shift from furthering an understanding of material language to exploring the material, corporeal ramifications created by discourses of material language and cultural reproductive futurity in order to better account for those bodies that were constricted rather than liberated by such textual constructs. While the body was always present in my analysis, my focus shifted from its representation to its repression as I became more attuned to the eugenicist ideologies undergirding modernist discourses of language and culture, and to the forms of corporeality these discourses made deviant and marginalized when they did not destroy them outright. Following Elizabeth A. Wilson, I came to explore the conceptual and political legacies produced by feminism's own history of antibiologism and to ask, "What conceptual innovations would be possible if feminist theory wasn't so instinctively antibiological? […] What if feminist politics are necessarily more destructive than we are able to bear?" (1). As a literary scholar, I lack the knowledge and tools necessary to make the material body's raw biological data the focus of my analysis, so I instead engage a critical analysis of medical discourses from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including work in neuro-gynecology, aesthetic surgery, and prosthetics, to further my understanding of the modern body's material construction. Acknowledging white feminists' complicity across the twentieth century in advancing antibiologist and even eugenicist projects by claiming for women the liberal ideals of abstract personhood and individual autonomy has furthermore allowed me to recognize those instances where women, not in spite of but because of the particular positionality of their material embodiment in relation to these medical discourses, reclaimed the biological body's interdependent collectivity to advance the support of intransigent queer and disabled corporeality through various causes of care.

Through this research, it became clear that I would require an intersectional framework beyond material feminism to adequately address the repression of sexuality and sexual difference enacted by cultural reproduction’s antibiologism. In addition to relying heavily on disability and disability studies in this analysis, as previously indicated, I draw tools and frameworks from queer theory in constructing my understanding both of the repression, exclusion, and erasure of non-normative sexuality from the body politic through discourses of material language and cultural reproductive futurity, and of the insistent biopower contained in the sexualized bodies that rupture through the text. Particularly useful to my analysis have been those theorists, including Kafer and Jasbir Puar, who are pioneering intersectional approaches to queer and disabled embodiment and who provide me with much of the language I employ to discuss the sexual marginalization of open, non-normative bodies and this disruptive corporeality’s resistant positionality within nationalist constructs of space and time. I find in these scholars, most of whom are women and/or people of color, much practical applicability in not only challenging heteronormative discourses of reproductive futurity but actively reclaiming the agential body’s corporeal futurity for women, people of color, LGBTQ, and disabled folk, a futurity that Lee Edelman notoriously abandons. It is necessary to acknowledge the limitations of my research, and in laboring to expand Michaels’s race-based analysis of cultural reproduction’s role in advancing white nationalism in the early twentieth century to better account for those sexual minorities—women, LGBTQ, and disabled folk—who were deemed out of time and stripped of their reproductive agency by these discourses, I have chosen not to address race as a primary component of my analysis given the considerable critical attention it has already received. Rather, what analysis of modernist racial constructs I have included is approached through my primary focus on feminist, queer, and crip challenges to liberal constructs of white normativity. Puar posits that:

> [T]he epistemological bifurcation that has occurred around intersectional theorizing […] has let white feminists, especially those working on technoscience and (new) materialisms, off the hook and has, quite frankly, burdened women of color theorists and activists […] with the responsibility of adjudicating and defending the perceived successes or failures of intersectional scholarship. (*Right to Maim* 21).

As I have shifted the focus of my research from the materialism of language to the materiality of bodies, I have aimed to contribute my academic labor to shouldering this burden by furthering intersectional scholarship in literary modernism and American studies.

Given that my access to modern embodiment lies not within corporeal remainders but in a corpus of literary texts and public discourses, I have adopted an assemblagist approach to the open body's materiality and biopower. Following those avant-gardists who turned from painting or sculpture to the collage and photomontage to represent the body's modern materiality, I have identified and deconstructed textual assemblages of bodies, words, and environments in aiming to understand how such sexual/textual constructs were originally produced in relation to embodied experience and material practices of writing; as previously noted, I frequently incorporate such artwork in my analysis. In laboring to situate my literary analysis within a broader historical project of understanding modernist material culture, I have been mindful that "negating materiality can actually inhibit the development of a robust understanding of discursive production itself, since various aspects of materiality contribute to the development and transformation of discourses" (Alaimo and Hekman 4). Yet in keeping Puar's challenge to white feminists in mind, I have aimed to not further exacerbate but rather to remedy the bifurcation she identifies between new materialism and intersectionality by refusing the critical impulse to displace marginalized bodies with things. Indeed, Bill Brown's "indeterminate ontology where things seem slightly human and humans seem slightly thing-like" has always struck me as too close to "The Dude" Jefferey Lebowski's inebriated pronouncement that "[Jackie] Treehorn treats objects like women, man" for my comfort, as certain bodies have always been rendered more than just slightly thing-like through their fragmentation and objectification (13; Coen). Lest I run the risk of further displacing bodies with things and thing-like words, I adopt Jane Bennett's aspiration "to articulate a vibrant materiality that runs alongside and inside humans to see how analyses […] might change if we gave the force of things more due" (viii). A number of things and thing-like texts come into my assemblagist reading of modernist material corporeality, including an alphabet toy, an acrobat's costume, letters written to the advice columnist for the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, various prosthetic devices and the missing body parts they indicate, and in the case of Ernest Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden*, the textual manuscript itself, which is archived in five boxes held at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library. Yet in turning to these objects, my focus has remained on their agential relationality within constructs of non-normative human corporeality and public bodies as I aim at better understanding what Bennett describes as "a more *distributive* agency" at work in discursive assemblages of bodies, texts, and things (original emphasis, ix).

Modernist constructs of material bodies and the body politic are commonly theorized through Marxist approaches to early twentieth century capitalism's industrialized mass production and consumption, and framed in terms of dispossession and alienation. While my critical method is primarily aligned with new materialism's broader approach to humanity's relationality with(in) the material world, the economic aspects of producing and marketing texts for a newly developing mass readership—of making texts that make money—comprise a part of my literary analysis along with uncovering the text's thing-like materiality. I consider literary modernism's movement from the little magazines' limited readership to the ever larger, more national audiences of commercial publishing houses and popular journalism through a "commercial publicity apparatus" whereby the patronage system that supported writers in earlier times gradually gave way to the development of a professionalized institution of commercial publishing (Conroy 5). However, my intention here is not to reenact the dichotomy between high and popular modernisms, as the spuriousness of such distinctions is already well established. Rather, my interest in the economics of publishing has more to do with constructions of privately embodied readers into mass reading publics across the early decades of the twentieth century. At the time, public discourse on sexuality was severely curtailed and regulated under the obscenity laws of the Comstock Act, a topic I return to in my third chapter. This treatment of sex and sexuality as strictly private matters had (and continues to have) profound implications for how women, LGBTQ, and disabled folk could conceptualize their non-normative corporeality in relation to a public comprised of autonomous liberal subjects. As Michael Warner posits, this "protection of the private from public interference simply blocked from view those kinds of domination that structure private life through the institutions of the family, the household, gender, and sexuality" ("Public and Private" 43). When sex was limited to a private matter, what discourses on sexuality were publicly permitted served to further equate the public body with antibiological constructs of liberal autonomy, and when Habermass conceptualized the public sphere as "above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public" (27), he did not yet acknowledge as Warner does that privacy in turn is constructed publicly ("Public and Private" 62). When read today, the texts I examine seem to indicate the possibility of constructing queer and disabled counterpublics that take into account a range of private embodiment, but given the (often deliberate) limitations these texts faced in reaching a mass audience—indeed, several of the texts I examine disappeared entirely from public view in the years after they were written and resurfaced publicly only in recent decades—such counterpublics never had the chance to fully materialize.

Chapter Outline

Throughout this dissertation, I aim to complicate existing approaches to modernists' textual/sexual assembalging of material bodies that take the invisible, antibiologist construction of white masculinity as their starting point through an intersectional reading of feminized, queer, and disabled corporeality that ruptures through the text. The arc of this project is organized into two sections with complementary aims. I opened this introduction with a brief discussion of the multiple aesthetic and ideological foundations that factored into literary modernists' varied approaches to language's materiality and an indication of how these approaches would break down across bodily difference. In the first section comprising chapters one and two, I conduct a more in-depth examination of two alternative modernist constructs of language, materiality, and the sexual body, both of which represent challenges by modernist women to the nationalist projects of cultural reproduction and reproductive futurity advanced by male modernists through discourses of material language. I argue that through their particular lived experience as women, Mina Loy and Djuna Barnes developed different relationships with language and materiality that in turn affected their understandings of bodies and embodiment as reflected in their textual production. From these understandings, Loy and Barnes present alternative models of domesticity and futurity that account for the porosity of bodies and space, their production and destruction.

Chapter one argues that Loy approaches the materiality of language through her lived experience as a single mother, and that the particular embodiment of motherhood informed her early feminist challenge to the anti-biologism of cultural reproduction. I consider how Loy appropriates and adapts Futurist methods of Parole-in-Libertà (Words-in-Freedom), which allows her to represent through her early poetry and the "Feminist Manifesto" (1914) the porous relationality of male and female embodiment and to challenge the marginalization of motherhood both in the Futurists' nationalist constructions of futurity and in New Women's attempts to replicate male liberal autonomy at the start of the twentieth century. While Loy's emphatically heterosexist "Feminist Manifesto" largely aligns with the eugenicist ideologies that permeated the Progressive Era well into the twentieth century, Barnes explores the resilience of race, queer sexuality, and disability through her construction of a soft modernist materiality in

Nightwood (1936), as I argue in chapter two. With its explorations of the precarity of Jewish, queer, and disabled embodiments, today *Nightwood* is largely appreciated for Barnes's anticipation of the Holocaust. By examining Barnes's frequent references to sewing in her early journalism and the novel, I further consider how she presents the materiality of bodies and language as fluid and changeable yet prone to decay, particularly as they come up against debilitating medical discourses, in this case Freud's talking cure, aimed at normalization and the destruction of difference.

In the second section, I turn from the somewhat limited audience of Loy's and Barnes's highly experimental avant-garde modernism to mass publication's broader readership. Chapters three and four explore various outcomes when material language and practices of writing come up against the biological body through public discourses aimed at perpetuating the liberal subject. To understand the impact of the body's insistently material corpo-reality on discursive constructs of the body politic, I examine through Nathanael West's engagement with the early advice column and Ernest Hemingway's posthumous relationship with his publisher how material care of the private body was translated into discursive care of the public body through technologies of mass publication. I consider how the disembodied ideal of liberal subjectivity this discursive care work aims to protect and maintain both suppresses and produces embodied difference in public bodies, which ruptures through the text to demand care in its own right.

Chapter three examines the role of the advice column, one of the few public discourses on sexuality allowed under the Comstock Act, in both the Americanization of the body politic and the production of queerness and disability out of corporeal difference as presented by Marie Manning, creator of one of the first syndicated advice columns, “Beatrice Fairfax,” and in Nathanael West’s satirically surrealist novella *Miss Lonelyhearts* (1933). Through the agony aunt Miss Lonelyhearts’s textual/sexual contingency and complicity with his public audience, which materializes as his male pregnancy, West presents a model of disabled queer modernity that elucidates the limitations of disembodied liberal autonomy by exploring the inextricability of bodies, texts, and the urban environment. My reading of Hemingway’s posthumous novel *The Garden of Eden* in both its manuscript and its published form further explores the limitations of the text without a body, as I consider in my final chapter the different constructions of embodiment enabled by the public and the private text. While I do not argue for the precedence of one text over the other, I consider how the open, repetitive form of the manuscript, which develops less through plot advances than through repetitious descriptions of bodily care, allows for the representation of cycles of continuous care necessary for the support of queer and disabled bodies in comparison with the linear plot structure of the published novel. This same care belies constructions of male liberal autonomy as natural and neutral as presented in Hemingway’s public persona, itself a materialist textual construct.

Throughout this dissertation, my focus on amplifying and expanding a more complete and nuanced understanding of the modern body’s textual/sexual materiality by revealing and correcting the earlier erasures of eugenicist cultural reproduction not only in the texts I examine but also in the history of feminist and modernist scholarship represents my attempt at a form of care work that labors to sustain and perpetuate the openness of assemblaged texts, bodies, and environments. Like Dilsey's witnessing of the slow decline of the Compson family, literary scholars have seen the beginning and the ending of literary modernism's insistence on the materiality of language, yet as the current political environment marked by a global resurgence of nationalism and isolationism makes all too plain, the larger project of cultural reproduction aimed at sustaining an antibiological notion of liberal subjectivity that produced modernist discourses of material language presses on through the twenty-first century. As I discuss further at the conclusion of this project, while modernist discourses of material language might today appear as quaintly academic relics of the past century, the antibiologist ramifications of these discourses, assemblaged as they are within bodies and environments, have reified and materialized within social structures where they continue to marginalize women, people of color, and queer and disabled folk. While Jason's castration cure failed to remove disability and the open, disabled body from the body politic, the caring labor of protecting and maintaining those marked by corporeal difference so they have the capacity to participate as public bodies and political subjects is never complete.

I. Maiming for Motherhood:

Maternal Materiality in Mina Loy's Parole-in-Libertà and "Feminist Manifesto"

> What can they want, women, the sedentary, invalids, the sick, and all the prudent counselors?
>
> (F.T. Marinetti, "Let's Murder the Moonshine," 1909)[3]

> Some say that happy women are immaterial.
>
> (Mina Loy, "The Effectual Marriage")[4]

As scholarship on gender and modernism over the last few decades has moved women writers out of the periphery and developed a more complex, nuanced understanding of women's role in producing literary modernism, this understanding has in turn shifted the very grounds on which modernism itself is defined. Once largely excluded from the canon of high modernism (with the notable exception of Woolf and Stein) and relegated to the lower rung of popular modernism, contributions by women together with the work of writers of color are now central to transatlantic modernist studies and have all but eliminated the previous high/low divide in current scholarship. Just as approaches to modernism have been made more complex by the influx of gender, feminism over the same time has moved toward a more inclusive, intersectional understanding of women's varied yet relational experience. Part of today's intersectional feminist labor then aims at recognizing white women's historic complicity within systems of oppression and their role in perpetuating racist, heterosexist, and ableist ideologies. What this implies for the study of white women modernists is the necessity of reading for a more nuanced understanding of both the liberatory as well as the exclusionary and restrictive aspects of their constructions of modernism and gender. While (primarily white) women labored toward attaining more complete forms of public modern citizenship through suffrage and birth control campaigns and the pursuit of professional careers in the early decades of the twentieth century, much of this labor was grounded on an antibiologist notion of liberal subjectivity and the heterosexist and eugenicist ideologies of the Progressive era. Yet as I posit throughout this dissertation, the insistently material biopower of bodies has a way of persistently rupturing through such ideological constructs, and white women, situated as they are between the privilege of their race and the marginalization of their gender, were uniquely positioned to bring their relational understanding of this agential corpo-reality to the larger construction of abstract personhood and cultural reproductive futurity.

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[3] *Marinetti: Selected Writings* 46

[4] *The Lost Lunar Baedeker* 36

In this chapter I argue that throughout Mina Loy's writing, particularly in her early work where she engages Futurist methods of Parole-in-Libertà (Words-in-Freedom), she evinces a theory of materiality based on bodily interconnectivity and relationality in flux that challenges the antibiologism of modernist theories of language and the masculinist constructs of citizenship they support, which in valorizing an abstract personhood accessible only to men make no place for women's excessive embodiment, as realized through motherhood. Herself a single mother and transnational subject, Loy emerges as an important yet until now largely overlooked modernist figure for her early feminist critique of masculinist attempts to bypass, through cultural reproduction, the “messiness” of biological embodiment in defining and reproducing the racialized nation. By appropriating and repurposing the Futurists’ masculinist discourses of material language, Loy takes on modernist claims to language’s power to suppress the biological body’s “embarrassments” figured in the womb in favor of cultural reproduction realized through linguistic agamogenesis (asexual reproduction, literally “not woman born”), cementing male liberal autonomy’s centrality in defining modern citizenship. Instead, Loy insistently centers the biological body within modernism’s material discourses of cultural production in order to claim a place for white motherhood within the space of nationalist reproductive futurity. In doing so, Loy refigures the “spheres” of bourgeois propriety (male/female, public/private, exterior/interior) not as separate, but as overlapping and mutually constitutive, an insistently biological social construct that anticipates current work in material feminisms, which poses similar challenges to feminist discourses that for too long have neglected the biological body in their politics.

Loy’s engagement with theories of material language is co-constitutive of her privileging of modern motherhood and its attendant relationality over contemporary feminist models aimed at replicating male liberal autonomy. The arrival of the independent New Woman across Western culture in the early decades of the twentieth century presented a problematic binary with a host of attendant issues that remains contentious to this day: If the appropriation of male liberal autonomy is the marker of (white) women’s citizenship and their place within the nation’s futurity, then what space remains for mothers in the modern nation other than their relegated role as signifiers of the past? This binary is further complicated by the aforementioned theory of material language that makes the (white, male) artist the "mother" of the modern nation, as I will show in the work of F. T. Marinetti, founder of Italian Futurism. Loy reclaims and elevates white women's embodied subjectivity by triangulating the New Woman and the mother with the virgin, whom she makes stand for the past in place of the mother—a past that, following the Futurists, must be sacrificed in the name of cultural progress. In keeping with the Futurists' radical eugenicist ideology, Loy's "Feminist Manifesto" calls for the destruction of the biological body's "natural" virginal state through the surgical transformation of women's bodies. Reading Loy's materialist textual construct of the female body through the lens of disability, I argue that Loy figures the woman's "natural" body as always already debilitated, dependent on the rigidly patriarchal social apparatus of the marriage market to fulfil its capacity in motherhood, a response to her lived experience under the propriety of Victorian social strictures and its attendant ideology of separate spheres. The technofix produced through Loy's rhetorical virgin sacrifice would then cure the mother's misfit, to use Rosemarie Garland-Thompson's feminist disability concept, under a system of transactional marriage that valorizes virginity at the expense of motherhood. Through this discursive maiming of the female body to grant women their full biological capability, Loy imagines an alternative future environment that fully supports the female body's (re)productivity and realizes through her sexual circulation a vibrant relationality for "superior" women and men alike, all realized through language's relational materiality. Still, the problematically eugenicist aspects of Loy's white feminism cannot be overlooked, and just as she provides a liberatory model of relational public citizenship for “superior” mothers, she simultaneously perpetuates a different form of the same virulent white heteronationalism she attacks in the Futurists’ misogynistically antibiologist cultural reproduction.

The Working Mother as Global Subject

While this chapter focuses on Mina Loy’s discursive engagement with Italian Futurism between 1914 and 1920, particularly her adaptations of and challenges to Futurist techniques and ideologies, I mean not to neglect the larger complexity or importance of Loy’s own distinctive modernism. Throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, Loy circulated among avant-garde movements and artistic communities, moving geographically across England, France, Germany, Italy, the United States, Mexico, and Argentina. To an extent Loy’s artistic and geographical circulation was enabled by the fact that “she [was] not quite a lady,” as she self-identifies in the poem “Lion’s Jaws” (50), her bourgeois upbringing affording both a launching point and a level of protection for the later improprieties of her bohemian lifestyle. In a sense Loy embodies Edward Said’s reconsidered traveling theory, a “crucial reworking and critique” of received ideas across “actively different locales, sites, situations […] without facile universalism or overgeneral totalizing” (448, 452). She has been characterized as a “great honeybee, cross-pollinating distant fields of poetry and art: […] land[ing] in every fertile plot to leave a little something from afar and uniquely of her own before moving on” (Weiner 115), and while I appreciate how this metaphor captures Loy’s agency in bringing together seemingly disparate and contrasting modernist communities, I am less comfortable with how it characterizes her artistic labor as a sort of force of nature. This comes too close to replicating earlier characterizations of Loy as a mistress-dilettante whose artistic production and circulation stem from and are limited to responses to her sexual relationships—as has been noted, Loy's biographer Carolyn Burke frequently (though seemingly not intentionally) slips into describing her work thus. It also glosses over the fact that Loy's artistic circulation was not entirely of her choice and that "to survive as a woman poet in the midst of macho avant-gardists, she had to establish herself as an assertive, independent agent" (Arnold 84). More than a cross-pollinator, Loy was a master networker and negotiator, an assemblage artist skilled at repurposing the found material of the modernist avant-garde to create a relational imaginative space for herself and her ideas which she then purports to transform into a social space for women's particular embodiment—most notably, motherhood. Through the traveling theory that undergirds her poetic assemblages, Loy elucidates the "facile universalism" and "overgeneral totalizing" inherent in modernist visions of futurity articulated by and accommodating only a limited circle of (white, straight, able-bodied) men with full access to liberal citizenship that excludes—if not outright erases—more fleshy forms of biological embodiment.

This labor of assemblaging and transforming existing theory is particularly evident in Loy's sense of materialism as figured through her art and early writing, which fuses biology, spiritualism, and economics, with the body always at the center. In 1912, when spiritual and psychological communities were as numerous as avant-garde artists' circles, Loy became an early adopter of Henri Bergson's theory of intuition and the mind's variable capacity to experience temporality, as well as his contemporary Frederick

Myers's evolutionary theory of the "gifted hysteric" whose body is more permeable to the "uprush" of artistic genius than other people's (Gaedtke 155-156, Burke, *Becoming Modern* 144). At the same time, while many members of her social circle (notably her close friend Mabel Dodge) were attracted to Eastern(-ish) religions' theories of the mind's transcendence over materiality, Loy's focus on the biological body's inextricability from the mind drew her instead to Christian Science, and while her interest in the religion peaked at times of her or her children's illness, she and her family remained a lifelong adherents[5].

The practical nature of Loy's interest in materialism and the body is likewise visible in her money-making enterprises of the ensuing decades. While she had some success with publishing poetry and essays in various little magazines, as a single mother supporting a family Loy depended on entrepreneurship, invention, and the less prestigious decorative arts for income, rather than the patronage system that supported and privileged her male colleagues' artistic production—a material consequence of the artificial division of modernism into high and low arts that tended to favor work by men. With financial backing from Peggy Guggenheim, in the 1920s Loy set up shop in Paris, constructing and selling elaborate lampshades and hat designs to support her career as a poet, though the labor of producing these goods consumed her time for writing. While initially adverse to mass producing her goods, fearful that her designs would be ripped off, in the 1930s and ‘40s after moving to New York City, Loy increasingly turned to marketing her inventions to larger firms, and her detailed plans and formulas for plastics, toys, facial- and body-shaping apparatuses, and household tools can be found alongside her literary manuscripts and letters in Yale’s Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscript Library. Jessica Burstein has dubbed this aspect of her work “Loy, Inc.”, observing that “The bodies in Loy are built from context, and to look inside these anatomies is to find corsets and curtains. [… C]ommitted to and adept at originality as she was, Loy was perennially aware of the economy supporting that enterprise” (152-153). A focus on Loy’s inability and/or unwillingness to transcend her material context prompts a more literal and perhaps less flattering interpretation of Yvor Winters’s 1926 claim that “She moves like one walking though granite instead of air” weighted down, as she was, by the material culture and economics of domesticity (quoted in Prescott, xxxiv). Beyond simply illustrating her need to make money to support her family, Loy’s commercial production, by making the transformation of material goods into money explicit, translates economics into a material context that includes both bodies and language, as I explain further below in my examination of one of Loy’s inventions, the “Alphabet that Builds Itself” toy, and that reappears throughout her writing about women and men’s embodied relationality compromised by an economic system in which men hold all the power.

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[5] Despite her lifelong affiliation with the faith, the role of Christian Science in the formation of Loy's distinct modernism has received little critical attention. Lara Vetter provides an important examination of how Loy's belief in Christian Science played into her theories of free love eugenics, a topic I return to later in this chapter, as evidenced in her unpublished prose, though much more remains to be discussed on the topic of Loy and religion.

The Embodied Materiality of Modern Motherhood

Loy’s practical interest in the economics of materialism is evident throughout her critique of the Futurists in what are sometimes referred to as the “house poems,” written between 1914 and 1920, which elucidate how the antibiologism and "dissolution of the authoritative self" championed by Marinetti "would only have hampered [Loy]" in her artistic and economic enterprises (Arnold 84). In the poem "The Effectual Marriage, or, The Insipid Narrative of Gina and Miovanni," Loy figures the ideology of separate spheres common to both Victorian bourgeois values and the Futurist avant-garde as a house divided by a door into a kitchen and a library:

> In the evening they looked out of their two windows
> Miovanni out of his library window
> Gina from the kitchen window
> From among the pots and pans
> Where he so kindly kept her (36).

While the speaker reports that "Some say   that happy women are immaterial" (36)[6], the weight of the white space that dominates the line exposes the material reality of the scene it interrupts: the woman "Gina" laboring in the kitchen among the pots and pans who learns "at any hour to offer/ the dish   appropriately delectable" since the man "Miovanni" is too occupied "Outside time and space" to answer her simple request to name a dinner hour (37). One can only transcend the strictures of materiality, the poem suggests, if someone else remains behind to heat the leftovers—and that someone is probably a woman.

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[6] Throughout this chapter, I have made an effort to replicate Loy's idiomatic use of typography and spacing, what Janet Lyon dubs her "pregnant pauses," when quoting her, as Loy's substance and style are inextricable.

Perhaps ironically then it was Marinetti, not Loy, who compiled and published a cookbook, which contains "formulas" (the term he preferred to "recipes") for elaborately suggestive but ridiculously impractical meals, such as the "Parole-in-Libertà Sea Platter" consisting of "a sea of endive dotted with ricotta" supporting a vessel constructed of "half a watermelon with a tiny captain on board, sculpted out of Dutch cheese, who commands a sluggish crew roughly hewn in calves' brains cooked in milk" (*Futurist Cookbook* 192). While Marinetti's *Futurist Cookbook* overflows with material sensations, the scents, sounds, and visual display of his extravagantly imagined dinners, like most of his Futurist oeuvre the vision of materiality it evinces has little biological practicality: with his formulas Marinetti seeks to "elevate" domesticity from the quotidian, fleshy drudgery of caring labor, which he blamed in part for the feminine degeneration of Italian identity[7], to the high spectacle of aesthetic abstraction. Rather than follow Marinetti down the path of antibiologism, Loy instead anticipates Luce Irigaray's feminist edict that women, "historically the guardians of the corporeal, […] must not abandon this charge but identify it as ours" by insistently centering the body throughout her work, particularly where she adapts Futurist techniques in service of her own theory of materiality (quoted in Burke et. al, *Engaging with Irigaray* 67). Notably, the vehicle Loy engages to drive the material body to the forefront of the text, to make the matter of bodies matter, is Marinetti's own Futurist typographical method.

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[7] In his "Manifesto of Futurist Cooking" Marinetti includes a tirade "against pasta," which he believes has rendered the "Italian male [into] a solid leaden block of blind and opaque density" (*The Futurist Cookbook*, 33). Sarah Urist Green has heroically reconstructed one of Marinetti's masculinist alternatives, the *Futurist Cookbook*'s phallic pièce-de-résistance, "Sculpted Meat," for PBS's "Art Assignment" vlog: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4v4e5WmEDtk .

In 1912 Marinetti published a "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," which outlines his vision for Parole-in-Libertà, a method of writing informed by new technologies in film, typesetting, and airplane flight that would free words from "the absurd inanity of the old syntax inherited from Homer" (*Selected Writings*, 87), as seen in his 1919 poem *Zang Tumb Tuuum*[8]. As much a visual artwork as a poem, *Zang Tumb Tuum* transforms words into actors and letters into landscapes, the lazy curve of an "S" meandering through a valley created by the jagged peak of a capital "M," where "Mon Ami" takes refuge from the handwritten onomatopoetic "ta-ta-ta-ta-ta-ta" of "GUERRE." Marinetti realizes his atomized, nonhierarchical vision of language through a list of eleven guidelines, the first stating that "We must destroy syntax by placing nouns *at random where they are born*" (my emphasis, Ibid.), his aim being to "reach the point of expressing the infinitely small and the vibrations of molecules" where "the poetry of cosmic forces supplants the poetry of the human" (98). As noted by Laura Winkiel, the liberal autonomy of language at play in Marinetti's Parole-in-Libertà "exclude[s] racialized and gendered subjects from his vision of art as a vehicle of total revolution" (83). While Winkiel grounds this exclusionary rhetoric in Marinetti's production of racialized national subjects, I further posit that his imagining of words born of nothing should be read as Marinetti's disavowal of the body's materiality, specifically the materiality of maternal bodies, which is compounded by his vision of the artist's agamogenesis[9], a radically independent and antibiological self-fashioning that represents an attempt to do away with the feminine, or to cede feminine biopower to masculinist artistic production. In “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” Marinetti recounts his rebirth as a Futurist after crashing his car, emerging from its womb-like mechanical wreckage into a cesspool, and more astonishing yet the title character of his novel *Mafarka the Futurist* gives birth to his own son. In Canto XXX of *Songs to Johannes* Loy names Marinetti’s refusal to father her child a fear of “plagiarism” (66), another displacement of the body through language that reveals what he perhaps actually fears is her woman’s body’s capacity for reproduction, a capacity he recognizes he cannot in truth appropriate and through which she holds a biological advantage over him. But despite Marinetti’s desire to repress and deny the maternal, material body through artistic production, it has a tendency to rupture through the text, as Loy suggests in her materialist reworking of Parole-in-Libertà, which through the bio-logic of heterosexual reproduction and the connective tissue of signification sees birth and the word as relational rather than random.

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[8] While I am unable to reproduce them here, images of select pages from Marinetti's *Zang Tumb Tuuum* are available digitally through the Museum of Modern Art's online archives: https://www.moma.org/artists/3771?=undefined&page=1&direction= .

[9] This term for the Futurists' aversion to heterosexual reproduction is Loy's, from the poem "Lions' Jaws."

In Loy’s poetry from her introduction to Futurism through the early 1920s, she regularly uses techniques of Parole-in-Libertà, with its dynamic break from linear syntax through clashing typefaces and sizes, to replicate the shock value of Marinetti’s disjunctive graphic language, though she is widely recognized as doing so to “combat the linguistic and cultural determinism she believed were destroying women’s lives” (Frost 30). Through Parole-in-Libertà Loy engages a metatechnique endemic to modernism, using “the methods of a discipline to criticize the discipline itself” (Goody, *Modernist Articulations* 4), just as Marinetti regularly employs technology to critique what he sees as technology's threat to masculinity. More an act of disidentification than a simple taking up of the master's tools to dismantle the master's house, I further suggest that Loy's adapted Parole-in-Libertà differs essentially from Marinetti's atomized vision of the word set free in that she uses his materialist practices to insist on language's relationality by making the connections she draws between signifiers more visible, more hereditary. "[W]hen I have written anything," Loy states in a letter to Carl Van Vechton dated from 1914, "I feel my family on top of me" (quoted in Arnold, 90), and while on the surface the letter expresses Loy's concern that the graphic sexual nature of her poems might prompt her parents to cut off their financial support of her and her children, it also further links her literary production to the connective collectivity of biological reproduction. In her unpublished papers Loy can be seen playing with the relational bonds between words and things through her repeated practice of making a single word give birth to a family of anagrams. As Tara Prescott notes, this poetic practice creates chains of signification "as if participating in a word game, a Scrabble player switching around tiles on a rack […] to make as many words as possible that are consequently related" to then emerge in her poetry as, for example, the substitution of "Ques Sextion" for "sex question" (xxix, xxxi). Through this playful approach to language, Loy's insistent relationality reflects and shapes her view of the material world dependent on interconnectivity, mutability, and flux at work throughout her poetry.

It is through a different game, however, that the vibrant relationality of Loy's material language fully displays its dynamism. In 1940 Loy submitted detailed designs to F. A. O. Schwartz for a word game in two iterations, the "Build Your Own Alphabet" and

"The Alphabet that Builds Itself." Intended as teaching tools for young children, each of the games contains segmented pieces of letters that the child constructs into a working alphabet. While Loy's design for the "Build Your Own Alphabet" includes a detailed script for the mother to instruct her child how to play the game, "The Alphabet that Builds Itself" is made up of magnetized segments intended to snap together under their own agency, forming letters in any number of permutations. As Margaret Konkol demonstrates by prototyping "The Alphabet that Builds Itself" using 3D printing technology, the game "represents Loy's articulation of a theory of language as kinetic, geometric, recombinant, and open to mutation […] an articulation of language as a physical substance which infers its own morphology" (2)[10]. Konkol reads the game as an extension of the materialist sensibility found in Loy's poetry, observing that:

> The mobility of her invention across categories—as game and toy, as expression of her poetics, and as money-making venture—which is to say from two-dimensional letters as signifiers, to dimensional plastic letters, to money—the most abstract of all signifiers—points to the complex ways in which Loy engages physical substance as semantic material. (2).

I would add to Konkol's assessment that it is notably through Loy's teaching role as a *mother* that she articulates this theory of material language, suggesting that her relational Parole-in-Libertà represents not simply an iteration of *éciture féminine*, but more specifically a mother's language born, not at random as Marinetti suggests, but through a particular experience of female embodiment and caring labor. As is widely noted, Loy's poetry is "exceptional for the way it often revolves around investigations of the female body. She depicts childbirth and cunnilingus, maidenhead and menstruation" not merely through her subject matter, but through the materiality of her language, which contracts, dilates, and oozes across the surface of the page (Prescott 51). The "Alphabet that Builds Itself" extends the scope of this maternal materiality in Loy's poetry by animating maternal care work through the mother and child's shared discovery of language's relational morphology.

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[10] Konkol's prototype of "The Alphabet that Builds Itself" can be seen in action at https://mina-loy.com/endehorsgarde/alphabets-that-build-themselves/ .

What develops out of Loy's vibrantly materialist Parole-in-Libertà is neither the atomized independence Marinetti envisioned nor the sort of strict hierarchy of meaning he railed against, but rather a tangled network of relationality in flux, which is visibly at work in her extensive play with anagrams and spoonerisms, as I further elaborate below, as well as her anti-Imagist insistence on using complex archaic and technical language in place of Pound's "exact word" throughout her poetry, which draws the reader's focus to the word's obscure originality rather than elucidating a verbal image, as in the case of "agamogenesis" and the "sialagogues" Gina prepares for Miovanni in "Effectual Marriage" (36). As noted by Michaels and discussed in my introduction, discourses of material language developed out of Pound's Imagism were predominantly used by modernists, as with Marinetti, to eschew the messiness of biological reproduction in favor of a masculinist asexual reproduction through "[c]ulture, put forward as a way of preserving the primacy of identity while avoiding the embarrassments of blood" and employed to further projects of nationalism and white supremacy (13). Loy's material language then represents not merely a response to or critique of Marinetti's Futurist aesthetics, but rather models a significant departure from and alternative to a much broader modernist project as she favors the fleshy muck of biopower over the cleanly cerebral atomization of culture in centering the material body throughout her work. This is a central conceit of her poem “The Prototype,” which opens on a scene of artificial birth “In the Duomo, on Xmas Eve, midnight” (221):

> a cold wax baby is born—born of the
> light of 1,000 candles.
> He is quite perfect, of that perfection
> which means immunity from
> the inconsistencies of Life.

By looking back to the old cold magic of the Catholic church, Loy uncovers a patriarchal antecedent of the Futurists’ faith in agamogenesis, showing that there is nothing particularly modern about erasing the mother to transcend the embarrassments of corporeality. Into the Duomo there then enters

> […] another baby, a horrible little
> baby—made of half warm flesh;
> flesh that is covered with sores—carried
> by a half-broken mother.

The poem’s speaker turns away from the wax baby to worship “the poor/ sore baby—the child of sex igno-/ rance & poverty,” directing her prayer “not to a god, but to/ humanity’s social consciousness” (222). Rather than a substitution of signifier for signified, Loy’s turn from the wax baby to the fleshy baby is a turn away from signs born of nothing, such as Marinetti’s Parole-in-Libertà, to signs born of material embodiment, such as Loy’s “Alphabet that Builds Itself” and her own adapted “Parole-in-Libertà,” which lead to a greater awareness of the social and biological inextricability of cultural production. By including the bodies of the poor and the sexually marginalized in her project of material language, Loy poses a challenge to Marinetti's exclusionary rhetoric and the extreme nationalism it props up—though as I will further elaborate below, this does not make her immune to eugenicist ideologies.

Enacting Biological Transformations through Linguistic Relationality

Instead of "reconceptualizing and thereby preserving the essential contours of racial identity" as Michaels suggests (13), Loy's material language allows her to transform and transfer identity through relational word play[11]. Loy was particularly fond of name games and anagrams throughout her life: a prime example of this can be found in the poem "Lions' Jaws" where she spins off multiples of herself as "Nima Lyo, alias Amin Yol, alias Imna Oly" (49). While many modernists were known to trade in pseudonyms (take Pound and Elliot's references to each other as "Old Possum" and "Brer Rabbit" in their correspondence, or even Djuna Barnes's naming Loy "Patience Scalpel" in her *Ladies Almanac*), Loy's anagrams are significant for the transparency with which they preserve their relation to the original, deriving their power from the relationality of birth and the word. Returning to "The Effectual Marriage," "Gina" and "Miovanni" are clear spoonerisms of Mina and Giovanni and reference Loy's affair with Giovanni Papini, Marinetti's Futurist contemporary. But rather than hiding their identities, Loy's spoonerisms signify a shifted relationality: Elements of both Mina and Giovanni can be found either in Gina, the woman trapped in the kitchen's domesticity, or in Miovanni and his attempts to transcend space and time in the library:

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[11] Burke suggests Loy learned this practice from her mother, Julia Bryan Lowy, who dropped the "w" from her husband's last name to make it sound less Jewish (*Becoming Modern* 15).

> The door was an absurd thing
> Yet it was passable
> They quotidienly passed through it
> It was this shape (36).

The hat trick of "Effectual Marriage" then is that rather than simply recreating the ideology of separate spheres through the door dividing the house into relegated male and female zones, Loy makes the masculine and the feminine, exterior and interior, overlap through the nominal relationality of the two not-so-distinct people who occupy those spaces. As she writes in the poem "Parturition":

> without
> It is within
> Within
> It is without (4).

Through this Loy reveals that the Futurists' project of quarantining the feminine to the excessive embodiment of domestic materiality to free themselves from the trappings of corporeality only denies them access to their own fluid relationality.

Loy's interest in the fluidity of identity and her overlapping, mutually constitutive constructions of interiors and exteriors extends beyond the nominal to the biological. Burstein observes that, as with her method for "Auto-Facial-Construction," a system of exercises for the facial muscles aimed at improving the face's surface appearance published in 1919, “Loy’s inventions engaged the body in a way that […] take as their ground the interpenetration of the body and its context, and invite rearrangement” (183). In this sense Loy’s material language and the relational networks it enables can be seen as anticipating the recent biological turn in material feminism and its work of challenging and correcting the antibiologism prevalent in feminist theories grounded in social constructionism. Through the interrelation of her poetry and her bodily inventions, and the dynamic fluidity that animates them both, Loy evinces a challenge to antibiological discourses akin to Claire Colebrook’s summation that:

> When feminists criticized or rejected notions of women as mired in material embodiment, they did so because matter was deemed to be devoid of dynamism. […] And when ‘linguisticism,’ in turn, was challenged, this was because language had been erroneously taken to be a fixed, determining, and inhuman grid imposed on life, rather than a living force. (64).

While the feminists Colebrook references seek to avoid giving up agency to biological matter and language that to them appear reified within the patriarchal order, this sense of materiality is itself a masculinist invention, as Loy appears to have understood. And as Loy makes plain in her poetry, the dynamic agency of matter consistently denies any constructed fixity, the fluid plasticity of bodies and language persistently rupturing through those discursive inventions built to contain it.

Following Colebrook, I do not mean to suggest here that Loy’s dynamic fluidity is open to infinite permutations leading to a complete interchangeability of identity: As I stated previously, the relationality key to Loy’s materialism challenges rather than replicates Marinetti’s atomized liberalism where something may be born of nothing. In the same way feminists today aim to rectify the excesses inherent in theories of gender built on social constructivism untethered from the body, Loy's challenge to Marinetti stems from her understanding of the particulars of women's embodiment and its larger social importance. The materiality of her words and bodies may be in flux, but for Loy its relationality traces back to and retains an essentialized notion of the sexes based in the biological body; as she states at the outset of the "Feminist Manifesto":

> be **Brave**
> & deny at the outset—that pathetic clap-trap war cry
> **Woman is the equal of man**—
> For
> She is **Not!** (153)[12].

Yet although Loy claims women and men as unequal, this does not imply their separability—just as Loy's productively materialist feminism is not entirely separable from Marinetti's destructively nationalist Futurism. While in the "Feminist Manifesto" she goes on to claim "the sexual embrace" as "the only point at which the interests of the sexes merge" (154), the permeability of the door in "The Effectual Marriage," which "was passable/ They quotidienly passed through it" (36), suggests Loy sees multiple merging points that confound the hierarchical geometric organization of the sexes inherent in the logic of separate spheres. Elsewhere she describes the sort of domestic relationship depicted in "The Effectual Marriage" as a strangely biological "mechanical interaction" in which she can "only give off what I'm absorbing" (quoted in Burke, *Becoming Modern* 182). In this bodily relationality Loy poses the opposition of the sexes as systemic rather than separated, echoing Elizabeth A. Wilson's suggestion that "the periphery is a site of intense […] agency on which the center is always dependent. Which is to say, the periphery is interior to the center; the stomach is intrinsic to the mind" (14). For both Wilson and Loy, the agency of matter and bodies extends throughout the systems in which they are imbricated no matter their location. Under this system of insistently biological materialism, men cannot separate themselves from their dependency on women's agential biopower, particularly in the act of reproduction.

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[12] Loy did not pursue publication of the "Feminist Manifesto" in her lifetime, but the corrected holograph manuscript she included in a letter to Mabel Dodge Luhan suggests the typesetting she imagined for the document was to follow Futurist techniques of Parole-in-Libertà.

Reclaiming Women's Capacity for Biological Reproductive Futurity

The issues Loy addresses in the "Feminist Manifesto" arise then not from women and men's essentialized yet relational corporeality, but from social systems constructed to negate motherhood by structuring the sexes' relationality through fixed financial transactions, most notably the system of bourgeois marriage in which men set the value of women's bodies. "Every woman," writes Loy, "has a right to maternity" (155), yet that right is obstructed and displaced both through the fetishized commodification of virginity within the marriage market and by attempts by New Women to enter the marketplace on their own terms by replicating male liberal autonomy through the financial independence attained through professional and commercial careers ("**Is that all you want?**" Loy asks incredulously [153]). Both systems force upon women the atomization Loy resists in her relational materiality, whether through the fragmentation of women into commoditized "bits of bodies" with "the hymen, the proof of women's virginity" as the most valuable "bit" (Prescott 230), or through the cutting off of women from motherhood through sexual hygiene and birth control campaigns, of which Loy was highly suspect and critical (Burke, *Becoming Modern* 179). As Loy posits in the "Feminist Manifesto," "The value of man is assessed entirely according to his use or interest to the community, the value of woman, depends entirely on **chance**" (155). In Loy's view, marriage for women is less a market than a lottery, as it is never guaranteed how the investment of their virginity and their dowries will pay off, the subject of her poem "Virgins Plus Curtains Minus Dots[13]." Motherhood, for Loy, should be the index of (specifically white) women's use value, both in terms of her ability to produce and care for children and her subsequent ability to determine bio-cultural materiality through those children, a view supported by fin-de siècle understandings of gyno-neurology that Kyla Schuller names "vaginal impressibility": "[I]mpressions on the vaginal nerves of the civilized races—and only the civilized races—make 'modifications' to 'the nervous system' itself and these changes are transmitted to future offspring" (quoting Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, 100). Yet "under modern conditions," as Loy writes in the Manifesto, motherhood marks the expiration of both the virgin's fetishized commodification and the New Woman's simulated liberal autonomy, aligning the mother with a past marked by the modernist avant-garde for destruction. Loy seeks instead to make the mother the sign of the future and to allow mothers, not simply women, to participate as full modern subjects, though to do so she argues mothers need the capacity to circulate both socially and sexually, a topic I further address below, which they cannot do under the strictures of bourgeois patriarchy[14].

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[13] A term for dowries Loy derives from the French.

[14] While Loy vociferously advocated "free love" and chose to pursue multiple sexual partners while separated from her first husband Stephen Haweis, she did so at great economic cost, as her parents

While Loy does not explicitly posit women as such in the “Feminist Manifesto,” I suggest they should be read under the purview of disability[15], blocked as they are by institutionalized structures from realizing their full biological and social capacity as both mothers and national subjects because of their particular embodiment. In an early Futurist manifesto, “Let’s Murder the Moonshine,” Marinetti groups women together with “the sedentary, invalids, the sick” (*Selected Writings*, 46). Though Loy does not likewise equate women’s embodiment with physical *impairment*, she does imply in the “Feminist Manifesto” and elsewhere that they are *debilitated*, a state, Jasbir Puar posits, of perpetual wearing down through unequal social, cultural, and political relations (*Right to Maim* xiv). “Disability,” Puar explains, “is not a fixed state or attribute but exists in relation to assemblages of capacity and debility, modulated across historical time, geopolitical space, institutional mandates, and discursive regimes” (Ibid.). Under the historically particular strictures of bourgeois patriarchy, I would argue that Loy sees women in the marriage market as subjected to and debilitated by a process of normalization, an “effort to control and standardize human bodies and to bestow status and value accordingly” through the fetishized commodification of virginity and subsequent devaluation of motherhood (Garland-Thompson 598). Though it would be a step too far to identify women who deviate from this normalization as disabled, a label that is largely dependent

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perpetually cut off their financial support because of it. As previously noted, Loy had some degree of success supporting herself and her children with her designs and invention, though this largely prevented her from simultaneously pursuing a literary career.

[15] This is *not* to claim that motherhood makes women disabled (though in some cases pregnancy can cause severe bodily impairment to the point of disability), but rather to acknowledge that most social environments and institutions are not designed with the particular embodiment of pregnancy or motherhood in mind. I consider this topic further in the coda.

on institutional recognition, they better align with Rosemarie Garland-Thompson's feminist disability concept of the misfit, which:

> center[s] its analytical focus on the co-constituting relationship between flesh and environment. The materiality that matters in this perspective involves the encounter between bodies with particular shapes and capabilities and the particular shape and structure of the world. (594).

For Loy, the biological materiality of women's bodies, specifically mother's bodies with their particular capabilities and needs, does not take the shape demanded by a system of marital propriety, producing a misfit. What she aims for in the "Feminist Manifesto" then is a better fit between women's biological capacity for motherhood and modernist social structures, which demands a new spatial and temporal relationship between bodies and environments to allows for a modernist maternal materiality.

The construction of a discursive-materialist future capable of supporting sexualized embodied subjects is a complex rhetorical task, and Loy's particular understanding of women's modernity gained "through lived experience, through embodiment—cannot be straightforwardly circulated" (McWhorter 3), as can be seen in the case of "The Effectual Marriage," a version of which Pound edited from 122 down to just 24 lines and published under the title "The Ineffectual Marriage." While Loy's published poetry overflows with deliberately spaced and spatialized examples of women's misfitting, she chose as the vehicle for realizing a newly relational spatial futurity not the poem, but the manifesto, a rhetorical genre Laura Winkiel recognizes as "the modernist form *par excellence,* poised as it is between action and theory, politics and aesthetics, the new and the old […] the manifesto is a *formative,* not merely reflective, genre *in imagining and shaping the future*" (my emphasis, 2). Modernist poetry with its constructed material language proved a highly effective genre for representing the particular materiality of womens' embodiment, but the manifesto would provide Loy the ground on which to imagine and construct a yet unseen, emphatically feminist future. As a form of "art in action" (94), the avant-garde manifesto operates by rhetorically foregrounding a sort of utopian rupture, invoking a militant history through the form's role in political revolution while simultaneously calling for a break from the past (Lyon, *Manifestoes* 7). This temporal paradox inherent to the avant-garde manifesto rebukes linear narratives of social progress while at the same time exposing and disrupting slow processes of normalization, such as institutionalized marriage, by "us[ing] shock effects to jar readers […] out of easy acceptance of conventional ideas and behavior" (Lyon, *Manifestoes* 30, Arnold 92). The manifesto thus produces "a certain untimeliness" in relation to the future (Arnold 94), preparing its audience for the as-yet-to-be-produced work of art by impacting the audience's experience of temporal materiality and so creating the space of the future out of no place. As Loy foregrounds in the poem "Lions' Jaws," she would create through her "Feminist Manifesto" a rebuke to Marinetti's Futurist "manifesto/ notifying women's wombs/ of Man's immediate agamogenesis" and its erasure of motherhood from the social and sexual relations of the future once and for all (47).

With this understanding of the modernist manifesto's rhetorical production of future time and space in mind, I argue that Loy's aim for the "Feminist Manifesto," beyond countering the misogyny inherent in both bourgeois patriarchy and Marinetti's Futurism, is to construct an insistently biological futurity that materially supports women and men’s heterosexual relationality outside the socioeconomic institution of marriage by granting all women dynamic, creative agency through motherhood, as doing so would bridge what Loy must have perceived as the artificial division of “women’s biological and artistic capacities for creation” (Peppis 572). Just as Loy moved freely among artistic and philosophical communities, traversing national boundaries and confounding categorization along the way, mothers, she claims, must be free to circulate among sexual partners, creating biological webs of relationality to counter the linear, hierarchical organization of family trees demanded by the bourgeois state and the nationalist avant-garde alike. Only thus could women reverse the debilitation mothers suffer as devalued commoditized objects under a transactional system of marriage and be granted modern global citizenship through social and sexual circulation, which represents “a moment when individuals authorize *themselves* through *property and discursive relations* rather than through the state” (my emphasis, Davidson, “The Dream of a Public Language” 72). Whereas Marinetti imagines for men a future autonomy free of wombs, which he makes to signify the encumbrances of the past, Loy—ever the biological pragmatist—sees wombs and motherhood as key to granting both women and men access to the future, an anti-patriarchal but still emphatically heterosexist view of reproductive futurity. In the “Feminist Manifesto,” Loy authorizes women’s ownership of their bodies by destroying systems of traditional marriage so that women and men might each optimize their shared biological relationality. Notably, rather than laying blame on men for systems of bourgeois patriarchy, Loy is equally critical of wives and husbands for submitting to what she sees as the mutual parasitism and exploitation of an “irksome & outworn continuance of an alliance" rather than "follow[ing] their individual lines of personal evolution" in which "each individual should be the expression of an easy & ample interpenetration of the male and female temperaments" (155), though she sees women, not men, as responsible for dismantling the current state. If women, she posits, through introspection and bravery might overcome "superstition" to reach the realization that "there is **nothing impure in sex**—except in the mental attitude to it," they could actualize "an incalculable & wider social regeneration than it is possible for our generation to imagine." However, to enact the temporal rupture that would grant her access this future, Loy posits a shocking rupture of the female body.

As I have discussed, both the manifesto as avant-garde aesthetic form and the typesetting techniques of Parole-in-Libertà were deliberately developed and deployed to shock readers, which is precisely the effect of the "Feminist Manifesto's" call to action, what Loy forebodingly refers to as "the **Wrench**" (153):

> [T]he first self-enforced law for the female sex, as a protection against the man made bogey of virtue—which is the principal instrument of her subjugation, would be the **unconditional** surgical **destruction of virginity** through-out the female population at puberty— (154).

Even a century later when many of Loy's feminist ideas and literary techniques have become commonplace, to advocate female genital mutilation through a mechanical or technological maiming of the hymen remains a "horrifying" and "unimaginably invasive and authoritarian" proposition (Pozarski 53). Yet if Loy's intent were solely to shock audiences, it would seem strange that she does not designate the word “surgical,” so key to the invasive corporeal violence of her proposition, to be printed in oversized boldface, as is the rest of phrase. Sandwiched as it is between the typographically foregrounded “unconditional” and “destruction,” the word “surgical” visually recesses to the background of the page. As a trained visual artist, Loy understood how techniques of foregrounding create an illusion of depth on two-dimensional surfaces, and the three-dimensional, sculptural effect of her Parole-in-Libertà ultimately invites the eye to skim over what would otherwise be an essential modifier, suggesting that virginity might be unconditionally destroyed *otherwise*.

It is essential here to recognize that for Loy, for whom the materiality of language is actualized through bodies, women are always already debilitated by patriarchal discourses of virginity as commodity fetish, which operate under a biopolitical logic Puar names the “right to maim” through which subjugated populations are maintained “as perpetually debilitated, and yet alive, in order to control them” (*Right to Maim* x), as the commodification of virginity grants men power to limit and control women’s reproductive capacity. Therefore the solution to the problem of women’s debilitation lies not in virgin sacrifice, surgically or otherwise, as debility “addresses injury and bodily exclusion that are *endemic* rather than epidemic or exceptional, and reflects a need for rethinking overarching structures” (my emphasis, xvii). Rather than a directive for further agression against women’s bodies, then, Loy poses a direct discursive challenge to the received wisdom of the virginal body’s supposedly “natural” state. Through her biologically-oriented Parole-in-Libertà, Loy presents the possibility of an unconditional *discursive* destruction of *institutionalized* virginity, which, "though endowed with supposed essential value (as intact, untouched and pure)" actually derives its fetishized value through "purely monetary and […] artificial" traditional social structures (Goody, *Modernist Articulations* 110), the true targets of her violent rhetoric. I argue that a closer examination of her materialist Parole-in-Libertà reveals that what Loy proposes then is not women's right to further maim the female body as an appropriation of patriarchal power and liberal autonomy, but rather the destruction of those discourses and institutions that maintain women as debilitated subjects.

The Persistent Biopower of Loy's Eugenicist Materiality

I find it important to emphasize here that while Loy poses a vital challenge to the antibiological denial of the sexual body in both Marinetti's Parole-in-Libertà and in broader modernist discourses of material language and cultural (re)production, her feminist project of recuperating women's bodies cannot be separated from her reception and repetition of pervasive eugenicist ideologies. As Aimee Pozarski argues, Loy's choice to appropriate Futurist techniques grants her access to "the considerable power these extreme tenants wield […] ultimately assigning women sole responsibility for racial purity" (44). Despite the radical nature of Loy's feminism and her well-known critique of Margaret Sanger's birth control campaign, Loy's perpetuation of eugenicist logic should not be surprising given that, as Janet Lyon argues, "manifestoes proliferate at the cloverleafs of class war, gender politics, ethnic identification, and national struggle" where opponents are as likely to be found as allies (*Manifestoes* 10). Loy's primary complaint in the "Feminist Manifesto" is that under bourgeois patriarchy, men value the wrong attribute, virginity, when selecting sexual partners, and she sees white women as more capable of producing superior children as “the result of a definite period of psychic development in her life” during which she is free to circulate outside the strictures of sexual propriety, resulting in her own “personal evolution” (155). Here again Loy’s reproductive futurity aligns with contemporary medical understandings of vaginal impressibility, through which white women’s bodily agency might “realize the full potential of the impressible nervous system of the civilized, granting each act of sexual stimulation a role in the gradual development or degeneration of the population of the whole” (Schuller 110-111). Indeed, Loy’s radical feminist proposition lies squarely within the medical discourses of the fin-de-siècle, departing only in her insistence that women’s vaginal impressibility is best stimulated outside the monogamous bonds of traditional marriage.

While the “Feminist Manifesto” is undeniably eugenicist, the aim of Loy’s reproductive futurism deviates from the heteronationalism inherent in contemporary medical discourse or even the Futurists’s unique brand of homonationalism, as she eschews women’s alliance to the patriarchal nation-state in her poetry, her sexual circulation, and her traveling theory alike. Much has been written on Loy’s conceptualization of her own racial identity, particularly in regard to “Anglo-Mongrels and the Rose,” a poem written between 1925 and 1932 brimming with empathy for her immigrant Jewish father, and her self-identification as “not quite a lady” can be read as having racial as well as gendered implications. But as with her feminism, depictions of race and whiteness in Loy’s writing are inconsistent and often contradictory. As has been widely discussed by Siobhan Somerville, Michael North, and many others, race was a fairly nebulous distinction in the first decades of the twentieth century despite widespread ontological efforts to define and contain it, and when Loy calls in the "Feminist Manifesto" for "every woman of superior intelligence" to "realize her race-responsibility, in producing children in adequate proportion to the unfit or degenerate members of her sex—" (155), she appears to have something akin to Myers's artistically evolved "gifted hysteric" in mind rather than a particular ethnic or national identity. However, this should serve as neither an excuse nor an apology for Loy's attempt to assign women rather than men the labor of removing undesirable bodies from the body politic through what has been dubbed free-love eugenics. As I stated at the outset, Loy poses a notable challenge to the antibiologism and denial of sexuality inherent in prominent modernist discourses of material language and cultural reproduction, but her interest in "the materiality of the signifier [and] the relation of signifier to signified, in the relation of sign to referent" remains imbricated with nativist modernism's eugenicist fantasy for maintaining a racialized familial identity (Michaels 2).

Also notable is the fact that Loy did not pursue publication of the "Feminist Manifesto" in her lifetime, and that it remained without an audience until it appeared in Roger Conover's edited collection *The Last Lunar Baedeker* in 1986[16]. Janet Lyon posits that the manifesto operates by creating its audience "through a rhetoric of exclusivity, parceling out political identities across a polarized discursive field" (*Manifestoes* 3).

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[16] This collection was re-edited to correct for Loy's idiomatic spacing and typography and published in 1996 as *The Lost Lunar Baedeker*.

What then, we might ask, is the manifesto, a rhetorical form that operates entirely through its reception, without an audience? Can one manifest without a witness? In a subsequent letter to Mabel Dodge Loy refers to the "Feminist Manifesto" as a "fragment of feminist tirade" and confesses that "I feel rather hopeless of devotion to the woman-cause—slaves will believe that chains are protectors—& so they are—the most efficient for the coward" (quoted in Winkiel, 112). While Burke suggests that Loy lacked the will to "test" her manifesto "[o]nce Papini returned to Florence [and] it became more difficult to separate 'sex or so called love' from the other emotions with which it often becomes entangled" (*Becoming Modern*180)[17], and Winkiel infers that Loy came to see the manifesto as belated and stripped of its revolutionary verve since "her most 'daring' proposal," the universal surgical destruction of virginity, "had already been imagined by one of Havelock Ellis's patients" (112), I would further posit that for Loy, who elsewhere in her work is so driven by the practicalities of embodied materiality, the manifesto's intrinsic utopianism was ultimately "**Inadequate**", to borrow from the text (153). A utopian body means no body, which is exactly the Futurist end Loy seeks to demolish. The rhetorical paradox of Loy's unpublished, unpublishable manifesto speaks to the difficulty of fully realizing the mother and her complex biological, cultural, and economic materiality within the framework of modern liberal citizenship, a difficulty that persists today as women increasingly recognize the hollowness of the promise that they can have it all. While most Western institutions of marriage have developed beyond the strict Victorian propriety and market mentality Loy addresses in the "Feminist Manifesto," for too many women, notably those whom Loy excludes from reproductive futurity with her free-love eugenics, the larger social systems and structures that house marriage and sexuality under the logic of neoliberalism still pose a debilitating misfit.

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[17] Here again I would posit the common critique of Burke's biography that she largely interprets Loy's work through her relationships to men.

In my next chapter, I move from Loy's unpublished/unpublishable feminist proposition to Djuna Barnes's attempt to define and construct a queerly disabled counterpublic in opposition to a particular medical discourse aimed at correcting and so eliminating embodied difference. While Loy's white woman's construct of modernism's maternal misfit sits comfortably within her casually eugenicist approach to feminism and her heteronational vision of reproductive futurity, other marginalized forms of corporeality, those whose racialized, queer and disabled embodiment further marks them as fleshy misfits, were less likely to survive the more blatantly genocidal context of Europe leading up to the second World War. Loy's emphatically relational constructs of language remain notable for her recognition of the body's materiality and biological agency, yet her constructs of whiteness and of sexually marginalized bodies are somewhat abstracted by their contradictive complexity. I turn then to Barnes who, writing twenty years after Loy's "Feminist Manifesto," treats race, queerness, and disability in more concretely direct terms than her friend and contemporary, given the material context of *Nightwood*'s construction, which stems from the period Barnes spent in Weimar Berlin a decade before the onset of the Holocaust.

II. Material Girl:

(Un)Stitching Bodies, (Un)Stitching Words in Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood* (1937)

> There once wuzza lady named Djuna,
> Who wrote rather like a baboon. Her
> Blubbery prose had no fingers or toes,
> And we wish Whale had found this out sooner.
> (Letter from Ezra Pound to T. S. Eliot, 1937.)[18]

> Still her clothing is less risky
> Than her body in its prime,
> They are chain-stitched and so is she […]
> Slipping through the stitch of virtue
> Into crime
> (Djuna Barnes, "Seen from the 'L'")[19]

As I examined in the previous chapter through the embodied relationality that characterizes Mina Loy's materialist poetry, women's vexed relationship with liberal autonomy and public embodiment functions in part through their particular association with the open body. While I find it productive to read Loy's materialist language through the lens of disability, and despite Loy's close associations with Gertrude Stein, Alice B. Toklas, and Natalie Barney's sapphic Left Bank salon, Loy remains adamantly ableist and heterosexist in her approach to sexuality and eschews links between women's open embodiment and that of other sexual minorities in her writing. Yet as I demonstrate through my examination of Loy's "Feminist Manifesto," women modernists were generally positioned to pose challenges not only to dominant masculinist constructs of material language, but also to the very construction of bodies such modernist discourses produce, which includes not only gendered but also queer and disabled forms of embodiment. While not particularly evident in Loy's eugenicist brand of feminism, the intersectionality that connects feminine, queer, and disabled bodies through their excessive corpo-reality is a primary driver in her close friend and contemporary Djuna Barnes's 1937 novel *Nightwood*, which since its publication has been largely appreciated for its modernist depiction of queer subjectivity. Not only does *Nightwood* mark a significant difference in the construction of modern embodiment, read together with Barnes's early journalism and poetry, it presents a significant departure from modernism's dominant construct of concrete, sculptural materiality itself, realized through the open body's soft porosity. Unlike Loy, Barnes refuses the curative logic of eugenicist progressivism that denies multiple, intersectional forms of the body's open materiality to instead offer through her novel a form of discursive care for queer and disabled bodies rendered "out of time," to use Kafer's phrase, in the face of genocide.

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[18] Quoted in Field, 108.

[19] *The Book of Repulsive Women* 17

In this chapter I argue that the material body's centrality in the construction of Barnes's writing, as established in her subjective journalism and evident in *Nightwood*'s fixation on stitching and fabrics in constructing both bodies and interiors/interiority, indicates an inventive challenge to medical discourses' complicity with genocidal curative futurity through which Barnes reveals and reverses the Freudian talking cure's discursive tendency to target deviant corporeality for elimination. In contrast with approaches to materiality put forward by her male contemporaries as solid and fixed, through images of the stitched body, Barnes develops a construct of a soft, malleable, porous materiality that employs language and time to blur distinctions between objects, bodies, and environments, making them inextricable. Building on Griselda Pollock's construct of a liquid modernity, as well as Jane Bennett's framework of material vitality and Elizabeth A. Wilson's negative approach to biologism, I argue that in *Nightwood,* material language, like material environments and the material body, decomposes with use, as seen through the talking cure's repeated stitching and unstitching of the body, which accelerates this decay. This is not to reject readings of the symbolic in *Nightwood* whole cloth, but rather to suggest that one reason the material body's presence has been overlooked in the novel is that readers tend to interpret queer and disabled bodies as symbolic signifiers and not as representatives of distinctly marginalized corpo-reality threatened, with the rise of eugenic nationalism in 1937 Europe, with erasure from the body politic. In bringing attention to the inextricability of language, environments, and bodies in *Nightwood,* I aim to complicate approaches to modernist discourses of material language and genocidal nationalist projects that likewise overlook the materiality of queer and disabled bodies, as in Michaels's analysis of nativist modernism's cultural reproductivity, by examining how Barnes's malleable, porous construction of materiality, in bringing language and bodies closer together, allows queer and disabled subjects to disidentify with such discourses in order to break them down.

Writing Through the Body

This reading begins with some of Djuna Barnes's earliest published work. Barnes's biographer Andrew Field dismisses her "light journalism" as the "least important" of her "four ways" of writing (31), and even after Barnes's poetry and novels garnered a more centralized focus in literary modernism (largely due to scholarship by women), until recently the sensationalist subject matter of Barnes's earliest writing for the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* and the *New York Daily Press* fell below the radar of critical scrutiny and was instead mostly cited as a colorful author note, likely because it tends toward the disparaged, feminized genre of yellow journalism: She once climbed through an upstairs window to snap photographs of a murdered girl's body after the father threw her out of his house[20]. Barnes became more widely regarded as a writer for her high-profile interviews, with subjects ranging from Billy Sunday and "Baby Face" Nelson to "Roshanara the Snake Dancer" and Dinah, the Bronx zoo's newborn gorilla. Her adroitness with words and observation in this early work led Barnes to write for more prestigious publications in the 1920s, including *McCall's*, *Vanity Fair* and *The New Yorker*, which provided her the financial support and literary reputation necessary to launch herself as a serious modernist. Critics including Nancy J. Levine and Deborah Parsons have astutely noted that in Barnes's early journalism can be seen the roots of

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[20] Barnes's prose style in her early journalism is similarly sensationalist. For an interview with a dentist who pulled teeth for free on a Brooklyn street corner, she penned the headline "Digital Dexterity of the Dental Demonstrator Holds Audience in Awe," and she described ice cream soda as "cheerful chemicals in chiffon" (quoted in Levine, 29, 30).

Nightwood, its characters and the dark world they inhabit. Alex Goody argues even further that Barnes's journalism should prove more interesting than *Nightwood* to scholars of modernism because in it she "encapsulates […] the role of the visual media technologies of the early twentieth century in producing a spectacular modern femininity" and "explores the tensions between a rowdy participatory popular culture and performances of difference" ("Spectacle, Technology, and Performing Bodies" 207, 210). This high valuation of Barnes's journalism is seemingly supported by her contemporary James Joyce, who stated in an interview she conducted with him for the April 1922 edition of *Vanity Fair* that, "A writer should never write about the extraordinary; that is for the journalist" (quoted in Field, 109). While I would not suggest that Barnes's journalistic writing should supplant modernist scholars' interest in her literary writing, I do posit that an understanding of her early journalism can contribute to more nuanced readings of her other work, as beyond providing subject matter for *Nightwood,* Barnes's journalism led her to develop a distinctly materialist practice of writing with embodied practices at the forefront of the text that is likewise at work in the novel.

While throughout her early career Barnes described herself as a "newspaperman," in the popular style of the day her highly subjective journalism was intentionally, exaggeratedly feminine, a journalistic trend I discuss at greater length in my chapter on Nathanial West's novella *Miss Lonelyhearts*. In addition to writing columns under the stylish persona of a vampish female urbanite with the penname "Lydia Steptoe," she frequently lent her body to spectacular social experiments for her articles, including getting thrown about the rickety amusements of a newly-opened Coney Island, being rescued three times from the heights of a skyscraper by a fire brigade, and voluntarily undergoing force-feeding through a tube in her nose, replicating the experience of British suffragettes whose hunger strikes were thus violently broken. In such stories dramatically featuring her body for public consumption, Barnes's journalistic objectivity is constantly interrupted by her body's visible subjectivity; as Parsons observes, she "play[s] on the juxtaposition of roles that Barnes recognizes she is positioned within. 'I was a movie', she states […]. She becomes the movie itself because […] she embodies the process of filming as well as the object being filmed" (*Djuna Barnes* 12). By placing her body at the center of her writing and relaying both her experience and the experience of observing and recording that experience, Barnes anticipates the New Journalism of the 1960s and '70s—she was gonzo decades before Hunter S. Thomas coined the term. Through this subjective journalism for which she translates bodily experience into language for her readers' consumption, at once cinematic and dream-like in the way she records the spectacle of her own bodily performance, Barnes developed an eye for what Levine names the psychological environment of a story, recalling the uncanny and Freudian dream analysis through her use of "marginal, concealed, but vital details that allow her to respond to the atmosphere of an assignment" (31)—details that likewise allow her reader to inhabit the roles of both participant and observer through her writing. Yet upon moving to Paris in 1921, Barnes, situated as she was at the periphery of literary modernism's masculinist circles, seems to have viewed this foregrounding of her feminine body as a liability to her writing: Gertrude Stein expressed more interest in Barnes's legs than her work when they were first introduced, and Ezra Pound recalled in

1967 his early impression that Barnes "weren't (sic.) too cuddly" (quoted in Field, 106). Still, in Barnes's subjective journalism can be seen a practice of writing with the spectacle of the feminized body at its center that would form the basis of her modernist narrative.

Barnes's expatriate circle moved to Berlin from Paris in the summer of 1921 for its lower cost of living. In Berlin the American dollar had nearly twenty times the purchasing power as in Paris (Field 118), and there Barnes's journalist's salary afforded her a grand bohemian lifestyle of frequenting theatres and nightclubs and buying "brocaded velvet, […] a lot of old Russian jewelry and some iron necklaces and bracelets" (117-118), the same sort of trumpery she liberally drapes across *Nightwood*. Field suggests that Barnes developed the psychological environment for *Nightwood* in Berlin, its "grotesque atmosphere" making its way into the novel's "gloomy air" (16), and I argue furthermore that interwar Berlin offered Barnes a space of unique corpo-reality with literary implications beyond the psychological. During this period Barnes rented a room at In den Zelten 18, the home of Magnus Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science. Hirschfeld established the Institute in 1919 as a public space for sexual research, education, and experimentation geared toward building tolerance for homosexuality, transsexuality, and transvestitism—a sort of caring labor for the queer body through public outreach. While Hirschfeld is primarily known for his psychological and sociological approach to "sexual intermediaries," which foregrounds the language of fluidity common in gender studies and queer theory today, his Institute was also a space for biological care work in the form of research and experimentation on the organics and chemistry of the sexed/sexual body, through which Hirschfeld likewise saw a fluid intermediateness. Felix Abraham, a surgeon and colleague of Hirschfeld's, performed some of the earliest transsexual surgeries, including Lili Elbe's first operation in 1930, and one of his first patients, Rudolph Dorchen/Dora R., was a housekeeper at the Institute (Armstrong 166). Yet significantly, In den Zelton 18 was no cold clinical space. Originally the home of a famed violinist, the mansion passed into the hands of Count Hatzfeld, ambassador to France, before becoming government property after World War I. As the Institute for Sexual Science, the building remained a grand domestic space noted for its tasteful design, a journalist for the magazine *The Interview* reporting in 1922:

> That—a scientific institute? No cold walls, no linoleum on the floors, no uncomfortable chairs and no smell of disinfectants. This is a private house: carpets, pictures on the walls, and nowhere a plate saying 'no entrance'. And it is full of life everywhere, with patients, doctors and other people who work here (quoted in Wolff, 177)

—not to mention the expatriate tourists. While Barnes may have initially settled upon In den Zelten 18 for its cheap rent and night life, there she would have mingled with and witnessed the care of a community of differently feminized bodies—cross dressers, androgynes, and amputees[21]—the likes of which would later populate *Nightwood*, with its similarly decorated, highly curated interiors likewise locating the queer and disabled body outside of clinical space. Field reports that In den Zelten 18's spectacle of public homosexuality and transvestitism was "depressing by most memoir accounts," though Barnes, it appears, "didn't see much suffering" (118).

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[21] As Michal Davidson notes in his examination of disability in *Nightwood*, it is Freud who most notably associates amputation with feminization ("Pregnant Men" 211). While this view of disability as emasculating was common at the time, my intention here is to document, not replicate, Freud's false equivalence.

The feminized male body was common spectacle in Weimar Germany. Beyond the walls of In den Zelten 18, large numbers of the Great War's amputee veterans populated Berlin's streets and bars, and through such bodily crises the queer and the disabled were made to abut and overlap. Many of the medical advances used in the first sex reassignment surgeries were developed during and after World War I to treat the battlefield's missing limbs and castrations, "another case of prosthetics," Tim Armstrong observes, "modulating from the covering of a lack into a 'cosmetic' intervention" (166). Throughout its history, cosmetic surgery has been used as a curative to allow bodies to pass—as healthy, as deracialized, as reproducible—and in an era of nativist reproductive futurism, cosmetic surgery was increasingly normalized. In 1933 Friedrich Pruss von Zglinicki published an article in *Die Ehe* ("Marriage"), Hirschfeld's popular journal, connecting the legitimacy of plastic surgery to the rise of modernity (Gilman 174), but this curative legitimacy was not evenly distributed. While in 1920s Berlin a veteran's cosmetic surgery was publicly sanctioned, the state providing the surgery and prosthesis that would return to his body, disabled in service to the nation, a semblance of wholeness, the transsexual body could not fully pass as a national subject, and the public spaces through which queer bodies could circulate remained restricted up to their physical removal from the body politic in the next decades. This distinction between fragmented masculine bodies allowed to pass as full public citizens and feminized bodies' fragmentation of the body politic and subsequent erasure from public space begins to explain why modernism's crises of the material body, so readily visible in masculine narratives of war heroes such as Jake Barnes[22], are rendered unrecognizable outside the symbolic in *Nightwood*, stripping its queer and disabled subjects of their material and political agency.

Even as a medical endeavor, the making of bodies is culturally coded as feminine, as Jane Marcus indicates in her caustic critique of Dr. Michael O'Connor's "womb envy" in *Nightwood*. Despite Zglinicki's progressivist claims to its modernity, cosmetic surgery was still widely constructed as transgressing the borders of masculine autonomy at the start of the twentieth century, as Gilman suggests (261). While an amputee veteran's state-issued prosthesis might reaffirm his place in the public body, by occupying the space of a lack, to use Armstrong's terminology, it simultaneously signified a feminine openness and malleability of his biological body antithetical to constructions of the autonomous liberal subject, as discussed at length in my introduction. Ironically, as Katherine Ott explains, twentieth century technological advances in the construction of prosthetics that led to their increasing ability to "control" disability assigned to these objects the agency and thus the modern masculinity stripped away from the opened and fragmented male body. In light of this, many World War I veterans opted to forego prosthetics, the spectacle of their missing limbs reinscribed to signify not a debilitating lack but rather their masculine sacrifice for the nation (16, 28). This is just one example of how aesthetic surgery's ability to transgress the boundaries of the sexed body was paradoxically used to reaffirm and fix those boundaries, making the sexual intermediaries Hirschfeld championed at the Institute for Sexual Science and Djuna Barnes animated in

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[22] I return to the issue of the disabled male body's contentious place in public space in my chapter on Ernest Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden*.

Nightwood newly disruptive and laying the groundwork for an anti-progressive liquid modernity, which I further discuss below.

Throughout the novel's reception, readers and critics have mitigated the threat of the chaotically unbound disabled body by reading such bodies as symbolic representations of queer subjectivity[23]. This slide from disability to the symbolic is aided by disability's own insistence on the instability of the material body against the face of liberal notions of corporeal integrity and autonomy, itself an abstract symbolic ideal in need of constant discursive reinforcement—in Sander Gilman's words, "the symbolic body, as much as the 'real' material body, is always collapsing, always promising to slide into oblivion" (332). Incomplete, dismembered bodies and severed body parts animated with sexual energy overwhelm the discourse of *Nightwood* to such an exaggeratedly nightmarish extent that symbolic readings are perhaps inevitable, even advisable. Yet even as such readings aim to legitimize modernist representations of queer bodies by reviving their public visibility, in unintentionally dichotomizing queerness and disability, they render disability and the disabled body invisible by dismissing its materiality and so excluding it from public space. Even when critics make the disabled body central to their reading of *Nightwood* they tend to render it a signifier for otherness, as when Davidson pronounces disability "the *ur*-identity of the stigmatized body" ("Pregnant Men" 220)[24].

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[23] Notable among this criticism are Frann Michel's reconciliation of modernism and the feminine in her Kristevian reading of castration in the figure of Robin Vote and Kate Armond's examination of a baroque tradition of symbolic dismemberment seen through Barnes's use of architectural forms in words and domestic space.

[24] Similarly, Julie Goodspeed-Chadwick, who labors to place the material body at the center of her analysis of *Nightwood* as a war novel, does so by reading queer subjects and nonhuman animals as representative of women's invisible suffering through the embodied traumas of war beyond the battlefield.

Like *Nightwood*'s Mademoiselle Basquette, the girl without legs "damned from the waist down" who is carried off by a sailor to "have his will" (29-30), the disabled subject, it would appear in such readings, has no psychology, no drive, no desires of her own. My aim here is not to dismiss the symbolic in *Nightwood*, but rather to bring it closer to the material. In this I follow Elizabeth A. Wilson's presumption that "biology and culture are not separate, agonistic forces; […] a political choice cannot be made between biological and cultural agency" (8). By doing so, I hope to correct the separation of the queer and the disabled in Barnes's discourse of the body.

Stitched Bodies and Liquid Modernity

The material body throughout *Nightwood* is constructed in language and imagery that is provocatively literal[25], stitched out of various fabrics from the outside in. Barnes notably employs language of fabrics and sewing from her early journalism and poetry on into *Nightwood* to flip over the sampler of urban life with its neat rows and straight stitches, exposing the messy, knotty underside of public spaces and social bodies. In *The Book of Repulsive Women*, published in 1915, she writes in the poem "Seen from the 'L'" of looking out the window of an elevated train into the window of a tenement building to see a young woman "Chain-stitched to her soul for time. […] Slipping though the stitch of virtue/ into crime" (17). That same year she would write in a review of a fashion show for the *New York Press* that "Life hangs upon a thread—the drawstring of a chemise, the ribbon in a petticoat" (*New York* 208), and in 1917 she turned a tour on a pleasure boat around Manhattan into an article for the *New York Morning Telegraph Sunday Magazine* that focused on the island's greasy, garbage-strewn waterfront with the headline "The Hem of Manhattan" in which she reports that "the city gave out only a faint sound of fabric being rent" (294). From the opening pages of the first chapter, "Bow Down," *Nightwood* treats the reader with lush images of crimson satin, gold thread, ribbon, faint thread, linen, and leather (3-4, 6). Given Barnes's social context, this stitcher's[26] discourse-on-material as material discourse carries notably feminine valences. This is not to simply suggest that writing on or through sewing is "women's work", but rather to follow Rozsika Parker in recognizing that for many modernists who were not themselves stitchers (and who were primarily men), embroidery existed outside of culture as "timeless, mindless, and simply available to be incorporated in the fine arts" (191). So we see Yeats in "Adam's Curse" comparing an hour spent writing of a line of poetry to "stitching and unstitching" (80). Georg Simmel associated embroidery with reproductive femininity because its practitioners follow patterns (74), and Freud even viewed embroidery as a gateway to female hysteria, arguing that the stitcher's repetitive motions rendered her prone to daydreaming that induced "dispositional hypnoid states" (quoted in Parker, 12). While in this view embroidery was valorized by modern artists as antithetical to the mechanical reproducibility of mass culture, compared to painting and sculpture, it seemed to them a "retrograde" art "valued … not for its qualities as an artistic medium but for its stereotypical associations with intuition, feeling and above all with nature" (190-191).

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[25] For me, having grown up with a mother who sewed most of my clothes and who taught me embroidery at a young age, the word "material" has always been synonymous with fabric. This caused me great confusion every time Madonna's "Material Girl" came on the radio.

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[26] I adopt this term for a person who sews because of its lack of hegemonic gendering (as opposed to "seamstress" or "tailor") and because "sewer" means something else altogether (though given the context of *Nightwood* it is a tempting pun).

I want to extend these contrasting constructs of masculine/progressive sculpture and feminine/regressive embroidery to literary modernists' approaches to materiality, specifically to discourses of materialist language. As discussed in my introduction, many literary modernists were influenced by T.E. Hulme's philosophy of material language, which hailed sculpture as a means of understanding the relationality of words and things through "a kind of extreme nominalism … where language is treated as a set of discrete entities or atoms, to be pinned onto objects in the word" (Thacker 47). For modernist poets, this meant approaching the thing-ness of language as something solid and resistant, resulting in a direct poetic discourse that could "mould images […] into definite shapes" (53). This process is literalized in Mina Loy's poem "Brancusi's Golden Bird," in which she refigures the titular sculpture linguistically: "As if/ some patient peasant God/ had rubbed and rubbed/ the Alpha and Omega/ of Form/ into a lump of metal" (79)[27]. Compared with this sculptural construction of material language, fabric provides a framework for a more malleable but less resilient materiality, as when a character in Barnes's short play "The Dove" dreams of a Dresden doll whose "china skirt had become flexible, as if it were made of chiffon and lace" (154). While even a quick glance through the history of fashion shows how fabrics can be stretched, folded, gathered and wrapped to take on any number of sculpture-like shapes, it takes a stitcher to relate the immense physical strain these actions place on the material, that Yeats's casual "stitching and unstitching" risks unraveling the thread and tearing the cloth. This, I argue, is Barnes's sense of materiality and material bodies in *Nightwood*. The softness of Barnes's material language compared with Pound's concrete discourse echoes Griselda Pollock's constructs of feminist temporality and liquid modernity. Freed from the revolutionary logic and teleology of progressivism, she argues, liquid modernity:

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[27] Ned Hercock's analysis of hardness as the modernist aesthetic *par excellence* further looks to sculpture's resilient impenetrability, the deathless-because-lifelessness of hard surfaces mirroring, like the bronze of Brancusi's sculpture, the object's "perception without conception" (500, 509). An image of *Golden Bird* (1919-1920) can be viewed at the Art Institute of Chicago's digital archives: https://www.artic.edu/artworks/91194/golden-bird

> modernizes for its own sake, that is, changes merely for the sake of changing […]. Liquefying modernity erodes the solid ground (tradition or dominant political or cultural forms) against which progressive avant-garde transgression alone made sense. In the internally destabilized changefulness of the conditions of liquid modernity, any understanding of avant-garde transgression and its specific gender politics as represented by the latter's encounter with feminism shifts to uncertain ground. (796).

Like embroidery, Barnes's writing has often been seen as retrograde, insistently feminine and more decadent than modern in her refusal to take up masculinist literary forms and their transgressions of cultural tradition. Here I suggest that rather than pointing to the past, Barnes, recognizing that the progress represented by such modernisms remained inaccessible to feminine, queer and disabled corpo-reality, utilizes her fabric-like material construct of language in order to locate the body on the uncertain ground of a liquid modernity and furthermore to make materiality itself run on non-progressive queer time, which I discuss at length in my analysis of *Nightwood*'s central character, Robin Vote, and her son Guido.

Because the material body is constructed of such soft, malleable stuff in *Nightwood*, Barnes's critics tend to look right through it. Pound wrote in a letter to Eliot in 1937 a lament, in limerick form, that Barnes's "Blubbery prose had no fingers and toes" (quoted in Field, 108). For Eliot, who edited *Nightwood* and wrote its introduction, such writing risks being too abstract and excessive, separating the word from the thing; it functions by constructing "feeling and contemplating that feeling, rather than the object which has excited it or the object into which the feeling might be made" ("London Letter" 216). While Susan J. Hubert argues that separating the word from the object in *Nightwood* is a deliberate aesthetic and political choice on Barnes's part, I see in the novel's excess of material objects and bodies/body parts the same development of psychological atmosphere through minutiae that Levine points to in Barnes's early journalism through which, in the dual role of participant and observer, she utilizes objects and language to reverse psychoanalysis's tendency to erase the material body. Beyond animations of the psyche, Barnes's chaotic assemblages of fabrics, body parts and bric-a-brac, I argue, teem with their own vitality even as they deconstruct notions of the autonomous body. In this I follow Bennett's framework for recognizing material vitality by "turn[ing] the figures of 'life' and 'matter' around and around, worrying them until they seem strange, in something like the way a common word when repeated can become a foreign, nonsense sound" (vii). Bennett sees material vitality "run alongside and inside humans" through both natural bodies and technological artifacts in much the same way Barnes uses images of the stitched body to construct her queer and disabled modern subjectivity (viii). Inducing, in Bennett's words, "an aesthetic-affective openness to material vitality," as Barnes does throughout *Nightwood* by deconstructing the categories of life and matter, biology and culture, body and environment, might seem destructive to the human body (x). Quite often it is in fact just that, yet this openness allows us to recognize the precariousness of queer and disabled bodies constructed "in another cheaper material, cut to the poor man's purse" not merely as symbolic referents but as material artifacts in and of themselves (Barnes, *Nightwood* 12). Wilson further illustrates in her turn toward biologism that such embodied negativity "is intrinsic (rather than antagonistic) to sociality and subjectivity," and so "we need to pay more attention to the destructive and damaging aspects of politics that cannot be repurposed to good ends" (6). Given the inevitable fate of queer and disabled bodies in *Nightwood,* which, as Marcus suggests, anticipates the Holocaust (97), embracing the destructive negativity of the open body is the only way to do the novel political justice.

Never has clothing been closer to the body than Barnes makes it in *Nightwood*. In the construction of her characters, clothing functions like a medical implant: not a biological component of the body, but not entirely separate or separable from it either. This is most evident in the figure of Frau Mann, a seemingly minor character who appears in the novel's first chapter, exits at the introduction of *Nightwood*'s central love interest Robin Vote, and who reemerges toward the novel's end when Robin once again slips from view. An androgynous acrobat, Frau Mann:

> seemed to have a skin that was the pattern of her costume: a bodice of lozenges, red and yellow, low in the back and ruffled over and under the arms, faded with the reek of her three-a-day control, red tights, laced boots—one somehow felt they ran through her as the design runs through holiday candies" (16).

Just as Frau Mann's sweat penetrates and fades the dye of her costume, the fabric seemingly oozes back through her skin and into her body, transforming her into an "organism" of an "alien element." "The stuff of the tights" Barnes writes, "was no longer a covering. It was herself." Yet this transubstantiation of flesh and fabric is far from the greatest of Frau Mann's corporeal marvels. Barnes gives great care to the construction of "the bulge in her groin where she took the bar," a "solid, specialized" construction "tightly stitched" and "so much her own flesh that she was unsexed as a doll. The needle that had made one the property of the child made the other the property of no man." Here the specialized garment serves as actant, creating, not replicating, the body's androgyny: without it there could seemingly be no Frau Mann. When she is first introduced to Dr. O'Connor at Count Altamonte's party, the sight of Frau Mann's stitched body causes him to recall "something forgotten but comparable… 'Nikka the nigger who used to fight the bear at the *Cirque du Paris*'" (19), a somewhat different case of the needle obliterating the border between object and body, transformed here into a tattoo needle. The object joined by a needle to Nikka's body is language, including "a quotation from the book of magic, a confirmation of the Jansenist theory" on each buttock, the words "I" and "can" across his knees, and "all down his side, the word said by Prince Arthur Tudor, son of King Henry the Seventh, when on his bridal night he called for a goblet of water." That Frau Mann's stitched body recalls O'Connor's memory of Nikka raises the question whether the words permeate Nikka's body the same way Frau Mann's costume does hers, which would suggest, following Bennett's assemblagist material vitality, that the pigmentation both of his skin and of the words is the source of his racial othering.

As suggested above, through the stitched body Barnes locates her characters in the uncertain, non-teleological context of queer time. Barnes establishes an interchangeability between Frau Mann and Robin Vote, the two like Superman and Clark

Kent never occupying the text at the same time, and both women are identified primarily through Barnes's elaborate detailing of their clothes. Robin, who first appears in the novel wearing the white trousers Eliot's Prufrock wouldn't dare to wear on the beach[28], is a wandering presence in the novel, *la somnambule* who drifts aimlessly across two continents and in and out of three relationships. While much has been made of Robin's queer wanderings, less has been said of her unboundedness in time[29], though like Parsons's *flaneuse* she seemingly has the ability to walk through the palimpsestic layers of the urban wasteland. Again, it is the assemblage of body and clothing that constructs Robin's temporality as indeterminate, as observed by her first partner, Felix Volkbein:

> Her clothes were of a period that he could not quite place. She wore feathers of the kind his mother had worn, flattened sharply to her face. Her skirts were moulded to her hips and fell downward and out, wider and longer than those of other women, heavy silks that made her seem *newly ancient*. One day he learned the secret. Pricing a small tapestry in an antique shop facing the Seine, he saw Robin reflected in a door mirror of a back room, dressed in a heavy brocaded gown which time had stained in some places, in others split, yet which was so voluminous that there were yards enough to refashion. (my emphasis, 48).

The brocade gown makes Robin queer because it makes her newly ancient, unbounding her from progressive modernity and setting her adrift in the internally destabilized changefulness of queer time[30]. Yet queer time's liquidity does not make it infinite: the materiality of the gown defines its borders, and though Felix judges there are "yards enough" of brocade, Robin's refashioning of the fabric must surely accelerate time's staining, splitting deterioration of the garment, anticipating Robin's degeneration into a dog in the novel's final passage. As I will argue below, the same accelerated decay is seen through the "stitching and unstitching" of language in Barnes's disidentifying refashioning of the talking cure.

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[28] And there is little doubt, dear reader, that she would eat a peach.

[29] Caroline Rupprecht posits that Robin "embodies the past" and "[l]ike a magic gown, [she] has the capacity to renew [herself]" (115). Reading Barnes's fabrics as representative of the novel's texture, Rupprecht engages the sort of symbolic reading not fully attuned to the novel's materiality that I hope here to correct. The gowns in *Nightwood* are indeed strange, but I would stop short of calling them magic.

[30] Jules Sturm asks whether every reader would "give [Robin] a straight face, make her a costume embroidered with clear boundaries and invent for her a coherent life story?" (257), to which I answer, No.

Queerness meets disability in Robin and Felix's son Guido, who is figured as a sort of amputee: "the modern child [with] nothing left to hold to, or, to put it better, he has nothing to hold with" (43). Upon first meeting Robin, Felix, a Jew masquerading as a baron, is determined to father a son "who would feel as he felt about the 'great past'" (42). When Felix tells Dr. O'Connor that his son and heir should have an American for a mother, O'Connor replies that such nobility belongs to "the few that the many have lied about well enough and long enough to make them deathless" (43). Though Felix succeeds in marrying Robin he fails to seduce her, and Guido's origin, like Michaels's cultural reproduction, is strangely antibiological, Robin "conceiving herself pregnant before she was" and producing a child doll-like in its passivity: "It slept too much in a quivering palsy of nerves; it made few voluntary movements; it whimpered" (49, 52). Guido's abject dollishness is reiterated through a gesture Robin repeats with both her baby and with a doll given to her by her second lover, Nora Flood: "standing in the centre of the floor holding the child high in her hand as if she were about to dash it down" (52). Robin aborts this violence with Guido but later brings it to fruition with the doll when, dressed in boy's clothes, she "hurled it to the floor and put her foot on it, crushing her heel into it […] its china head all in dust, its skirt shivering and stiff' (157). While it may seem a mercy that Robin spares baby Guido this violence, he is nevertheless consigned to a negative fate, his body not deathless as O'Connor suggests, but rather, like Robin's dress, in a state of perpetual degeneration: Guido, "if born to anything had been born to holy decay. Mentally deficient and emotionally excessive, an addict to death" (114). As Guido decays he becomes even more doll-like, wrapped in blankets and decked with red ribbon, "at ten, barely as tall as a child of six, wearing spectacles, stumbling when he tried to run, with cold hands and anxious face" (114-115). Though Guido's disability distresses Felix, Dr. O'Connor embraces it as the promise and potential of embodied modernity, proclaiming that "cleanliness is a form of apprehension; our faulty racial memory is fathered by fear. Destiny and history are untidy; we fear memory of that disorder. Robin did not" (126). Guido, the doctor continues, "is blessed—he is peace of mind—he is what you have been looking for—Aristocracy" (129), revealing Felix's progressivist dream of siring the nobility his ancestors counterfeited (and indeed all dreams of reproductive futurism whereby nativists hope to give birth to their grandfathers) as destructively futile by exposing it to the destabilizing changefulness of non-progressive liquid modernity.

Curating Domestic Museums of Private Interiority

Barnes's modernist materialism is more than a case of clothes making the man, an outward presentation of curated public subjectivity as Thomas Carlyle suggested a century earlier in his philosophy of clothing, *Sartor Resartus*: "the vestural Tissue, namely, of woolen or other cloth; which Man's Soul wears as its outmost wrappage and overall; wherein his whole other Tissues are included and screened, his whole Self lives, moves, and has its being" (2). In *Nightwood,* as I have demonstrated, clothing and bodies are inextricable, material vitalism muddying the line between exterior and interior, public and private. Barnes makes this interplay extend even further outward, the body in its environment placing private interiority on display for public consumption, much as in her subjective journalistic accounts of force feeding and fire rescues. Beyond the stitched body, Barnes fabricates Frau Mann's and Robin's queer material vitalism in the ways each woman moves through elemental environments. When made to walk on solid ground, Frau Mann, "an organism surviving in an alien environment" (16), maintains something of the trapeze about her: "[H]er coquetries were muscular and localized. […] Her legs had the specialized tension common to aerial workers […] as if the air, by its very lightness, by its very non-resistance, were an almost insurmountable problem, making her body, though slight and compact, seem much heavier than that of women who stay upon the ground" (15-16). In addition to altering the physics of her movement and density, Frau Mann's amphibiousness inflects her speech: "The way she said 'dinner' and the way she said 'champagne' gave meat and liquid their exact difference, as if by having surmounted two mediums, earth and air, her talent, running forward, achieved all others" (17), again reifying Barnes's distinct sense of materiality through language. As Frau Mann's speech and movement reflect the dueling materiality of her two environments, as well as her fluid yet solid body, so Robin's movement reflects her drifting relationship with time. Remarking on "a past that is still vibrating" in Robin, Felix observes that time "was in her walk, in the way she wore her clothes, in her silence […]. There was in her every moment a slight drag, as if the past were a web about her, as there is a web of time about a very old building. […] So about [Robin] there was a density, not of age, but of youth" (126-127), to which Felix attributes Robin's "fluid sort of possession" (120). But bodies in *Nightwood* are not mere passive receptors constructed by their spatial and temporal environments. Like Frau Mann's sweat fading the dye of her costume, embodied interiors and interiority have their way of leaking into material environments.

Barnes would have seen the potential for fashioning queer identity and interiority outside of the harsh austerity of clinical space at the lavish domestic environment of Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science, and she makes the specific material environments of elaborately decorated, highly curated family houses in *Nightwood*, houses much like In den Zelton 18, function as extended bodies, as articulated by Dr. O'Connor: "[H]ere I sit, as naked as only those things can be, whose houses have been torn away from them to make a holiday, and it my only skin" (162). The curation of rooms and their adornments is undertaken with the same care Felix places in selecting a mother for his child, and it serves the same purpose: to establish heritage, furniture contributing as much to identity as genetics. So we see Felix's mother Hedvig, daughter of the House of Hapsburg and wife of an Italian Jew, establishing the House of Volkbein through interior design:

> Three massive pianos (Hedvig had played the waltzes of her time with the masterly stroke of a man, in the tempo of her *blood*, rapid and rising—that quick mannerliness of touch associated with the playing of the Viennese, who, though pricked with the love of rhythm, execute its demands in the dueling manner) sprawled over the thick dragon's-*blood* pile of rugs from Madrid. The study harboured two rambling desks in rich and *bloody* wood. Hedvig had liked things in twos and threes. (my emphasis, 8).

The appearance of blood three times in this description is as deliberate as the three pianos, Hedvig's furnishings providing what her Jewish husband Guido, who "prepared out of his own heart for his coming child a heart" (5), could not: Felix's claim to nobility. Barnes names the Volkbein's house in Vienna's Inner City "a fantastic museum of [Hedvig and Guido's] encounter" (7), giving the publicly-oriented nationalist space of the museum an intimate biological function. Everyone in *Nightwood* lives in a museum, from Nora and Robin's carnivalesque assemblage of remnants from circuses and churches to Jenny Petherbridge's collection of stolen artifacts and Dr. O'Connor' tiny room of horrors adorned with rusty medical devices, empty perfume bottles and an overflowing chamber pot, each highly curated interior giving view to its occupant's interiority. For Barnes, this public/private function of the domestic museum, beyond determining racial heritage, opens interiority to such display that it renders psychoanalysis's discursive talking cure redundant, even unnecessary. After all, to curate does not merely mean to collect; it means to care.

Disidentifying Freud's Talking Cure

If Barnes's stitched body and its material environment render the talking cure redundant, it is fair to question why she makes it so central to *Nightwood*, embodying it, as she does, in the novel's most visible character, Dr. O'Connor. Eliot, as he wrote in the introduction, saw little reason to psychoanalyze *Nightwood*: "[T]he book is not a psychopathic study. The miseries that people suffer through their particular abnormalities of temperament are visible on the surface; the deeper design is that of the human misery and bondage that is universal. In normal lives this misery is mostly concealed" (xxi).

Though I would not follow in dismissing the many excellent psychoanalytical studies of the novel on the faulty grounds of a false universalism that erases otherness through its elision of the body, I do appreciate Eliot's attention to the surfaces Barnes makes readily available for reading, as when Nora, rising from a dream about her grandmother in drag, "looked down into the body of the house as if from a scaffold, where now Robin had entered the dream" (86), thus offering up her own interpretation[31]. Yet in considering *Nightwood*'s potential for psychoanalytical interpretations I would follow in the footsteps of those feminist critics who point to Barnes's playfully skeptical depictions of Freudian psychoanalysis throughout her work in their critical re-centering of the body through such readings. Barnes's skepticism of Freud is perhaps most fully on display in "The Dove," her one-act play performed in 1926 featuring three young girls in a lush red room teeming with swords, guns, and other phallic signifiers. The play ends with one girl shooting a gun offstage after which a second girl enters carrying a print of Carpaccio's *Deux courtisanes vénitiennes*, a sentimentalist depiction of women lounging on a balcony, pierced with a bullet hole. "*This*," she cries, "is obscene!" (original emphasis, 161). Indeed. While "The Dove" confounded its contemporary critics[32], its exaggeration and dramatic excessiveness transforms Freudian psychoanalysis, just as Barnes's early journalism with its exaggerated language and feminine subjectivity transformed "serious" journalism, through what I argue is an act of disidentification. As a survival strategy for marginalized individuals and communities, José Esteban Munoz explains:

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[31] Barnes, as has been widely documented and analyzed, is thought to have had a sexual relationship with her paternal grandmother Zadel.

[32] A critic for the *New York Sunday Telegraph* wrote that, "It gives an effect rather such as one might expect to obtain if, say, one were to read Stein on a merry-go-round, by candlelight" (quoted in Parsons, 21), surely the greatest sentence ever penned for a theatre review.

> Disidentification is about recycling and rethinking coded meaning. The process of disidentification scrambles and reconstructs the encoded message of a cultural text in a fashion that both exposes the encoded message's universalizing and exclusionary machinations and recircuits its workings to account for, include, and empower minority identities and identifications. (31).

As Marcus suggests in her groundbreaking analysis of *Nightwood,* Barnes's aim in the novel was in part to "expose the collaboration of Freudian psychoanalysis with fascism in its desire to 'civilize' and make 'normal' the sexually aberrant misfit" (99). I would extend this argument by further positing that Barnes, beyond merely exposing the genocidal end of Freud's pathologizing discourse, repurposes psychoanalysis in an act of queer disidentification by bringing the talking cure's debilitating effects on the material body to the surface of the text, making not simply the politics but the very survival of queer and disabled embodiment in 1930s Europe newly urgent. Through her labor of disidentification, Barnes exposes and transforms the curative logic of psychoanalysis into a form of discursive care for the open and marginalized body.

Dr. Matthew O'Connor's talk dominates the text of *Nightwood*, with even the narrator, like Frau Mann at Count Altamonte's party, struggling to get a word in edgewise, for "[o]nce the doctor had his audience […] nothing could stop him" (18). Always analyzing, always pathologizing, always pulling apart the bodies and desires of his interlocutors, Dr. O'Connor is his own first and last patient, made visible in Barnes's arrangement of bodies in his crowded apartment, a filthy parody of Freud's cluttered office, where the patient Nora sits in a chair while the doctor lies on the couch. No matter his interlocutor, in repeatedly bringing his talk back to himself, his queer desires and transgenderism, O'Connor is ultimately made the victim of his own pathologizing discourse. As the text of *Nightwood* advances, his deterioration, in his own claims, is far worse than his interlocutors': "'Oh,' he cried, 'A broken heart have you! I have falling arches, flying dandruff, a floating kidney, shattered nerves *and* a broken heart!'" (164). He adds that his deterioration, like Frau Mann's costume, permeates his body into "the threadbare glomerate compulsion called the soul" (159), the word "threadbare" suggesting decay from repeated use, like Yeats's stitching and unstitching. Felix notes the acceleration of the doctor's degeneration when, upon spotting O'Connor returning from a funeral, he is "shocked to observe, in the few seconds before the doctor saw him, that he seemed old, much older than his fifty odd years would account for" (117), and throughout their conversation he observes the doctor "speaking more and more to himself, and, when troubled, he seemed to grow smaller" (127), his talk the apparent cause of his decline. Yet through his decay O'Connor sees a non-progressive salvation, much as he saw in the disabled Guido's paradoxical modern aristocracy. As his discourse wanders through and makes porous the past and the present in his final appearance, his companion, an ex-priest, urges O'Connor to "Remember your century at least!" (173), to which he responds that, "like the several parts of Caroline of Hapsburg put in three utterly obvious piles" Felix and Guido, Robin and Nora, "talking to me—all of them—sitting on me as heavy as a truck horse—talking!" will ultimately be "saved by separation" (174, 175).

What possible bodily salvation O'Connor's destruction through discourse can offer Barnes leaves intentionally ambiguous, and though her challenge to psychoanalysis's penchant for pathologizing difference through disidentification is significant, to suggest that O'Connor offers his queer, disabled, racially Other interlocutors an escape from fascism would be to elide Wilson's imperative toward biological negativity. "[T]he body," O'Connor declares, "has its politic too" (161), and in 1930s Berlin that politic is defined by eugenics and bent toward genocide. Like O'Connor, Barnes's insight gives her foresight, and she seemingly recognized that *Nightwood*'s textual inhabitants would outlast the publicly engaged queer bodies she encountered at Hirschfeld's Institute of Sexual Science, which the Nazis shut down in 1933. O'Connor's final lament may well be her own: "'What people! All queer in a terrible way. There were a couple of queer *good* people once in this world, but none of you' he said, addressing the room, 'will ever know them'" (171). Yet abjection is preferable to annihilation, as Marcus suggests, and degenerating into a doll or a dog or a pile of fragmented pieces opens a new terrain of different possibilities, which O'Connor recognizes through Guido's disability. The material present represented in *Nightwood* may have been ceded to *Cabaret*'s pretty Nazi boy sweetly insisting that "Tomorrow belongs to me,"[33] but as Barnes wrote in "Seen from the 'L'", deviants have a way of slipping through the stitch of virtue. In *Nightwood,* Barnes gives witness to queer and disabled embodiment's endurance through material devastation, and in slipping the stitched body through liquid modernity on into queer time, she makes an important challenge to the genocidal teleology of nationalist modernism, suggesting that "The unendurable is the beginning of the curve of joy" (125).

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[33] The film, of course, is based on *The Berlin Stories* by Christopher Isherwood, who, like Barnes, took rooms at In den Zelten 18.

Like many women modernists (though notably not Mina Loy), Barnes's literary production dropped off sharply after World War II, the vibrant public image of the intrepid girl reporter giving way to that of the glamorous recluse who spent the last forty-one years of her life largely confined to a Greenwich Village apartment. During this time *Nightwood* remained continually in print thanks to a "small but steady cult [read: queer] demand of several thousand copies a year," although Field notes that *Nightwood* "made no deep impression in on the broad reading public in either England or America" (20). Like *Nightwood*'s queer and disabled inhabitants, Barnes opted to spend the postwar years outside public scrutiny, publishing little new work beside her verse play *The Antiphon* (1958) and steadfastly refusing republication of her early work despite multiple offers. Approached in her later life for an interview by *The Little Review*, she replied that "the list of questions does not interest me to answer. Nor have I that respect for the public" (*The Book of Repulsive Women* vii). The underlying aim that has united my first two chapters has been my contribution to recent work in modernist studies that, through a more thorough and nuanced appreciation of texts by women, has challenged dominant constructions of modernism driven primarily by the work and concerns of a limited circle of men. While this canon has today found a scholarly audience, like much female labor, it still largely falls outside broader public purview. In my next two chapters, I turn more explicitly to the topic of public embodiment and the care of private bodies in my examination of texts with a broader popular appeal, and to the queer and disabled bodies that rupture through antibiological textual constructs in their demand for care.

III. Words Made Flesh: Coercing Queer Bodies with Discursive Care in Nathanael West's *Miss Lonelyhearts* (1933)

> They are literary freaks, that would be vastly humorous if they were not also pathetic, for in reading them one cannot escape the conviction that the questions addressed to the 'Aunt Margarets' or 'Sister Marys' who conduct these department stores of information, are asked in all good faith and sincerity, and that on the answers often depends on the welfare of many a simple soul.
>
> (Elizabeth Meriweather Gilmer, "Dorothy Dix," *New Orleans Picayune*, 10 January 1897).[34]

> [O]n most days he received more than thirty letters, all of them alike, stamped from the dough of suffering with a heart-shaped cookie knife.
>
> (Nathanael West, *Miss Lonelyhearts* 33)

The expanding inclusion of texts by and about women in recent modernist criticism has, often by necessity, entailed the induction of more popular texts into the modernist canon, further confusing the former categorical divide between "high" and "low" texts and cultural artifacts. Most of this criticism recognizes that modernists themselves engaged in similar projects of cultural blending, as is made particularly evident by those artists—visual and literary—working in the medium of collage. Scraps of newspapers and magazines can be seen in modern artworks from cubism to surrealism and Dada, and they further make regular appearances in literary texts as well. While these assemblaged fragments might be interpreted as having been "elevated" through their selection by the artist, they retain their original signification as popular texts within the new work—which is part of the reason the artist selects them in the first place. Such is the case with

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[34] Quoted in Gudelunas 72-73.

Nathanael West's 1933 novella *Miss Lonelyhearts*, a loving parody of Eliot's *Waste Land* that employs an assemblage of popular texts to present an image of America's urban wasteland, a different geography with a different population than appears in Eliot's poem. The most prominent popular text in West's assemblage is the newspaper advice column, a seemingly timeless form that first gained widespread popularity in the modernist era. Because of the advice column's far-reaching corporeal effects in defining and regulating white heteronormativity and promoting cultural reproductive futurity, I approach it as a popular form of the discourse of material language central to nativist modernism. Indeed, with *Miss Lonelyhearts* West employs multiple fleshy variations of material language to bridge the cultural gap between mass media's popular discourses and Eliot's modernist masterpiece, where the shattered remains of Western culture are built into new textual forms to shore up the fragmentation of masculine liberal autonomy. However, West's textual assemblage of urban America's queer and disabled remainders differs significantly from Eliot's "high" modernist assemblage in that West's textual fragments retain a resistant corporeal agency.

This chapter explores the interplay of queer and disabled corpo-reality and mass media's technologies of reproductive futurism in *Miss Lonelyhearts* to argue that West realizes through the advice columnist a textual/sexual assemblage aimed at coercing America's queer and disabled remainders' contingency and compliance in the production of white heteronormativity. While it has not been widely acknowledged as such, the advice column was broadly instrumental to eugenicist processes of Americanization in the early decades of the twentieth century, its confessional discourse serving as a form of corporeal regulation targeted at the nation’s sexual minorities. The endemic presence of queer and disabled bodies within the body politic was antithetical to constructed ideals of American whiteness, and through the advice column’s homogenizing discourse the nation’s queer and disabled remainders were regularly subjected to civic and corporeal maintenance in the form of discursive care. Operating outside the guise of medical professionalism and expertise, the advice column re-creates for a mass audience the intimacy of those confessional discourses that comprise Foucault’s Scientia sexualis, here played out as an older, more experienced woman (commonly termed “agony aunt”) dispensing maternal care and wisdom to a younger, usually female, relative. As such, the advice column had and continues to have unexamined material repercussions for queer and disabled folk, its discursive care work ultimately serving eugenicist ends in its instigation of white heteronormativity throughout the American body politic.

West’s biographer Jay Martin reports that he developed the idea for *Miss Lonelyhearts* when his friend and soon-to-be brother-in-law S. J. Perelman introduced him to the *Brooklyn Eagle*’s resident agony aunt, an unnamed writer identified only by her pen name, Susan Chester, in March 1929. “Miss Chester” had offered Perelman access to the actual letters sent by her working class, oftentimes disabled readers, “suggest[ing] that he might be able to put such material to comic use” (109), clearly a violation of her readers’ trust and the textual intimacy advice columns create with their audience despite the public nature of these letters once published for a mass audience. Though Perelman saw little use for the letters, West, like a modernist Frankenstein, lifted entire phrases and paragraphs from “Miss Chester’s” anonymous correspondents to assemble in *Miss Lonelyhearts* an exquisite corpse of human suffering, which W. H. Auden referred to as "West's disease" (147). By including these letters in his novella, West, like the agony aunts he parodies, affords their anonymous writers a level of agency within his textual assemblage, making *Miss Lonelyhearts* (and its title character) a satirical wasteland constructed not from the ruins of a fragmented culture but rather from urban America's queer and disabled corporeal remainders. The novel's protagonist, a man named only "Miss Lonelyhearts," inhabits a vibrantly material textual environment of the word made flesh, where letters penned by women in distress abut with sacrilegious parodies and rape jokes—all discourses aimed at coercing heteronormativity—and where he bears out the corporeal consequences of his discursive caring labor. Frequently ill, the queer and disabled corporeal remainders produced by his normalizing discourse imbricated within his own body, Miss Lonelyhearts seeks to regain a measure of masculine liberal autonomy through various acts of sex and violence. Yet the inextricability of the letters within his own corporeal construction marks Miss Lonelyhearts for slow death, and so these sexual violations of his textual role as "Miss Lonelyhearts" ultimately bring about his material and ontological destruction, as he is no longer able to be—or to cease being—Miss Lonelyhearts, both body and text, both giver and receiver of coercive care.

The Agony Aunt's Discursive Care Work: From Civic to Corporeal Maintenance

Interactive columns offering answers to readers' letters have existed in newspapers since the seventeenth century, but the personality-driven advice column as we know it today came about with the rise of women's journalism at the turn of the twentieth century. The earliest advice columns, including those appearing in John Dunton's *Athenian Mercury* and Daniel Dafoe's *Little Review*, were more publicly oriented, answering questions on a broad purview of topics from natural science to politics, with only the occasional letter focused on personal relationships (Hendley 347-348). These columns, written by men for a masculine readership, serviced what David Gudelunas terms "civic maintenance" by circulating knowledge and behavioral standards fitting of democratic citizens within a civil society (37). As such, these columns address their audience more as abstract liberal subjects than as fleshy material bodies, the advice they dispense resembling the masculinist, publicly-oriented "care of the self" Foucault examines in the third volume of his *History of Sexuality*.[35] Only after the advice column moved to newspapers' women's pages at the turn of the twentieth century did it become the premier public forum for discourse on domestic issues of love, sex, and heartbreak. With the feminization of newspapers, the advice column re-oriented from civic maintenance toward more overtly corporeal concerns such as unwanted pregnancy and venereal disease, offering caring labor in the form of circular reflexive discourse among mostly anonymous parties and promising a cure that persistently remained just beyond reach. As such, advice columns both established and reinforced heteronormative and eugenicist ideologies that delineated American citizenship and became significant public agents of cultural reproductive futurity, a topic I return to below.

While masculine discourses predominate twentieth century journalism and its criticism, the broader roles women played in shaping journalistic practices and institutions at the start of the twentieth century, both as producers and consumers of newspapers, are well documented. Two of the most significant twentieth century developments in journalism, the commercialization of news and the rise of the yellow press, both shaped and were shaped by the demands of women readers. Women's pages, originally conceived in American newspapers as a means of aiming advertisements directly to the wives and mothers who for the most part controlled day-to-day household expenditures, expanded and developed through the early decades of the twentieth century into domesticating "space[s] in which to initiate the reader-as-daughter to the sphere of mothering as its boundaries were 'naturally' expanded to fulfill modern cultural needs" in response to publishers' growing recognition of their existing female readership (Lueck 3). Once women's journalism was domesticated, it increasingly came to resemble the "natural" caring labor expected of women. At the time, women journalists labored to establish themselves as popular draws to newspapers for their gonzo-like reporting, in which they inserted themselves, boldly and bodily, into the center of sensationalist stories with coverage ranging from suffrage protests to traveling circuses, as in the case of Djuna Barnes examined in the previous chapter. Yet when newspapers established explicitly female-oriented "women's pages," women journalists gradually found their work relegated to the "Hen Coop," the name given by newspapers to the offices of their female press corps from which they wrote society columns, dispensed beauty tips, and, eventually, answered readers' letters seeking relationship advice. Women's pages grew from short columns to multi-page sections at the behest of readers and advertisers alike, and newspapers became more creative in developing content, including interactive reader's forums such as advice columns, to fill them. Women's domesticating influence on journalism gave newspapers more intimate appeal as women writers took on familial roles: In addition to the agony aunt, a figure with "a touch of the maternal in it, as well as the sibyl" (Manning 34), the spread of yellow journalism was aided in part by the writing of "sob sisters" given license to cover sensationalist stories such as domestic abuse and murder trials deemed too trivial by male journalists, which, significantly, brought public attention to what were largely seen as private domestic affairs. In this context, the advice column developed as a powerful homogenizing discourse, yet due to its seemingly trivial, female-oriented nature, perhaps the most popular public forum of the long twentieth century for instruction and education in sexual matters continues to go under-recognized for its political labor of maintaining and Americanizing the public through its discursive bodily care.

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[35] I further discuss Foucault's care of the self as it relates to feminine, queer, and disabled bodies in my coda.

Following its appearance in the women's pages, the now corporeally-oriented advice column had a broad and immediate social impact because of the public's limited access to discourses on sexuality under the Comstock Act. Given his outsized historical impact, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that the highest public office Anthony Comstock attained was as a United States Postal Inspector, and that he realized his vice crusade against obscenity, contraception, and abortion by curtailing the circulation of sexually explicit texts and materials through the mail, the government service that creates out of private businesses and households a public distribution network—thus through the post office Comstock was able to extend his public control over the circulation of sexually-oriented discourse to the corporeal control of private bodies. However, unlike other journalistic institutions (including the little magazines), daily newspapers largely controlled their own distribution and did not depend on the post office's circulation network, significantly limiting the reach of the law into the popular press. While the Comstock Act scuttled sexual revolution in the works of modernists from Margaret Sanger to James Joyce, the agony aunt's normalized and normalizing sexual discourse—with the financial power of the journalistic institutions propping her up—evaded government censure despite Anthony Comstock's personal opposition to the advice column, as he railed:

> What name shall be applied to the newspaper that gathers up the letters of the libertine, the secret doings of the rake, the minute descriptions of revolting crimes, the utterances of lips lost to all shame, the oozing of corruption from the debauched, and then weaving that into a highly sensational story, decks it with flying colors and peddles it out each day for the sake of money! (14).

The popularity of early advice columns attests to the broad public desire for access to information on sex and the sexual body, and the distribution of such discourses indeed proved a very profitable way for newspapers to expand their circulation. The advice column not only endured, it thrived in an era of limited public discourse on sexuality, with the immense popularity of "agony aunt" personalities contributing to rapid expansion and syndication in newspapers across the nation.

One of the earliest syndicated advice columnists, "Beatrice Fairfax" (who is pilloried by name in *Miss Lonelyhearts*) was created by Marie Manning in July 1898. Manning was among the first women's advice columnists to develop a dialogic, epistolary format in which a named persona offers the public maternal care in the form of discourse as she answers and advises readers in a circular exchange of letters. The epistolary format, made popular throughout the nineteenth century in novels and serialized travelogues, is credited with granting the advice columnist both a sense of familial intimacy with her readers and the direct authority of a first-person address in her offerings of expertise (Gudelunas 41), making the advice column an effective public forum for acknowledging and addressing private bodily matters. Manning developed the persona of Beatrice Fairfax together with her editor Arthur Brisbane for the *New York Evening Journal* out of practical necessity: The *Journal* regularly received correspondence from readers about overtly corporeal, often sexual issues that seemed directed to the women's pages but that did not readily fit into existing features, such as Manning's "Dreams Are Prophetic" column. In Beatrice Fairfax, Manning personified the white, middle-class ideal of a woman of good sense and breeding, and she frequently implored her readers to conduct themselves in her image through her practical, no-nonsense approach to love, relationships, and sex. As such, her advice column participates in what Evelyn Nakano Glenn names "elite women's 'public caring,'" which aims to "reshap[e] subaltern women to fit middle-class norms" (43, 9). I do not question the sincerity of Manning's efforts to provide help to her readers, but that she presents their personal problems as a means to indoctrinate the reading public to bourgeois values introduces an element of coercion[36] to her care, while at the same time the maternal nature of the advice columnist's discourse would in effect obligate her to continue providing care to her reading public so long as they require it, coercing the columnist as well as her readers to perpetually engage in the circular exchange of public caring.

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[36] Throughout this chapter, I follow Glenn's definition of coercion as any "physical, economic, social, or moral pressure used to induce someone to do something" (6).

While Beatrice Fairfax derived her authority from her familial knowledge of bourgeois propriety, the *Journal* championed itself as the “paper of the people” (Gudelunas 42). As an agent of public caring, Manning was quick to shape her advice to reflect and respond to the changing social norms of her readership, largely comprised of working class women, immigrants, and rural migrants following industrial jobs to the city, instructing them in the ways of stripping these subaltern identities in the pursuit of middle-class American whiteness. Through her discursive maternal care, the advice columnist could thus bring her audience into the American family, making public citizens of her readers and enacting a popular form of the nativist cultural reproduction championed by literary modernists. Significantly, from their earliest appearance mainstream advice columns pushing white normativity and advancing nativist ideologies have excluded and alienated black audiences, leading to the separate development of advice columns for and by black women in the African American press, as Julie Golia has examined at length. Still, by addressing and adapting to the impact of urbanization, industrialization, and nationalization on Americans’ social and sexual relations, agony aunts broadened their appeal beyond the women’s pages, and Manning regularly observed that over half of the letters Beatrice Fairfax received were written by men (Golia 11). Advice columns continually drew in readership beyond their targeted female audience, and “despite publisher’s attempts to market the woman’s section as ‘a place all her own,’ both men and women crossed discursive gender boundaries in the pages of the newspaper” as men increasingly turned to the agony aunts for practical advice (8). Although the familial standards for women’s journalism aimed to reproduce patriarchal culture by reinforcing the heteronormative roles of mothers, sisters, and aunts for a female readership denied recognition in the more publicly, masculine-oriented pages of the newspaper, as men's increasing participation as both readers and writers of advice columns demonstrates, they also provided a discursive space for resisting these norms by encouraging subversive,[37] even queer, readings of sexual discourses, a topic I return to below.

Coercion, Contingency, and Complicity within the Assemblaged Body

Despite its popular appeal in an era of widespread social progress, the advice column was and by large remains an essentially coercive medium for enforcing social and sexual norms, which is perhaps to be expected given the prominence of eugenicist ideologies in shaping fin-de siècle progressivism. Early twentieth century advice columns approached their public discourse on still widely taboo topics of sexuality as a sort of necessary evil, the stories of premarital sex, unwed motherhood, prostitution and venereal disease in their correspondents' letters serving a didactic purpose by delineating normative sexual behavior and making plain the social, financial, and bodily cost of sexual deviancy for the broader reading public, reaffirming their eugenicist ideals about the poor, immigrants, and queer and disabled folk. Manning hailed Beatrice Fairfax as a forerunner of psychoanalysis, boasting in her memoir that "no one in the United States had any inkling of the coming vogue of Sigmund Freud, Jung, or Brill, or of the means devised by these learned men to relieve overburdened consciousness through confession when […] Beatrice Fairfax was born" (32), and as such the agony aunt can be seen furthering the pathologizing labor of psychoanalysis aimed at eliminating embodied difference, which I examined in the previous chapter. Yet for the most part, Manning's expertise on human sexuality derived not from a nuanced understanding of "libidos, complexes and inhibitions" (40), but from official government publications issued by the United States Public Health Service that reflected the broader public's restrictive attitude toward sex. Manning regularly utilized her column to promote government agencies and charitable organizations that coerced sexual "deviants" through regulation and institutionalization, from the War Department's Office of Dependency Benefits to Florence Critenton houses and the Salvation Army (249). As much as Beatrice Fairfax offered genuine help to many of her readers who otherwise had no knowledge of or access to public support for their private bodily concerns, her caring labor could be as repressive as it was beneficial.

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[37] This critical approach follows Janice Radway's pioneering work on women's resistive readings of romance fiction. Eleanor Ty further argues for the necessity of critically engaging such maligned and trivialized women's genres, which "show some of the complexities and the tensions inherent in the construction of female subjectivity in our society today" (97).

Both as a public discourse and as an institution in its own right, the advice column's primary function was and remains the coercive perpetuation of sexual normativity, the definition of which is ever shifting but that for Manning equated to compulsory heterosexuality, the name Adrienne Rich gives to systems of prevailing social beliefs and practices that orient (primarily female) bodies toward the reproductive futurity of the nuclear family (228). Through its intersection of cultural and bio-futurity, the advice column serves what Jasbir Puar identifies as "a register of biopolitical population control […] that modulates which bodies are hailed by institutions to represent the professed progress made by liberal rights-bearing subjects" (*Right to Maim* xviii), giving the advice column an embodied social function as it institutes eugenicist ideologies through its discursive caring labor to produce a better sort of (white) American. Yet some forms of embodiment remain stubbornly resistant to eugenics' progressive bio-logic, particularly the endemic presence of queer and disabled corpo-reality within the body politic, which, as I discussed in the introduction in the figure of Benjy Compson, challenges nativist constructions of the white body's supremacy. By marking queerness and disability as the corporeal antitheses to American social progress, the advice column operated as "an ableist mechanism that debilitates" (Ibid.), making queer and disabled subjects the embodied remainders of a cultural and bio-futurity aimed at perpetuating a standardized ideal of whiteness and consigning those queer and disabled folk who cannot be hailed within or eliminated from the body politic to the perpetual wearing down of slow death.

As a confessional discourse aimed at controlling a population by regulating its sexual practices, it should go without saying that the advice column is part of the "multiplicity of discourses produced by a whole series of mechanisms operating in different institutions" comprising Foucault's Scientia sexualis (*History of Sexuality* 33)—that Foucault himself goes without saying it is of little surprise given the triviality ascribed to advice columns despite their enormous cultural and biological influence. Both West and Manning recognized the agony aunt as kin to the priest, identifying her caring labor as part of an institution "as old as the Catholic Church […] where the penitent, under the stress of religious enthusiasm, has 'told all,' sometimes to the embarrassment of the congregation" (Manning 34). Yet unlike the priest, the doctor, or the psychoanalyst, through the technologies of mass media, the modern advice columnist gives this confession a national audience, extending its dialectic intimacy to the wider reading public and, through syndication, allowing the agony aunt's regulatory discursive care to reach an assemblage of bodies distributed across her entire national audience all at once. While the advice column's "object of address is understood to be an identifiable person" (Warner, "Publics and Counterpublics" 72), giving the person who wrote the published letter the pleasure of being individually hailed by the agony aunt to receive her discursive care, this pleasure can be shared by all who opt to identify themselves within the dialectic exchange and to similarly orient themselves within the broader public, as it is "important that we remember that the speech was addressed to infinite others" (77). Both the individual confession and the pleasure of the discursive exchange are thus dispersed across the column's audience, uniting those who identify with the letter's anonymous author and producing a form of queer panic in those who cannot. The overall effect of the confessional discourse is thus the same as in Foucault's analysis, though multiplied: By naming and shaming sexual irregularities, the advice column produces embodied queer subjects from sexually deviant acts on a mass scale and debilitates them through exclusion from economically useful, politically conservative social relations (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 37). The pleasure of the advice column's discursive exchange is thus diverted away from the queer and disabled remainder it produces—and away from the columnist herself, for unlike Foucault's priest or doctor, Manning, if taken at her word, derived no pleasure from her role as confessor to the masses. She writes that "before long, I began to dread the sight of the office boys, straining under mail sacks" (36)[38], seemingly indicating that her participation in the public discourse makes the agony aunt herself a sort of queer subject, which I further elaborate below.

The ability of the advice column's confessional discourse to instruct and regulate an entire national population operates in part as a function of the reader's and the columnist's shared anonymity[39]. Because the columnist and reader's collective aim, beyond offering advice and comfort to wayward individuals, is to discursively engage the embodied norms and values of the white middle class, to a large extent the individual identities behind the agony aunt and the letters published in the column matter far less than the larger social problems/positions they represent; as Gudelunas observes, "Even though each letter writer is an individual, the problems they write about are anything but unique" (56). The advice column's constant substitution of individual letters voicing the same concerns enacts for her audience what Warner identifies as reflexive circulation, through which "[r]eaders are called on to pass informed and reflective judgment" in the way they present and situate their confession, which "allow[s] the participants in that discussion to have the kind of generality that had formerly been the privilege of the church or the state" ("Publics and Counterpublics" 99). Still, I would posit that this reflexive circulation presents the individual letter writer with an opportunity to express her agency by determining the specific way she orients herself within the generality that is the advice column's reading public. By signing their letters with names fabricated to give some sense of social identity, the writers of these letters, like West's fictional "Sick-of-It-All," "Desperate," and "Broad Shoulders,"[40] participate in organizing themselves into a range of social types to which the agony aunt offers "commonsense solutions to certain eternally familiar problems, the deserted wife, abandoned children, or the girl who had loved well but unwisely" (Manning 36). Although Manning jokes in her memoir that all of her correspondents, despite their particular troubles, could be christened "'She ought to have known better'" (40), their self-identification reflects her individual readers' social knowledge and even opens up potential for disidentification, for while the known/named individual polices her behavior in fear of social censure, "anonymity serves as a type of de-individuation and contributes to a sense of a loss of personal responsibility" (Gudelunas 52), allowing readers to take the agony aunt's wisdom with a grain of salt. Yet if "Beatrice Fairfax" and *Miss Lonelyhearts* are any indication, the agony aunt's queer readers appear more apt to *mis*identify than to disidentify through their engagement with the advice column's confessional discourse, her discursive care coercing in them a desire to be hailed as part of her progressively normative American family and to continue partaking of the advice column's confessional pleasure. As Puar argues, "instead of retaining queerness exclusively as dissenting, resistant, and alternative (all of which queerness importantly is and does)," such misidentification "underscores

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[38] There is, of course, a second, more sadistically voyeuristic pleasure to be derived from the advice column's confessional discourse, as demonstrated by the *Brooklyn Eagle*'s "Susan Chester": that of looking down at the suffering of the poor, dumb masses. I return to this topic in my discussion of Miss Lonelyhearts's editor Shrike.

[39] While the occasional agony aunt, including Dorothy Dix (Elizabeth Meriweather Gilmer), understood the financial value of her public persona and took legal action to protect her intellectual property and attendant *nom de plume*, the majority of advice columns, including Manning's own "Beatrice Fairfax," belonged to their publishing institutions and so were comprised of an assemblage of anonymous ghost writers.

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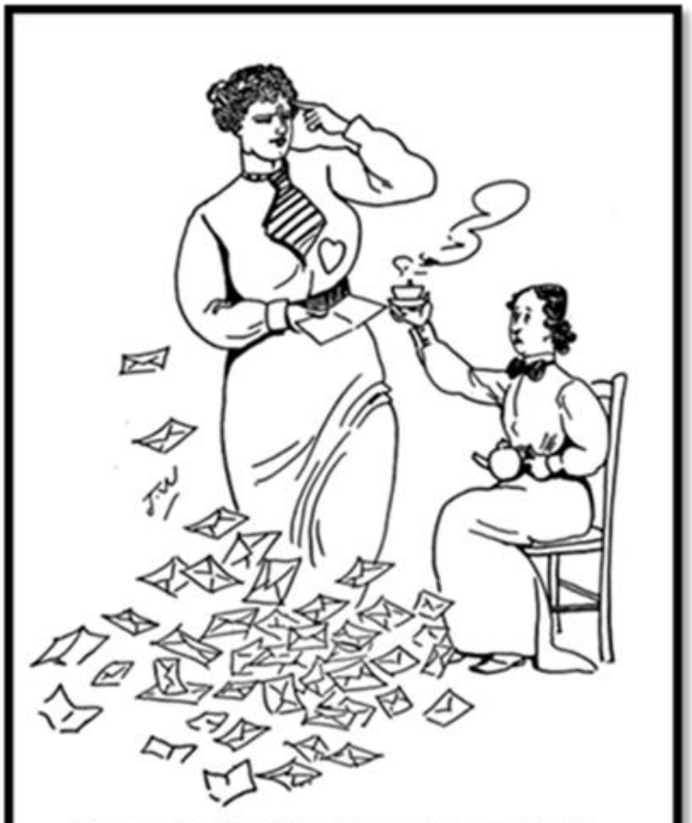
[40] West, it should be noted, took this name directly from one of the letters given to him by "Susan Chester" (Martin 110).

[queerness's] *contingency and complicity with dominant formations*" (my emphasis, Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages* 205). The advice column's normalizing discourse is contingent on the presence of queer embodiment to rail against, and although its anonymity gives queer readers the agency to self-identify, many of them, it appears, employed this agency to comply with its cultural and bio-futurity so that they might be recipients of the agony aunt's caring labor rather than be left out of progress as part of the debilitated queer remainder.

All this suggests that the anonymity of mass media further complicates Foucault's face-to-face construction of the confession by connecting entire networks of anonymous readers—some of whom offer confessions as letters, most of whom don't—through which the discourse's regulating power is diffusely "implanted in bodies, slipped in beneath modes of conduct, [and] made into principles of classification and intelligibility" (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 44). Because the different "roles" constructed through the advice column, for both writers and their popular audience, remain open through their anonymity (unlike Foucault's psychiatrist and the patient), they can be occupied by and have repercussions for multiple embodied subjects at the same time, making the advice column an assemblage of diffuse texts and bodies open to the hegemonic biopower of the mass media's regulatory machine, though the column's individual writers retain the agency to express their corporeal biopower within the assemblage. The advice column's epistolary discourse produces this embodied textual assemblage in the figure of the agony aunt herself, as illustrated in a cartoon that accompanied the first "Beatrice Fairfax" columns in the *New York Evening Journal* depicting the agony aunt as not merely the proprietary textual construction of the journalist, but also as a production of her readership (Figure 1). Jessie Wood draws the figure of Beatrice Fairfax emerging from a pile of letters like Athena from the head of Zeus while a second figure, presumably Marie Manning, offers her a cup of tea. Beatrice Fairfax points to her cranium with one hand, signifying her wisdom and reiterating her Athenian resemblance, while clutching an open letter in the other. Mediating the space between her brain and the letter, a cookie-cutter Valentine heart is stamped upon her ample breast, softening the masculine effects of her New Woman's starched collar and necktie and her scowl of concentration with its representation of her maternal caring labor. In this the agony aunt as the queerly embodied assemblage of popular discourse marks a significant departure from high modernism's typical cultural assemblages, as in Eliot's *Wasteland,* in that it points to a material modernity constructed from America's *corporeal* remainders. Because the material body retains its agential biopower within this textual/sexual assemblage, the advice column holds both liberatory and restrictive potential, and to maintain their position within the assemblage the queer and disabled are made contingent and complicit in its construction in order to receive the agony aunt's coercive care. Approaching the advice column and indeed *Miss Lonelyhearts* as a queer assemblage thus enables a reading of co-constitutive constructions of normative/non-normative sexualities and abled/disabled bodies—as well as elite/popular culture—within the situated historical context of American modernism. Here the resistant materiality of the queer and disabled bodies that rupture through the agony aunt's coercive discursive care shapes a vision of modernist futurity at odds with the cultural and corporeal reproductive futurity promoted in early advice columns and confounds the restrictive eugenicist bio-logic that undergirds its perpetuation of white heteronormativity.



Cartoon by Jessie Wood, intended to symbolize Miss Manning and the Fairfax column. The picture is marked on the back: "Deliver at once" to "A. Brisbane or Representative, Editor Evening Journal, Tribune Building, Park Row, City."

Figure 1: Jessie Wood, "Beatrice Fairfax," cartoon illustration for the *New York Evening Journal*, July 1898.

The Queer Assemblage's Debilitating Threat to Masculine Liberal Autonomy

Miss Lonelyhearts opens on a rather familiar scene of failed production: the writer who cannot write. Faced with his daily pile of letters presenting an assemblage of queer and crippled humanity "stamped from the dough of suffering with a heart-shaped cookie knife," Miss Lonelyhearts has already reached the conclusion that he "could not go on finding the same joke funny thirty times a day for months on end" (33). The suffering expressed in that day's letters is truly unfunny: the mother of seven diagnosed with kidney disease whose husband, despite her doctor's counsel for abstinence, gets her pregnant yet again; the suitorless adolescent girl born without a nose, probably an indication of congenital syphilis, who contemplates suicide; the young man whose deaf and mute sister was raped and impregnated by a neighbor and who is incapable of writing to Miss Lonelyhearts on her own behalf. The daily repetition of such suffering in the letters evinces a shared condition among their discrete authors that Lauren Berlant names slow death, a perpetual wearing down of bodies in the face of structural subordination that "prospers not in traumatic events, as discrete time-framed phenomena […] but in temporal environments whose qualities and whose contours in time and space are often identified with the presentness of ordinariness itself" ("Slow Death" 759). The humor he once found that now elides Miss Lonelyhearts supposedly lies within the letters' "inarticulate expressions" (West 62), the miseducated dialect of the working class devolving their stories' pathos to bathos and constructing the elitist heights from which his editor Shrike—the novella's masculine standard bearer—observes the perfectly ordinary suffering of the poor and broken masses with detached mockery[41]. Equally funny to Shrike is the seemingly religious faith Miss Lonelyhearts's desperate adherents place in his confessional's powers of absolution, which inspires the prayer Shrike writes and hangs above Miss Lonelyhearts's typewriter:

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[41] I can only assume that it is from a similar cultural elitism that John Keyes, who claims that "everyone admits" to finding the letters humorous, declares both West's textual and the real-life women who write to agony aunts "veteran complainers" whom "one suspects [of being] a nag" (86). Call me a feminist killjoy, but that joke isn't funny anymore.

Soul of Miss L., glorify me.

Body of Miss L., nourish me.

Blood of Miss L., intoxicate me.

Tears of Miss L., wash me. (33)

The correspondents' faith in the Madonna-like figure of Miss Lonelyhearts demands of him perpetual caring labor in the absence of a cure for slow death, for what salvation might Miss Lonelyhearts truly offer his readers corporeally marked by the "debilitating ongoingness of structural inequity and suffering" (Puar, *Right to Maim* 1)? The only action Miss Lonelyhearts's role as agony aunt provides him is to offer a sort of discursive palliative care to the public's queer and disabled remainders, which he no longer takes pleasure in providing. Along with his readers' suffering, Shrike's prayer is no longer funny to Miss Lonelyhearts as, like Wood's illustration of Beatrice Fairfax, it makes all too plain the inextricability of Miss Lonelyhearts's body from his readers' all-consuming need and desire, rendering him "the victim of the joke he has helped to perpetuate" (Conroy 74), the unnamed columnist no longer existing, textually or materially, independent of the column. With the loss of his material independence, Miss Lonelyhearts can no longer operate under the masculine guise of liberal autonomy, and as with the small frog he stepped on as a child, Miss Lonelyhearts's initial pity for his readers' "spilled guts" shifts when "[their] suffering had become real to his senses, [and] his pity had turned to rage" (48).

Incapable at first to face the masses who produce and consume him, Miss Lonelyhearts redirects his rage at Shrike, who unlike Miss Lonelyhearts is able to maintain an ironic distance and a semblance of masculine autonomy from the human suffering of the letters even as he dictates Miss Lonelyhearts's response. Despite Miss Lonelyhearts's attempts as the novella progresses to first imitate Shrike, then to emasculate him, and finally to escape him altogether, Shrike continually lords his masculine control over Miss Lonelyhearts. As its editor, Shrike is an interested participant in perpetuating the advice column's coercive care, and operating under the same capitalist logic that dictates the advice column's sole taboo—that Miss Lonelyhearts cannot advise his readers to commit suicide—Shrike cannot allow Miss Lonelyhearts to quit the column, as that would result in lost circulation. For Shrike, who recognizes his own material inextricability with Miss Lonelyhearts only in terms of money, not corporeality, the advice column's perpetual care work amounts to perpetual commerce. And so he offers the advice columnist advice to fill his column with a different sort of self-perpetuating faith: "'Why don't you give them something new and hopeful? Tell them about art. Here, I'll dictate: *Art is a Way Out*'" (35). The literary art of parody seemingly provides a Way Out for Shrike and his autonomous, antibiologic vision of materiality. Shrike always carries in his wallet a newspaper clipping about the "Liberal Church of America," which offers prayers via adding machine since numbers "constitute the only universal language" (38-39), the cold hardness of numbers closely approximating Hulme's atomized vision of language's static materiality. Though Shrike's parodic play with material language offers him temporary respite from the assemblaged figure of corporeal suffering in its vision of disembodied liberal autonomy, the antibiologism at its center cannot hold: Even Shrike eventually seeks Miss Lonelyhearts as his confessor to "make a clean breast of matters," offering up his contribution to the queer assemblage of sexual suffering in his declaration that "Sleeping with [his wife Mary] is like sleeping with a knife in one's groin" (52). Unable to keep up the façade of corporeal autonomy against Mary's emasculating infidelity, even Shrike and his supposedly normative body occasionally require the discursive maintenance of Miss Lonelyhearts's caring labor.

Unable to determine whether Shrike's "heart-to heart" confession is yet another parody, Miss Lonelyhearts remains determined to abandon his readers and their shared fate of slow death to rededicate himself, like Shrike, to the pursuit of *jouissance*, becoming, using Edelman's term, a sinthomosexual, the queer approximation of masculine autonomy who escapes the corporeal future through nonreproductive sex. His constant exposure to the textual assemblage of his readers' suffering has had a corporeal effect on Miss Lonelyhearts, which he experiences as a physical impairment with symptoms queerly resembling pregnancy, yet ever the agony aunt, Miss Lonelyhearts is hopeful he can reorient himself toward heteronormativity. After several failed attempts at getting better through rest and drink he discovers what he hopes is a cure: "[H]e had completely forgotten sex. What he really needed was a woman. He laughed again, remembering that at college all his friends had believed intercourse capable of steadying the nerves, relaxing the muscles and clearing the blood" (50). Echoing the taxonomy of the body in Shrike's prayer to Miss Lonelyhearts, this college boy's folk medicine seems to promise that what the letters have sullied a good fuck will make clean. This belief, that he can reclaim masculine autonomy through nonreproductive sex and so abandon the perpetual corporeal care required of his feminized role as agony aunt—that he can “cure” himself of the queerly debilitating influence of the letters—operates on the eugenicist logic of curative futurity, which allows for the presence of queer and disabled bodies only so long as they are oriented toward progressive heteronormativity, for “once rehabilitated, normalized, and hopefully cured,” as Kafer explains, the formerly queer and disabled Other “play(s) a starring role: the sign of progress, the proof of development, the triumph over the mind or body” (28). And what better way for Miss Lonelyhearts to assert his healthy, progressive, masculine normativity than to construct his own parody of the letters by sleeping with another man’s wife, starting with Shrike’s?

Mary Shrike presents a different sort of queer assemblage, her body constructed of robotic signifiers that confuse the line between corporeality and commodity, disability and super-ability, to indicate an alternative modernist futurity defined by perpetual consumption similar to the images of a Hannah Höch collage. As a would-be cyborg, Mary presents a most fitting sexual conquest for a sinthomosexual. Her body defies its own biologism, giving off a “synthetic flower scent,” while her breasts are presented through a medal she wears on a low chain, which she presents “as the coquettes of long ago had used their fans” (50). Stepping out with Miss Lonelyhearts, she wears a “tight, shiny dress that was like glass-covered steel” with “something cleanly mechanic in her pantomime” (53). Like the figures in Höch’s *The Beautiful Girl* (1920), a collage constructed out of pin-up girls and car adverts, it is unclear whether Mary Shrike’s mechanical appendages are meant to enhance the features of the natural body or to disguise a disabling lack. Everything about Mary’s sexuality is tinged with the metallic glint of commoditized modernity, which presents a sharp contrast to the folksy cowboy romance of El Gaucho, the Latin-esque club where she takes Miss Lonelyhearts to dance. There he immediately recognizes that the desires of the robotic socialites who long to "cushion Raoul's head on their swollen breasts" are the same as "those who wrote to Miss Lonelyhearts for help"—however commodified, the female body, it seems, is coerced to crave maternal care. When Miss Lonelyhearts, still pursuing antibiologic *jouissance*, asks Mary what she finds appealing about such "fakey" romance, she proclaims that "'Everyone wants [it]—unless they're sick.'" Even in the pursuit of his putative sex cure Miss Lonelyhearts cannot escape his readers and their suffering corpo-reality, and his attempt to become a sinthomosexual is dashed. He is once again relegated to the role of agony aunt when Mary drunkenly offers up her own confession, he playing the specter of Freud rather than priest for his secular interlocutor in his utterance of the familiar command, "'Tell me about your mother'" (54). In one last desperate bid for sex in the hallway outside the Shrikes' apartment, he strips Mary of her coldly metallic robot's dress with Shrike listening in on the other side of the door. Yet even made primally human in her "naked[ness] under her fur coat" (55), Mary, having given her confession, refuses her sin and returns again to her husband.

As noted above, even Miss Lonelyhearts's impairment takes on a queerly disabling form, manifesting physically as a male pregnancy, his readers' corpo-reality present not only in the public space of the newspaper and the dance hall but in the private interiority of his own body. Alternately a stone, a bomb, or a congealed lump of frozen fat, the internalized presence of Miss Lonelyhearts's readers—an expression of their assemblaged corporeal agency—is at times located in his heart, at others further down his belly in what appears to be a phantom womb. As a pregnant male, Miss Lonelyhearts the failed sinthomosexual approaches the role of ultimate confessor, "Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, the Miss Lonelyhearts of Miss Lonelyhearts" (37). Though it may seem like yet another of Shrike's parodic modernist constructs, Mother Jesus, "the one who loves" (Bynum 113), appears in biblical and throughout medieval Christian texts, and while most of this discourse focuses on Christ's breasts, it also includes images of pregnancy that "explicitly [associate] heart and womb and [produce] a bizarre description of the soul as child incorporated in the bowels of God" (121). While taken from Christian tradition, West constructs his maternal God with his caring labor in the modernist discourse of psychoanalysis, with Miss Lonelyhearts diagnosing his pregnancy as a "Christ complex" (44). Images of Christ haunt Miss Lonelyhearts's dreams in traditional symbols of the word made flesh that yield easily to Freudian interpretation. Christ first appears as a sacrificial lamb whose throat Miss Lonelyhearts, ever the priest, attempts to cut with a broken knife—a rather obvious phallic signifier. But symbols are a slippery business, so when the blow of Miss Loneyhearts's knife leaves only a flesh wound, the lamb, covered in "slimy blood […] slipped free [and] crawled off into the underbrush" to suffer its own slow death (41). Miss Lonelyhearts returns in the dream to crush the lamb's head with a stone, recalling the embodied symbol of his own queer burden of human suffering. Through the language of psychoanalysis, West challenges the Christian "word made flesh" to make the leap from the symbolic divine to an unwieldy modernist materiality where queer corporeal remainders—those agential remainders lodged in Miss Lonelyhearts's own body—defy discursive control.

West does not limit his parody of material language to its traditional Christian constructs, as he likewise queers modernist poetry in Miss Lonelyhearts's dreams where this fleshy construct of material language retains its corporeal agency. In a later dream the word made flesh appears yet again, this time as an assemblage of detritus meant to recall Eliot's own wasteland: In a desert of "rust and body dirt," Miss Lonelyhearts sees his readers "gravely forming the letters MISS LONELYHEARTS," first out of clam shells, then "using faded photographs, soiled fans, timetables, playing cards, broken toys, imitation jewelry—junk that memory had made precious" (55, 57). Beyond reasserting that Miss Lonelyhearts exists as a co-constitutive textual/sexual assemblage incorporating both writer and reader, the dream hints that by attaching salvific significance to the name and not the body of Miss Lonelyhearts, his readers seek to coerce agential corporeal control over the normalizing assemblage they are complicit in constructing, and it appears to be only a matter of time before their assemblaged body gestates and ruptures through the text that is Miss Lonelyhearts. As West repeatedly demonstrates, these discursive fragments, like bodies, have a queerly resistant materiality, for even though "[m]an has a tropism for order," as Miss Lonelyhearts muses, "[t]he physical world has a tropism for disorder, entropy. […] Every order has within it the germ of destruction. All order is doomed, yet the battle is worth while (sic.)" (61). What makes it worthwhile West the modernist refuses—or is unable—to say. What is more clear is that for Miss

Lonelyhearts and his readers alike, those queer and disabled corporeal remainders, it will take more than the fragments of discourse to shore against their material ruin[42].

Masculinity Strikes Back: From Coercive Care to Discursive Violence

Of course, there are other, less charitable ways of reading the queer materiality of the pregnant male body than as the Christlike bearer of caring labor and the promise of eventual salvation. Miss Lonelyhearts is continually haunted by the suspicion that he might not be the reincarnated Christ after all, but rather nothing more than a sob sister, a woman superficially shrouded in the guise of masculinity. The revelations in Miss Lonelyhearts's description of his job to his fiancée Betty are telling: "A man is hired to give advice to the readers of a newspaper. The job is a circulation stunt and the whole staff considers it a joke. He welcomes the job, for it might lead to a gossip column, and anyway he's tired of being a leg man" (62). Along with Shrike, Miss Lonelyhearts's male colleagues in the newsroom seem to grant him the lowly status of a woman, resenting the inflated importance he takes on as the embodied representative of the women's pages' popularity. Miss Lonelyhearts's presence in the newsroom threatens the masculinity of his colleagues' professional identities as well as the broader journalistic institution—and it would appear they have their own broken knives to wield. In today's #MeToo context, women journalists have demanded license to make public the sexual coercion that constitutes a regular part of their profession from Fox News to NBC and NPR, and here West references an open secret, that compulsory heterosexuality's tools of harassment and assault have been integral to the gendered organization of the newsroom for over a century. Meeting up with a group of his colleagues after work at a speakeasy, Miss Lonelyhearts sits passive audience to their ritualistic exchange of rape jokes:

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[42] This reading contests Maria Cristina Iuli's perhaps unintentional reinforcement of literary modernism's division of elite art from popular culture in her reading of West's "inhumanist politics." West, she argues, "exploits the hiatus between aesthetic and social forms to the advantage of the former by self-consciously […] reintroducing the difference between the two as a meaningful, critical element of the literary self-construction of social reality" (574), whereas I argue a focus on the interconnected material effects of a range of modernist discourses reveals that such a hiatus never truly existed to begin with. Like Beatrice Fairfax, Miss Lonelyhearts cannot escape the embodied materiality of the letters, and neither can Nathanael West.

> "I knew a gal who was regular until she fell in with a group and went literary. She began writing for the little magazines about how much Beauty hurt her and ditched the boyfriend who set up pins in a bowling alley. The guys on the block got sore and took her into the lots one night. About eight of them. They ganged her proper…" (45).

No innocent bystander, West himself participates in the sexual bullying of women writers, for among the list of women in *Miss Lonelyhearts* who "needed a good rape" he includes "Mary Roberts Wilcox, Ella Wheeler Catheter, Ford Mary Reinhart…," jumbled yet transparent references to Ella Wheeler Wilcox and Mary Roberts Rinehart, with Ford Madox Ford and a catheter thrown in the mix for good measure. After suffering through his coworkers' macho display of discursive violence, Miss Lonelyhearts, despite his exhaustion with being a (leg) man, determines to "ask Shrike to be transferred to the sports department" (47), once again turning to performative masculinity to rid him of his debilitating feminine persona.

Since his masculinist sex cure has failed him, Miss Lonelyhearts seeks instead to regain his masculinity through violence. Ever complicit in the construction of coercive heteronormativity, he escapes his drunken coworkers' further abuses by finding an even more effeminate queer to assault. Bolstered by Dutch courage, Miss Lonelyhearts and his friend Ned Gates leave the speakeasy for a nearby park where they find a "clean old man” with elaborate manners and a voice like a flute waiting in the public toilets (47-48). Despite *Miss Lonelyhearts*’s superabundance of queer signifiers, the episode of “Miss Lonelyhearts and the Clean Old Man” marks one of the few places West makes direct references to homosexuality in the novella. While the clean old man denies any knowledge, carnal or otherwise, of homosexuality, the arrival of Miss Lonelyhearts and Ned Gates in the now unmistakably queer space of the public bathroom fills him with homosexual panic. Even before they begin their bullying the clean old man jumps in fright and “look[s] as if he were about to cry” (47), since, like the falling snow that Miss Lonelyhearts watches grow sodden about them, he seems destined to be defiled as Miss Lonelyhearts carries out his agony aunt’s mission of ridding the public of queer bodies, the coercion of his discursive care made violent in the flesh. While from the start Ned Gates seems fully intent on smearing the queer, Miss Lonelyhearts’s initial reaction to the clean old man is more complicit, the presence of a second queer body complicating rather than alleviating Miss Lonelyhearts’s own queerness. At first wary of Gates’s violent desires and not certain what other action to take, Miss Lonelyhearts falls back into his agony aunt’s curative futurity as he prompts the clean old man to give up queer suffering and make confession. The clean old man refuses the offer and asks by what right Miss Lonelyhearts questions him, to which Miss Lonelyhearts, separated by his presence in the public bathroom’s queer space from his column’s moral authority, answers rather lamely that “Science gives me the right” (48). But like the imbricated presence of his readers’ queer corpo-reality within his body, the clean old man remains resistant to Miss Lonelyhearts’s normalizing efforts, and with the caring labor of his confessional discourse diminished, Miss Lonelyhearts lays hands on the clean old man, physically punishing him for his queerness while he fantasizes about punishing his readers: “He was twisting the arm of all the sick and miserable, broken and betrayed, *inarticulate and impotent*” (my emphasis, 49). In this fantasy Miss Lonelyhearts substitutes his readers’ ordinary suffering with his personal debilitation, he the writer who cannot write and the man who cannot screw, so in lashing out against queerness in the form of the clean old man he is once again made the victim of his own coercion.

Finding a Cure for Care

The closest Miss Lonelyhearts gets to escaping the letters and thus alleviating himself of his embodied queer burden is by leaving the highly textual urban environment of New York City to return with Betty to the rural life of her family farm in Connecticut. Here West reverses the progressive logic of curative futurity through a modernist nostalgia Charlotte Willis terms the disabled pastoral ideal, a belief that “urban areas have a disabling effect on their residents” that time spent in pastoral space can neutralize, “exposing an important lynchpin in the constructedness of disability.” To this I would add that in *Miss Lonelyhearts*, it is urban space’s *textuality* that renders its debilitating agency over Miss Lonelyhearts’s body. Warner suggests that “Publics do not exist apart from the discourse that addresses them” (“Publics and Counterpublics” 72), and by removing himself from the discourse-rich environment of urban space, Miss Lonelyhearts hopes to elide the corporeal agency of his queer and disabled public once and for all. In this sense pastoral space is made private because it is empty of debilitating public discourses, holding out for Miss Lonelyhearts the promise that he can re-gain masculine autonomy when his body is likewise made private again. Appropriately it is Betty, who is rarely seen outside the domestic space of her apartment, who instructs Miss Lonelyhearts in the disabled pastoral ideal in suggesting that a return to the country will cure the queer symptoms of his Christ complex: “Whenever he mentioned the letters or Christ, she changed the subject to tell long stories about life on a farm. She seemed to think that if he never talked about these signs, his body would get well, that if his body got well everything would be well” (West 66). In Miss Lonelyhearts’s estimation, Betty’s heterosexual tropism is the best bet to win his corporeal battle against the queer debilitating effects of corporeal entropy, for “if her world were larger, were *the* world, she might order it as finally as the objects on her dressing-table” (original emphasis, 42). While Miss Lonelyhearts is freed from his readers’ suffering for the time he spends outside the material boundaries of his newspaper’s circulation at Betty’s farm, its curative pastoral powers are equally spatially bound, and immediately upon returning to the city he realizes that “Betty had failed to cure him and that he had been right when he had said that he could never forget the letters” (68), nor can he ever fully escape their agency.

It is upon this return that Miss Lonelyhearts is delivered the letter from “Broad Shoulders,” West’s longest, most pathetic, and—by Martin’s account—most liberally plagiarized from “Miss Chester’s” readers (110). The anonymous writer’s corporeal agency ruptures through the text in her tale of ordinary suffering at the hands of her mentally deranged husband, whom she can no more force to leave her home than Miss Lonelyhearts can force her to leave his body. Through her letter “Broad Shoulders” orients her agency toward coercing Miss Lonelyhearts’s continued complicity in perpetuating the agony aunt's normalizing caring labor even though it renders them both disabled queer remainders. Escaping the spatial bounds of public discourse ultimately proves inadequate against the letters' corporeal agency, as Miss Lonelyhearts's very existence is contingent on the presence of his readers whom he carries always within him—and who appear to have infected Betty as well during their shared time on the farm. Back in the city, Betty's tropism for heteronormative order is disrupted when she discovers her unplanned pregnancy—a pregnancy that might have fit her pastoral life but that in the city is complicated by the same coercive sexual discourses that Miss Lonelyhearts has had a hand in perpetuating. Being pregnant out of wedlock brings about the end of Betty's tidy single life, rendering her just another "She ought to have known better" consigned to the debilitation of slow death.

As it becomes clear to Miss Lonelyhearts that he cannot free himself of the debilitating corporeal presence of the letters by abandoning his readers, he comes to believe that only through curing them once and for all can he give up the coercive burden of care and finally cure himself—that he must end the perpetual deferment of curative futurity. He finds an apt candidate for his ultimate cure in the novella's most prominent assemblage of sex, text, and disability, "the Cripple" Peter Doyle. Before his trip to Betty's farm, Miss Lonelyhearts slept with Peter's wife Fay when she wrote his column asking that they meet in person to "have a talk" and signing the letter "an admirer" (56). Fay Doyle is the first of his readers Miss Lonelyhearts encounters outside of the advice column's dialogic exchange, and after sleeping with her he comes to the realization that she too desires his caring labor and so likewise constitutes his assemblaged corporeal burden "as if a gigantic, living Miss Lonelyhearts letter in the shape of a paper weight had been placed on his brain" (59). Then after his return to the city, Miss Lonelyhearts is introduced to Peter Doyle at the speakeasy, whom he immediately identifies as the man he has cuckolded. Miss Lonelyhearts responds to the disjunctures of Peter Doyle's crippled body by mentally likening him to "one of those composite photographs used by screen magazines in guessing contests" (75), a pop cultural repurposing of the surrealist exquisite corpse and an indication that Peter Doyle is yet another sexual/textual assemblage of queer and disabled remainders. In Peter Doyle's crippled body Miss Lonelyhearts is faced with ordinary suffering in its corporeal form before he reads its textual manifestation, reversing the order of his encounter with Fay, as only after sharing several drinks in the speakeasy's back room does Peter Doyle offer up his letter. Not another anonymous confession of sexual deviancy, Peter Doyle's letter is a cry of existential angst culminating in a demand to know "what is the whole stinking business for" (76). Instead of offering Peter Doyle coercive care in the form of advice, Miss Lonelyhearts performs a sort of faith cure, taking the crippled man's hand and "not let[ting] go, but press[ing] it firmly with all the love he could manage" (76). This loving physical contact with Peter Doyle's queer and disabled corporeality gives Miss Lonelyhearts the total bodily respite Betty's disabled pastoral ideal could not, and unable to give up the narcotic ecstasy of "the triumphant thing that his humility had become" (77), he follows Peter Doyle home so that he might further enact his cure.

Once in the Doyles' apartment, Miss Lonelyhearts realizes that Peter Doyle cannot actually be cured of his existential suffering so long as his wife Fay turns to Miss

Lonelyhearts for sexual care, and that his cure must be extended to Fay as well. The opportunity to save the Doyles by healing their marriage brings Miss Lonelyhearts's queer pregnancy to fruition, and he makes ready to deliver not the gestated rock of ordinary suffering, but a cure in the form of a "message" that will bring about the progressive future and right the world's corporeal entropy once and for all. However, Fay remains attached to Miss Lonelyheart's sexual care, and her insistent advances threaten to rupture his loving corporeal bond with Peter, so while she gooses him and presses her knee up against his, Miss Lonelyhearts "[tries] desperately to feel again what he had felt while holding hands with the cripple in the speakeasy" (Ibid.). Fay remains ignorant of Miss Loneyhearts's curative love for Peter, whom she regards merely as a burdensome cripple, and when after dinner Fay catches Peter and Miss Lonelyhearts holding hands in the parlor she declares them a "sweet pair of fairies" (78). Undeterred by Fay's ridicule, Miss Lonelyhearts remains mute as he attempts in vain to find the words to cure them all: "When he did speak it would have to be in the form of a message" (77). Yet the only words Miss Lonelyhearts is capable of producing when he finally attempts to deliver the message are a miscarried approximation of Shrike's responses to the letters, a crippled parody of a sacrilegious parody of a referent that has long been forgotten:

> "You have a big, strong body, Mrs. Doyle. Holding your husband in your arms, you can warm him and give him life. […] He drags his days out in areaways and cellars, carrying a heavy load of weariness and pain. You can substitute a dream of yourself for this load. A buoyant dream that will be like a dynamo in him. […] He will repay you by flowering and becoming ardent over you…" (78-79).

This final word of advice contains no curative power, for in coming between Mr. and Mrs. Doyle, man and wife, by seducing Fay and offering Peter his queer love, Miss

Lonelyhearts's own corpo-reality has shattered the discursive illusion of the agony aunt whose coercive care functions always in the perpetuation of heteronormativity's cultural and bio-futurity. Ultimately Miss Lonelyhearts's message cannot cure himself or the Doyles of the corporeal effects produced by that same caring discourse. They remain inextricable, just as queer and disabled embodiment remains inextricable from the body politic as a contingency of its discursive heteronormativity. Miss Lonelyhearts never fully understood this contingency or his own complicity in discursively rendering himself a debilitated queer remainder, so it is appropriate that despite rededicating himself to "a new life and his future conduct as Miss Lonelyhearts" with his columns submitted "to God and God approve[s] them" (86), Miss Lonelyhearts meets his end when he is unable to read his fate in the newspaper Peter Doyle carries, in which he conceals gun that finishes them both.

While the agony aunt reached her popular height in the mid-twentieth century in the guise of Ann Landers and Dear Abby, today as advice columns diversify and find new life on digital platforms they remain powerful tools for regulating discourse on sexual norms that materialize as embodied practices (Boynton, Kolehmainen), and in many ways their discursive caring labor remains aimed at coercing queer and disabled readers' contingency and complicity with neoliberalism's normalizing dominant forms. Even Dan Savage, the writer behind the popular "Savage Love" column who is well known for his sex positivity and advocacy of LGBTQ issues, can be seen coercing his readers toward curative futurity with his "It Gets Better" campaign in which he holds himself out to queer youth as a promise of a better future—if only they, like he, can afford to embrace white homonormativity. Like *Miss Lonelyhearts*, the advice column has yet to receive the critical attention it merits from scholars of American literary modernism and queer theorists alike, which would promote further analysis of the queering and debilitating effects of the advice column's coercive caring labor. Not even West, I suspect, fully recognized the material implications of the agony aunt's cultural and bio-futurity despite its disruptive presence in his text. In his "Notes on Miss L.", written for *Contempo* in May 1933, West frames the novella not as an advice column but as a comic strip, a differently normalizing genre popularized through journalistic technologies of mass media, and later in the same essay he dismisses the confession's coercive discursive potential all together, declaring that "Freud is your Bulfinch; you cannot learn from him" (67). (But then, West didn't know Foucault.) Yet as I have argued throughout this dissertation, the assemblaged corporeal text retains its fragments' agential biopower, which can operate at odds with the writer's—or the publisher's—intent. I further examine the material body's textual agency in my next chapter, which considers through a composite reading of multiple published and unpublished versions of the same novel the agential corpo-reality of the posthumous text.

IV. The Living Posthumous Text:

Disability, Genre, and the Public Body

in Ernest Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden* (1946-1986)

> What would it take to produce the political dignity of corporeal difference in American culture, where public embodiment is in itself a sign of inadequacy to proper citizenship?
>
> (Lauren Berlant, "National Brands, National Body: *Imitation of Life*" 112)

> You see I would like, if you wanted, to write books for Scribner's to publish, for many years and would like them to be good books—better all the time—[…] but I'll never be able to do that and will just get caught in the machine if I start to worrying about that—or considering the selling.
>
> (Letter from Ernest Hemingway to Max Perkins, 16 November 1926)[43]

In the previous chapter, I examined the queering and debilitating corporeal effects of a particular public discourse, the advice column, on not only its audience but also its producers. Oftentimes as readers we encounter texts as public genres that give little glimpse of the private acts of writing—nor indeed of the private copro-reality—that go into their construction. When the creator does make a public appearance, it is usually as a larger-than-life iconic figure, as in the case of Marie Manning's transformation into Beatrice Fairfax. In this chapter, I turn to examine the modernist writer with perhaps the most outsized public persona, Ernest Hemingway, who remains a highly visible yet largely abstracted cultural figure hailed for defining American masculinity for the better part of the twentieth century. As numerous critics (Debra Moddelmog and Thomas Strychacz key among them) have previously discussed, under Hemingway's public persona writing emerges as a highly performative labor, which perpetuates a masculine identity that unites writer and reader, for like the readers of advice columns I discussed in the previous chapter, Hemingway's public readership can still be seen shaping itself in response to his discursive masculinity as they identify themselves—or *mis*identify themselves—in the text. In this chapter I posit that like the advice column, the masculinist public ideal of Ernest Hemingway produces its own debilitated queer remainder, among which I include the now deceased author himself. I examine the parallel lives of the fleshy corporeal author and the abstract textual corpus to ask the question, Who is Ernest Hemingway when he's not Papa? By gaining a better, more nuanced understanding Hemingway's private writing process, which his unpublished manuscripts make more transparent, I hope to elucidate the corporeal constraints produced by the formation and perpetuation of his very public masculinity.

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[43] Quoted in Trogdon 47-48.

In this chapter I argue for the significance of the manuscript as distinct genre, a living text and a practice of being/becoming, through an examination of Hemingway's unfinished manuscript of *The Garden of Eden,* begun in 1946 and published posthumously in1986. A cyclical representation of embodied gender experimentation and sexual play, *The Garden of Eden* is essentially a meta-text, as its writer-protagonist David Bourne creates dueling narratives of gender formation in two separate manuscripts, one an ongoing chronicle of his Mediterranean honeymoon with his wife Catherine and the other a series of short stories about his father, centered on an elephant hunt in an unnamed African country. Since its public appearance in 1986, much of the criticism of *The Garden of Eden* has focused on its complex intersectional constructions of gender, sexuality, and race, prompting revaluations of the Hemingway cannon and the birth of what we might term queer Hemingway studies. I aim to further complicate this revaluation by exploring implications in the novel and the unfinished manuscript for disability and the gendered politics of care work—the quotidian demands of all bodies (but disabled bodies in particular) to receive care upsetting both the masculinist logic of liberal autonomy and the disability-phobic curative futurity implicit in the published novel's linear narrative. In both texts but particularly in the unfinished cyclical structure of the manuscript, Hemingway enfolds sex and queer sexuality, along with eating, tanning, and haircutting, within the cyclical labor of care work through Catherine's experimental play, compelling us to approach sexuality and labor in *The Garden of Eden* in more complex ways. I will consider how practices of writing and care work muddle gendered divisions of public and private labor, both in the text and in Hemingway's relationship with his publisher, Charles Scribner's Sons, which outlasted each of his four marriages and continues on in the decades after his suicide. Just as the published version of *The Garden of Eden* underplays David Bourne's reliance on Catherine to produce his narratives, the published novel, presented through a publisher's note as the author's work with only "some cuts in the manuscript and some routine copy editing corrections," disavows Hemingway's "reliance" on Scribner's to produce the posthumous works[44], preserving an ideal of masculine autonomy through the author function.

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[44] Tom Jenks, who edited Hemingway's sprawling unfinished manuscript to produce a novel out of *The Garden of Eden,* is nowhere named in the published text. The (as of this writing) eleven posthumous texts

This is why intersecting issues of sexuality and disability compel us to consider the unfinished *Garden of Eden* manuscript as a distinct, living genre: The novel is a product, the manuscript a practice. The difference between the posthumous novel and the manuscript as an ongoing practice of writing is the difference between authoritative and collaborative, public and private, epistemological and ontological writing, each producing distinct ideological and material outcomes. While the authoritative text of the published novel perpetuates the production of Papa, an idealized, masculinist public body with material profits for both Scribner's and Hemingway (as discussed at length below), through the living manuscript Hemingway labors—though perhaps unintentionally—to make the queer and disabled body's destabilizing fluidity quotidian, even boring, and thus, following Siegfried Kracauer, newly productive. This is not to privilege the manuscript over the novel as more representative of Hemingway's "true" authorial intent, to use the author's own parlance, but rather to suggest that the two texts read together represent the complex inextricability of texts and bodily practices through intersecting representations of queer and disabled embodiment that disrupt the disembodied author-ity of the posthumous work.

Disability and the Prosthetic Public Body

A dead celebrity is nothing if not a great commodity, as the changing fortunes of Charles Scriber's Sons in the decades following Hemingway's death have shown. The public appearance of *The Garden of Eden* in 1986 marks a transitional point not only for

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make up a large portion of the Hemingway canon, but they are not identified as such in Scribner's trade publications.

Hemingway studies, but for Scribner's as well. As Tom Jenks stresses in his account of how he came to accept and carry out the task of editing Hemingway's unfinished manuscript for publication, Scribner's, once an influential independent publishing house, had recently been sold to Macmillan, diverting the profits from its backlist, including the existing Hemingway catalog, to the corporate giant (18). While one might speculate on Scribner's literary interest in bringing forward Hemingway's unpublished works, Jenks leaves little question of the company's financial interest in doing so; as in Hemingway's own words from a November 1934 letter to Scribner's editor Maxwell Perkins, "But in the end it doesnt (sic.) do anyone any particular harm to publish literature once in a while—Especially as I have always paid my way" (quoted in Trogdon 141). Indeed Scribner's re-investment in Hemingway and *The Garden of Eden* ultimately paid off: While Macmillan would eventually be swallowed by even larger corporate fish, Scribner, building off its publishing successes in the 1980s, continues to prosper now as an imprint of Simon & Schuster, thriving in part by selling its version of Hemingway to new generations of popular readers who by and large remain unaware of the extent to which Scribner's editors have shaped his work. By stripping Hemingway's *Garden of Eden* manuscript of many of its complexities concerning issues of gender, sexuality, and race (and, I posit, disability) in order to appeal to as broad a heteronotmative audience as possible, Scribner's reiterates and reifies what Moddelmog names the "popular, commodified Hemingway and his work," a construct in which "the consumer capitalist system joined forces, as it does so often, with the psychic, social, and sexual needs of a segment of the American population" (59, 64). Particularly in his later years and even more so after his death, this iconic, commodified and hypermasculine ideal exists in popular culture (though largely debunked for academic audiences by current Hemingway studies) beyond the embodied Hemingway as a distinct textual-material construct, which we might call Papa.[45]

While Hemingway shared Scribner's financial interest in producing this outsized persona, in his later years he moreover had a personal interest in promoting the mythos of Papa to shade from public view his physically deteriorating body, as multiple friends and biographers have attested. Never a stranger to injury, from his fifties onward Hemingway suffered the consequences of decades of hard living on a rapidly aging body, a well-documented list of his physical and mental impairments including multiple concussions, high blood pressure, broken bones, rapid weight loss, depression, alcoholism, and possible hemochromatosis. This is not to claim Hemingway as disabled, but rather to acknowledge the impact such impairments would have had on his practices of writing. In the years that he worked on *The Garden of Eden*, he treated his various ailments with a cocktail of medications consisting of "Serpasil (to relieve anxiety, tension, and insomnia), Doriden (to tranquilize), Ritalin (to stimulate the central nervous system), Eucanil, Seconal (to get to sleep), massive doses of vitamins A and B, and other drugs for an alcohol-damaged liver," all topped off with "Oreton-M, a synthetic testosterone … [u]sually prescribed for late-developing children, impotence, and aging males during their climacteric" (Reynolds 521-522). While impotence is longstanding trope of

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[45] Hemingway, despite his continued labor to promote "Papa" during his lifetime, was keenly aware of the divide between his private and public personas and the impact it had on his work. In *Death in the Afternoon*, for instance, he writes of the man, the writer, and the author as distinct, mutually constitutive entities.

Hemingway's, perhaps nowhere as evident as through its embodiment in Jake Barnes's war injury, throughout his critical reception the symbolic significance of impotence as a marker of the crippling effects of modernity too often eclipses its material significance as a physical impairment. Although *The Garden of Eden*'s David Bourne exists in a state of heightened virility, partner to both his wife and Marita, his lost ability to write at the novel's conclusion belies his anxiety for the sexual body as expressed in the manuscript but cut from the published text: "He had never in his relatively short life been impotent but in an hour standing before the armoire on top of which he wrote he learned what impotence was. At the end of two hours it was the same. He was a one sentence writer" (quoted in Peters 59). David's interwoven anxiety over the masculine body's capability and his failure as a writer echoes Hemingway's own concern over his decline in his later years when he was often seen by critics, both in his writing and in his public presentation, as a bad parody of his younger self. Like David, he expressed anxieties for his writing in terms of virility, as in his repeated figuration of Scribner's requests to censor obscenities from his manuscripts as attempts at "emasculation" (quoted in Trogdon, 69, 109, 116). That he wrote a provisional ending to *The Garden of Eden,* alternately dated by critics from 1950 or 1958 and ultimately cut from the published novel, moreover indicates anxiety over his capability to finish the work. The rapid decline of Hemingway's health culminated in electroshock treatments received at the Mayo Clinic in December 1960, which further stripped him of many physical and mental capacities, including his ability to write. He would take his own life the following summer.

Like its author, *The Garden of Eden* is a corpus in two bodies, one constructed for a public audience and the other largely hidden from public view. The published trade edition is slim volume, its frequent chapter breaks extending the sparse text of roughly 70,000 words to 247 pages, Jenks largely following Hemingway's manuscript in organizing the text into larger books comprised of many short chapters, even as he has excised large sections of the original text. Clocking in at over 200,000 words, the unpublished manuscript, by way of comparison, stretches over 1,500 pages, housed in five legal-sized green file boxes in the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library's archives. These archives are publicly accessible by prior appointment, requiring potential Kennedy Library patrons to submit to only a brief application and orientation process. Upon arrival, a security guard accompanies visitors to the fourth-floor research room where roughly a dozen wooden desks sit facing the large I. M. Pei-designed glass wall overlooking the Boston waterfront. Following the library's detailed protocol, only one file box can sit on a desk, and only one file folder can be removed from the box at a time. The labels on the manila folders, which appear to have been typed rather than printed, indicate both the folder number and the pages it contains. The yellowed pages of the manuscript, photocopies of the originals, have become brittle with age and yet softened from repeated use, and they remain clear and unmarked in their preservation. The bulk of the manuscript contains Hemingway's triple-spaced holograph, with notes and addendums scrawled over crossed-out lines and curling into any and all available marginal space. Roughly a quarter of the manuscript is a corrected typescript with Hemingway's penciled-in notes. One folder contains 26 pages of miscellaneous notes and fragments scrawled on the backs of envelopes and otherwise discarded sheets of paper. Unlike the cleanliness of word processing where a sentence deleted is gone forever, the manuscript makes the messy whole of Hemingway's writerly process transparently available to those who come afterwards, particularly given his tendency to save everything. Yet despite the manuscript's public availability and frequent treatment in Hemingway scholarship, this process, embodied in the original text, remains hidden from the casual reader presented only with a pubic ideal of the writer as "Papa," the master of taught, sparse prose.

As a textual/material construct comprised of Hemingway's semiautobiographical fiction and journalistic nonfiction, popular magazine interviews and author photographs, as well as his well-known penchant for sport, sexual exploit, and heavy drinking, Papa represents a brand of masculinity that disability compromises if not destroys outright[46]. As Toni Morrison's watershed critique in *Playing in the Dark* suggests and as the figure of David Bourne's father in his "Africa stories" illustrates, Papa exists as an extension of colonial logic in which the white male body signifies control and mastery: Master of Nature, Master of the Other, Master of his own bodily destiny. Yet if the latter were to become impaired the resulting disability would jeopardize his control of his surroundings and subordinates[47]. It would seem that for this reason Hemingway's litany of bodily ailments and their impact on his performance, both as macho icon and as a writer, were subsumed under the umbrella of alcoholism during his lifetime. An impairment shared by many of Hemingway's modernist contemporaries (Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Picasso, Pollock), alcoholism, unlike a concussion or impotence, grants the agency of "quitting any time," as popular (but not medical) thinking goes. The romanticized mythos of the drunken modern artist is evident in a bizarre collage of an illustration from the series "Real Tough Guys," appearing in the men's magazine *Real* in April 1956 (Figure 2). A photograph of the older Hemingway, drinking directly from an oversized bottle, has been cut away, leaving only his head and hands, the instruments of his profession, affixed to an empty background. Over the area where his torso should appear is imposed the article's title, "The Hairy Chest of Hemingway," in bold black letters. While the image of the author remains intact, the impaired body of the man is subsumed by his outsized notoriety as an artist-drunk. For the aging Hemingway, this drunken machismo was increasingly received as inappropriately adolescent, as trying too hard to fit a masculine ideal[48]. After all, Western culture does not allow the labor of constructing masculinity to be discernable—it must appear natural and neutral. Fortunately for Scribner's, the posthumous author no longer has a deteriorating material body to contend with his public image.

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[46] While there is no shortage of critique on Hemingway's masculinity, Strychacz offers a particularly useful examination of Hemingway's construction of masculinity as a form of theatre that combines Judith Butler's performative gender with Brecht's sense of the gest, a "drama that grasps and exposes the socially constructed performances of everyday life" (6). Such is Papa.

[47] In this chapter, I follow the established distinction between *impairment* as an embodied condition that affects physical or mental function and *disability* as the social conditions that limit the capabilities of impaired individuals.

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[48] David Earle offers an extensive examination of the public's shifting perception of Hemingway as chronicled in men's popular magazines from the 1950s.

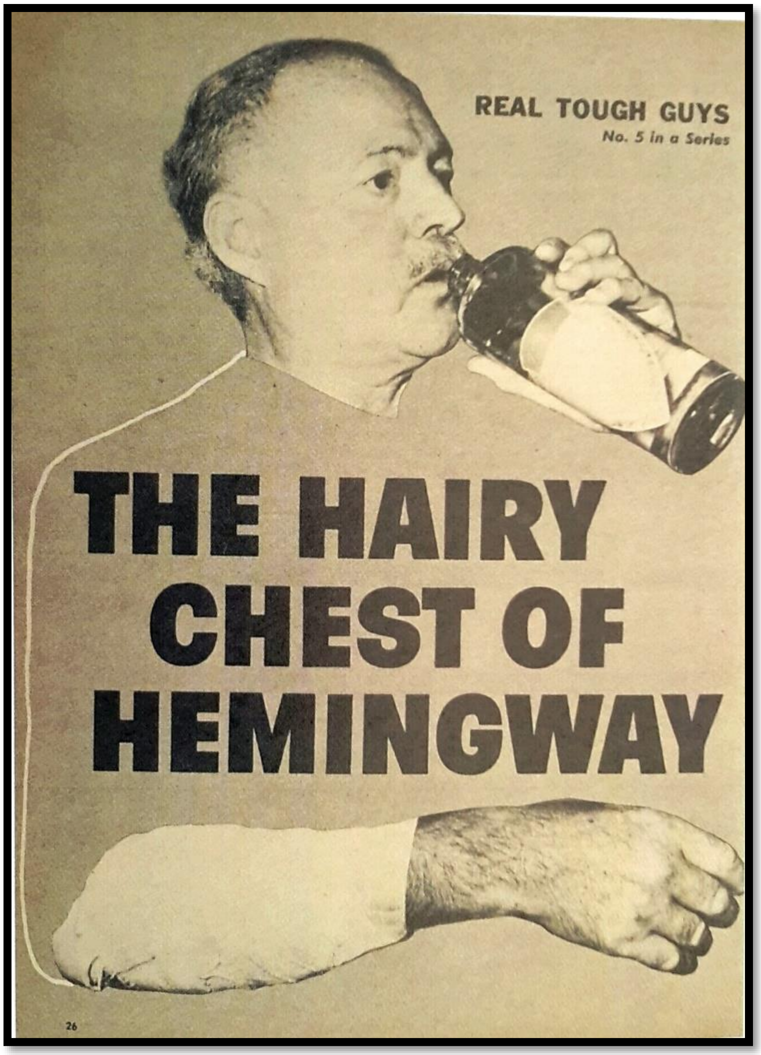
REAL TOUGH GUYS
No. 5 in a Series
THE HAIRY CHEST OF HEMINGWAY
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Figure 2: “The Hairy Chest of Hemingway,” illustration for *Real,* April 1956. Original copyright 1956 Literary Enterprises (not renewed).

Ultimately Papa, both in life and posthumously, functions as an enabling extension of Ernest Hemingway through what Lauren Berlant terms the prosthetic public body, which “ideally replace[s] the body of pain with the projected image of safety and satisfaction commodities represent” to offer “relief from the body [he] has” (“National Brands” 112, 109). The prosthetic public body is an object of desire—not to love, but to occupy and experience the privileges carried by certain bodies in the social world (Ibid.). Though Berlant frames the prosthetic public body in terms of gender and race does not explicitly tie it to issues of disability, the notion of a cultural supplement that obfuscates the body's debilitating differences and so expands its capabilities—indeed, the very term "prosthetic"—marks its natural fit within disability studies. In the years during which he wrote the *Garden of Eden* manuscript, Papa functioned in part by allowing Hemmingway to present to his reading public the ideal of his younger, commodified self, obscuring the writer's disabled body and reinforcing masculinist ideals of authorial control and the autonomous liberal subject that feminize impairment, disability, and dependence, an issue I will return to in my discussion of the gendered labor of care work. As Berlant further argues, the public semblance of autonomy is by design synonymous with the white male body:

> [B]y designating certain forms of legitimacy in abstract personhood and not the flesh, in American culture legitimacy derives from the privilege to suppress and protect the body; the fetishization of the abstract artificial 'person' is constitutional law and is also the means by which whiteness and maleness were established simultaneously as 'nothing' and 'everything.' ("National Brands" 140).

Like Hemingway, the characters of *The Garden of Eden* claim social legitimacy through the abstract personhood offered by prosthetic public bodies, whether it be David's fashioning his authorial persona in the image of his colonialist father or Catherine's appearance as a boy-chief at the Prado museum. Notably, Catherine's taboo as identified in the published/public text is in part that she makes the social construction of white masculinity all too visible with her haircuts, trousers and suntans. Scribner downplays this construction in posthumously editing the manuscript to emphasize the failure of

Catherine’s project, both in terms of her marriage to David and of her planned publication of the unfinished honeymoon narrative, though in the manuscript neither of these projects is given the finitude of the published text: Catherine’s disappearance is clearly designated as temporary, and Hemingway’s provisional ending makes clear that both her marriage and the narrative continue on. The posthumous text furthermore makes Hemingway’s own construction of masculinity invisible by obscuring the ever-in-process manuscript and thus the embodied writerly process in favor of an image of the author in complete control of his work: Masculinity must appear as easy and natural as David’s re-constructed Africa stories.

David Bourne’s prosthetic public body, his white man’s singular social legitimacy, appears both as the press clippings of book reviews he receives from his publisher and in the figure of his father as he writes the Africa stories, which threaten the Bournes’ shared sexual/racial project of bodily experimentation and therefore the text of the honeymoon narrative. While many see Catherine’s dislike of the press clippings as evidence of her jealousy of David’s success as a writer, she notably expresses no qualms over his two published novels but rather appears upset only at the multitude of two-dimensional reproductions of David’s image in the array of clippings, all featuring the same author photograph: “I’m frightened by them and all the things they say. How can we be us and have the things we have and do what we do and you be this that’s in the clippings?” (24). As David becomes increasingly alienated from Catherine and her project of twining their bodies through hair bleaching and sunbathing, obscuring the boundaries between the two of them as they both transverse boundaries of gender and race, he retreats into the white masculine ideal of his father, the hunter-colonizer. In writing the first of the Africa stories, which recounts his father's participation in the Maji-Maji rebellion and culminates in his act of violent destruction (which Hemingway, in typical iceberg fashion, only hints at), David wears his father's body as his father wears his faded corduroy jacket, and he invites his reader to do the same: "It was not him, but as he wrote it was and when someone read it, finally, it would be whoever read it and what they found when they should reach the escarpment" (129). Notably, this is the story that Catherine tears in half after reading, declaring it "horrible" and "bestial" in an apparent rejection of the story's invitation to inhabit the white male body (157). This is also the story David reconstructs perfectly from memory in Jenks's fabricated ending for the published novel after Catherine burns the clippings and the notebooks containing the Africa stories and thus destroying, by extension, David's prosthetic public body.[49]

Public-ation, Collaboration, and Care Work

Through the Africa stories, David practices an authoritative, journalistic mode of writing, one that is mimetically reproductive in contrast to Catherine's creative projects, which I discuss at greater length below. As Steven C. Roe suggests, David views his writing as historical (319); in embodying and writing his father, he practices a univocal, patriarchal discourse like an ancient prophet receiving the Word, his father being the closest thing to a god Hemingway's Eden has to offer. (Catherine, for her part, views such writing as "solitary vice" [216].) Here the white male author inhabits the crossroads of authority and authenticity where his embodied subjectivity is erased and the writing is, to use Hemingway's (and David's) word, "true." In the published conclusion of *The Garden of Eden*, David's literary sleight of hand, switching out his body for his father's, the writer for the author, is his ultimate success, and in Thomas Flanagahn's review of the novel this appears as Hemingway's success as well: "At the end Marita and Bourne are deeply in love, and Bourne is writing steadily and well, like Ernest Hemingway" (71). One cannot fully blame Flanagahn for mistaking Papa for Hemingway, for while Hemingway struggled for over a decade with the *Garden of Eden* manuscript and left it unfinished at his death, his prosthetic public body survived his suicide and lived on to write steadily and well for the next four decades. Here the legitimacy of Berlant's abstract public citizen lends the posthumous text a distinct authority which, as Meryl Altman posits, is in some way greater than the living writer's (130).

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[49] As Carl P. Eby has recently publicized, in an excised section of the unpublished manuscript Catherine's destruction of the Africa stories, positioned as the published novel's climax and long framed by critics as her ultimate betrayal of David, is matched by David's own earlier destruction of portions of the honeymoon narrative.

Publication means something different for David than it does for Catherine: For him, it means selling out the personal to the public, which in effect cuts the writer off from the text, while for Catherine, who claims repeatedly throughout the text that she cannot write and who as a woman faces barriers to publication that David does not, it means authenticating private experience in the public sphere, something she is fully reliant on David to do as she pushes him to complete the honeymoon narrative. In an examination of Hemingway's own theory of writing Hilary K. Justice argues that "[f]or the mature Hemingway, questions of creation and transformation, of privacy and publication, […] and of writing and authorship were aspects of each other, as were his texts; like his texts, such questions were interdependent and mutually informative" (56).

Catherine views the honeymoon narrative as a collaborative, living and embodied text, which closer approximates Justice's evaluation of "the permeability of the public-private boundary" in Hemingway's work than does David's authoritative text and prosthetic public body (Ibid.). While much criticism of *The Garden of Eden* positions David and Catherine as competitors[50], clashing over control of his writing, his body, and his sexuality, Catherine remains steadfastly insistent on their unifying position as collaborators, each providing distinct labor and care for the other in their shared project into which she brings a number of participants, including Marita, the hairdresser Monsieur Jean, Colonel Boyle, Picasso, and, in the manuscript, the Sheldons, Andy Murray, and Rodin. Catherine insists upon an assemblagist model of textual production that, in its challenge to liberal autonomy, goes against a publishing industry built around the author function, her joint publishing venture as much a rebellion against the name of the father as her sexual and racial experimentation.

In the novel (and even more prominently in the manuscript), Catherine is designated the role of "inventor," a conventionally masculine creative identity that counters her claim of being "the destructive type" (5). While not typically recognized as part of the act of writing, Catherine takes up the labor of creating experiences and identities, most of them the product of their shared bodily transformations and sexual play, for David to write about. To the extent that Catherine does destroy David, it is to strip away his semblance of masculine autonomy in order to create a queerly fluid, interdependent mode of being for the two of them to inhabit and create from together. If we take her at her word that she cannot write, a claim that is never fully explained and seemingly contradicted by the letter she leaves for David after burning the Africa stories which prompts him to "[find] that he still could be, and was, moved by her" (237), Catherine's role as inventor is fully dependent upon David's (re)productive textual labor, his writing of the manuscript a further materialization of the embodied experience she creates. Though David claims in the novel's opening chapter to be "the inventive type" (5), this follows his banal suggestion that they take an afternoon nap and is clearly meant as facetious. He is as dependent on Catherine's inventiveness as she is on his productivity: In terms of disability, neither is fully capable without the other's caring labor. Catherine and David's shared reliance marks his textual labor as complementary rather than subordinate to her embodied creative labor, and the two are furthermore marked as interdependent as even David's Africa stories, which also stem from his lived experience, are prompted by his attempts to elude Catherine's inventions. Unlike David's two sets of cahiers, in *The Garden of Eden* the honeymoon narrative and the Africa stories are housed together as a single text, which moves fluidly from one to the other, occupying the same space and marking Catherine's embodied experiments more inextricably as part of both stories.

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[50] Robert B. Jones, for example, views Catherine's inventiveness as a tyrannical stripping of David's authority, while Robert E. Fleming suggests that Catherine's ostensible desire to complement David's work "insidiously" disguises her true aim of competing with him ("*The Garden of Eden* as a Response to *Tender Is the Night*" 308).

By thus challenging the boundaries between gendered divisions of labor, David and Catherine's shared act of writing replicates and challenges the gender politics of care work in which bodily dependency is feminized and so seen as antithetical to masculinist ideals of liberal autonomy, "where public embodiment is in itself a sign of inadequacy to proper citizenship" (Berlant, "National Brands" 112). Just as the paid work of David's public/published writing, represented by the clippings, obscures Catherine's inventive labor (and as Scribner's published novel obscures Hemingway's ongoing, incomplete labor of the *Garden of Eden* manuscript), the abstract personhood of the (white, male) liberal subject obscures the interdependence of bodies and the universal need for care. The private, unpaid labor of care work typically falls under gendered divisions of labor, with women receiving little if any public recognition or monetary compensation for bodily care that falls under the traditional, familial purview of "women's work." Under this construct, both subject positions of care work, the impaired invalid and the ministering nurse, remain insistently feminine, even as care work was increasingly institutionalized and professionalized throughout the twentieth century[51]. With greater recognition of its intersectionality with gender and sexuality, disability has the potential to "queer" such divisions by making the care all bodies require and the support certain bodies receive under particular social structures increasingly visible, since every-body, for the most part, passes into and out of states of dependency throughout the course of a life[52] as David and Catherine pass into and out of genders through their queer sexual play.

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[51] Hence the persistence of the phrase "male nurse."

[52] As Taylor Hagood explains, much of the labor of disability studies in recent years has been to supplant the self-reliant subject idealized as the white male body at the center of modern liberalism with a model of social and political interdependence in which disability is recognized as a universal state of being, although he warns against the possibility for appropriation of difference under such a model, which could further marginalize the disabled body (48, 54). As disability theorists commonly observe, some individuals born with chronic disabilities never pass out of states of dependency, while others are systematically supported by social structures and institutions that render their bodily dependence invisible. The prosthetic public body props up this illusion.

As with their writing, in the private space of their honeymoon retreat David and Catherine participate interdependently in the shared labor of care work outside the public economy of paid labor: of the hotel in La Napoule where most of the novel takes place, Catherine insists, "[t]here is no one there and we'll be quiet and good and work and take care of each other" (71). It should be noted, however, that this shared space of private caring labor is afforded by Catherine's considerable inherited wealth: just as Catherine's income supports David's writing (and as Hemingway's independently wealthy wives supported his), it supports their ability to care for each other without relying on David's paid public labor. *The Garden of Eden* is a text driven not so much by plot, not even so much by character, as it is by the daily cycle of bodily care, consisting of eating, grooming, and sex, which I discuss further below. In each of these labors David and Catherine pass between masculine and feminine identification, queering gendered constructions of which bodies give and which receive care. This is evident when Colonel Boyle directs David to "[t]ake good care of [Catherine]" (65), a command matched in the manuscript but removed from the published novel as he tells Catherine, who at the time identifies as a boy, to take care of David. The visibility of David and Catherine's shared labor of care work contrasts sharply with the care David receives from his father in the story of the elephant hunt that "proves" his manhood, where Mr. Bourne waits until the young Davey is asleep before checking the pads of his feet for blisters, seemingly in the hope that this care will go unobserved. Care work and sexuality further intersect when Catherine brings Marita into their marriage as a third partner who offers sex and nurture to both Bournes and who tries "very hard" to "study" and fulfil their every need (122).

For a short time this queer collectivity operates interdependently, irrespective of proscriptive gender roles in both their sexual play and their care of one another, until Catherine's behavior grows increasingly erratic, her mental distress demanding ever greater care, and David and Marita in response fall back onto old patterns of heteronormativity.

Although the published novel ends with David's repudiation of the private life of collective labor as he sends Catherine off to the professional care of a Swiss clinic, in effect trading her interdependence for Marita's subservience while he returns to the authoritative writing of the Africa stories, the manuscript offers no such closure. Catherine does leave the hotel at La Napoule in one of the last completed chapters, but it is with the clear intention of returning in ten days' time, and return she does in Hemingway's provisional ending. A continuation of the honeymoon narrative, the provisional ending finds David and Catherine some time later sunbathing at the cove as they had in the early days of their marriage, although Catherine, who has since undergone clinical care, appears greatly changed and newly impaired to the point of disability[53]. She is now fully dependent on David for her daily care routine as he attentively monitors her needs, watching her skin for signs of damage and rubbing almond oil over her breasts in a gesture more like that of a nurse than the caress of a lover. Her creative capacity has likewise been impaired, shown as she laments for the time when "I used to talk about anything and everything and we owned the world" (quoted in Fleming, "The Endings of Hemingway's *Garden of Eden*" 268), and she requests David's assistance in carrying out her final invention, their joint suicide. While there remains some confusion over its exact date, it remains notable that Hemingway wrote the provisional ending at a time when he feared his growing bodily impairments and physical dependency would render him, like Catherine, incapable of completing his textual work. In contrast with the published novel, which abandons Catherine altogether, Hemingway's unfinished manuscript complicates notions of abstract personhood and liberal autonomy by its insistent and repeated returns to the care of the queer and disabled body.

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[53] The distinction between impairment and disability is in large part institutional, so I feel confident labeling Catherine as disabled in the provisional ending because she has undergone clinical treatment.

Cyclical Caring Labor and the Queer Quotidian

If one product of the published novel's heteronormative, disability-phobic ending is the reinforcement of Papa Hemingway as a figure of male liberal autonomy and authorial control, the manuscript, which in place of such resolution returns continuously to the same embodied themes of queer sex and interdependent care, labors instead to challenge this logic of curative futurity by making queer sexuality and identity as quotidian—as boring—as care work. That multiple editors including Tom Jenks struggled to carve a publishable novel with a formulaic exposition-complications-climax-resolution plot structure out of the manuscript's 200,000 words attests to the fact that the incomplete manuscript contains a different type of narrative text altogether with its unending daily cycle of writing, eating, swimming and sunbathing, haircutting, drinking, conversing, and screwing. Similarities between the unfinished manuscript and the honeymoon narrative seem to indicate that Hemingway may never have intended *The Garden of Eden* to become a novel at all, but rather to develop along the lines of *Death in the Afternoon* or his unfinished project of air, land, and sea stories, published separately as *Islands in the Stream* (1970) and *The Dangerous Summer* (1985). Each of these works, comprised of fiction, biography, and travel writing, defies traditional generic categorization and might today fall under the umbrella of "creative nonfiction." Carlos Baker, who read the unfinished *Garden of Eden* manuscript before its publication, complains in his biography of Hemingway that he found it to be "filled with astonishing ineptitudes" and that it "had none of the taut nervousness of Ernest's best fiction, and was so repetitious that it seemed interminable" (540). While seemingly harsh, Baker's assessment of the manuscript is indeed fair, particularly of its final chapters in which Marita, rather than settling into wifely normalcy as in the published text, reprises Catherine's project of haircutting, conversation, argument, and queer sex, which is yet again repeated by Nick and Barbara Sheldon in their narrative. Even the published novel caught its share of negative criticism over its repetitiveness, with Wilfrid Sheed famously declaring in his 1986 review that "*The Garden of Eden* is a bore. It needs a good snake" (5). For what on its surface is among Hemingway's most provocative work with its focus on queer sex and gender play to be received as boring is quite remarkable and merits further exploration.

Gertrude Stein, Hemingway's onetime mentor whose very name is synonymous with repetition, asks:

> Is there repetition or is there insistence. [… E]very time one of the hundreds of times a newspaper man makes fun of my writing and of my repetition he always has the same theme, always having the same theme, that is, if you like, repetition, that is if you like the repeating that is the same thing, but once started expressing this thing, expressing any thing there can be no repetition because the essence of that expression is insistence. (288).

Stein traces this difference between repetition and insistence, a constantly changing form of emphasis, from practices of writing to ongoing cycles of embodied action, further expounding that:

> [A]nything one is remembering is a repetition, but existing as a human being, that is being listening and hearing is never repetition. It is not repetition if it is that which you are actually doing because naturally each time the emphasis is different just as the cinema has each time a slightly different thing to make it all be moving. (295).

This movement through repeated action, the material counterpart of textual insistence, is essential to Stein's writing, though she claims it can only be perceived if it moves *against* something (287). In Hemingway's *Garden of Eden* manuscript the movement of the Bournes' repeated practices of bodily care comes into focus only upon their first encounter Nick and Barbara Sheldon, whom Jenks excised from the published novel despite their integral role in the manuscript. Having existed for some time within their private daily cycle of identical haircuts, suntans, and sexual gender play, Catherine is unexpectedly frightened when she first sees Nick and Barbara at a café in Biarritz with their similarly identical long hairstyles. She grows hostile of Barbara, who revels in the scandal of their public queerness, and even dismisses the Sheldons' matching haircuts as falling short of her own stylish invention. The Bournes, for their part, have managed to avoid public scandal over their queerly identical appearance through generous tips and donations to the collection plate—in David's words, "We're good clients. What the good client does is trés bien" (83). Barbara responds to Catharine's hostility with her own disavowal, as she confesses to David: "I know I'm strange. But I'm not a queer and I never was. […] It was just a simple delight or ecstasy. It was private and I made it public" (quoted in Spilka 37). Yet it is not the movement found in the bodily repetition of their queer daily rituals that these women seem to fear, but rather the exposure of their private lives now made perceptible on their bodies for public consumption.

Catherine's contagious queer panic at the sight of the Sheldons' public scandal recalls Eve Sedgwick's discussion of Claggart, the conspicuous homosexual in Melville's *Billy Budd* whose presence on the ship has queer implications for Captain Vere's "impartial" desire to gaze at Billy: "[P]erhaps rather than being mutually eternally opposing entities, X versus non-X, desire versus non-desire, 'partial' and 'impartial'"—or in this case, the Sheldons' public scandal and the Bournes' private kink—"are meant to relate here instead as *part* to *whole*" (original emphasis, 109). Once Catherine, over the course of several encounters and many glasses of absinthe, is made to recognize the Sheldons' queer public embodiment within the purview of the Bournes' own project of gender and sexual play, she is eager to collaborate with them on the honeymoon narrative, and she makes plans for Nick, an artist, to illustrate the honeymoon narrative, which would cement the Sheldons' participation in their shared labor of creation. To return to Stein's theory of repetition, Catherine's initial queer panic upon perceiving her movement once it comes against the Sheldons' public scandal elucidates why she feels so urgently the need to publish the honeymoon narrative: The insistence produced by the repetitions in the published text would create a public that reads her queer embodiment not as threatening, but rather as the movement produced by the daily repetition of sex and care. Under such a gaze the queer is rendered quotidian, even boring.

Boredom is generally taken as a negative state of being, antithetical to productive activity. This is clearly Catherine's immediate perception, as she constantly worries that married life with David will become boring. She expresses this concern in the early days of the honeymoon before she begins her bodily and sexual transformations, asking David "Do I bore you, darling?" amid a conversational lull (11), and again after David suffers remorse over their sexual transformations in Madrid[54]:

> "Do you like me as a girl," she said very seriously and then smiled.
>
> "Yes," he said.
>
> "That's good," she said. "I'm glad someone likes it because it's a god damned bore." (70).

It is perhaps this view of boredom that ultimately explains Catherine's claims that she cannot write, for when David complains that "bore" is "the one damned word in the language I can't stand," she replies defensively, "Lucky you with only one word like that in the language" (41). Yet it is from a place of boredom, cut off from the world in the relative privacy of their honeymoon retreat, that Catherine creates the embodied inventions that become David's textual production. This follows Siegfried Kracauer's modernist construction of boredom in which the constant distractions of mass culture, the omnipresence of film and radio, drive away consciousness and inhibit creative productivity, rendering boredom the desired state:

> But what if one refuses to allow oneself to be chased away? Then boredom becomes the only proper occupation, since it provides a kind of guarantee that one is, so to speak, still in control of one's own existence. If one were never bored,

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[54] Although underplayed in the published novel, the Bournes' time in Madrid becomes a major turning point for David in the manuscript, who consistently points back to the remorse he experienced there as the beginning of his negative feelings for Catherine's inventions.

> one would presumably not really be present at all and would thus be merely one more object of boredom […]. (334).

Here Kracauer makes boredom the sign of the sort of liberal control and authenticity typically associated with the white masculinity, contrasting the embodied materiality of presence with a nonproductive abstracted personhood, a marked departure from the prosthetic public body. In this construct boredom functions as a discipline, capable of producing its material effects on and through the body.

Still, the idle body is rarely conceived as the docile body of discipline, "something," in Foucault's words, "that can be made; out of a formless clay, an inapt body" despite its "turning silently into the automatism of habit" (*Discipline and Punish*, 135). Foucault, in defining the elements of discipline that render the useful and intelligible body docile, stresses its exhaustive use: "it was the principle of non-idleness: it was forbidden to waste time" (154). Yet in this particular framework Foucault's view of discipline is limited by its association with hegemonic coercion, and he overlooks less authoritative, more liberatory formations of docile bodies. As the Bournes and the Sheldons illustrate, leisurely boredom can be just as much a form of "disciplinary monotony" as the infantry's daily drills, their habituated action likewise occurring in the "protected place" of a confinement "closed in upon itself," and eventually leading to "the correlation of the body and the gesture" (141, 152). Read this way, Catherine's daily cycle of care is a discipline defined not from the outside in by "the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces" (137), but rather by the self-controlled existential interiority Kracauer insists can only be produced through boredom. Under this discipline the docile body remains open and creative rather than constricted and repressed by coercion. By prompting her bodily and sexual transformations, boredom grants Catherine the control to explore multiple forms of queer identity, which she shares with David, Marita, the Sheldons and others through their collaborative creation of the honeymoon narrative.

Public and Private Texts

I would not be the first to suggest that Hemingway's unfinished *Garden of Eden* manuscript *is* the Bournes' honeymoon narrative, that David and Catherine's gender and sexual play presents Hemingway's own living, continuously repetitious textual production. It is rather unfortunate then that in the years following the novel's publication, the manuscript has gradually receded from public view. While ostensibly available for public examination, the manuscript remains inaccessible to most readers, the only complete public copy physically housed in the Kennedy Library's Boston archives. As the lens of disability makes plain, accessibility is the true measure of a space's availability, and so although Hemingway's manuscript is available to the public, its inaccessibility places into question its status as a public text. Compounding this inaccessibility is the Hemingway family's wish that the manuscript, over which they hold private copyright, not be photocopied or reproduced digitally, and though scholars in the past have been granted permission to publish portions of the manuscript within their criticism, the Hemingway Foundation more recently has ceased granting permission or even entertaining requests for publication. This means that even scholars who have read the entirety of the manuscript, as I have, can only publicize their findings through existing secondary sources, compromising the public authority of the primary text.

The published novel, on the other hand, lives on in public view in part through a 2010 film adaptation. Problematically titled *Hemingway's Garden of Eden*, the film is even more insistent than the Scriber's text on being Hemingway's own unaltered work, the deletion of the titular "The" marking the film's content itself and not merely its textual source as *Hemingway's*. Here David Bourne, played by Jack Huston, appears as a doppelganger of the young Ernest Hemingway, his voiceover narration, penned by screenwriter James Scott Linville but presented as though the author's own, granting the film a first-person perspective lacking in the written text. This visual twinning of David Bourne and Ernest Hemingway is perhaps understandable given the autobiographical similarities between character and author, the text echoing Hemingway's 1920's expatriate ramblings along the Mediterranean coast, but the unfortunate immediate effect is that it obfuscates David and Catherine's shared project of queer corporeal twinning, the appearance of Hemingway's moustache on Huston's face ruining any semblance of mirroring between him and Catherine[55]. This corporeal realignment of David away from Catherine and toward the author's public image is perhaps the film's greatest adaptive sin, contributing as it does to the downgrading of Catherine from creative collaborator to popular trope, the rich bitch, as in the manuscript Catherine is as much a reflection of Hemingway's complex gender and textual creation as David is. But then again, a film about queer interdependence as lived through the quotidian cycles of bodily care would be as boring and unsellable as the unpublished text. So as with Scribner's, it appears the filmmakers chose to serve their material interest by presenting this *Garden of Eden* as yet another prosthetic public body for Ernest Hemingway, here updated and rejuvenated for an increasingly visually literate and image-conscious twenty-first century audience.

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[55] While I would recommend that my audience avoid the tedium of watching the film in its entirety, its cinematic trailer shows Huston's transformation from a young Ernest Hemingway to a mustachioed Hemingway-Catherine hybrid: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FLEN0jEJx0.

Ideally, today's reading public, armed with the tools of digital culture, might be offered a means to bring *The Garden of Eden*'s queer textual contradictions into greater alignment instead of a seemingly endless procession of Papas, regurgitated like David Bourne's author photograph in Catherine's despised press clippings. As Tom Jenks reflected at the twenty-fifth anniversary of his edited text's first publication, a "universally accessible digital archive of [Hemingway's] body of published and unpublished works" would free the reader of institutional gatekeepers, be they corporate or academic, and the (sometimes market-driven, sometimes unintentional) restrictions they place on the text (27). This vision has since come to fruition for a growing number of modernist authors whose digital archives have been given full public access—a number that yet excludes Ernest Hemingway. In the end the full body of the *Garden of Eden* text, comprising both the unpublished manuscript and the posthumous novel, remains as inaccessible and as paradoxical as Hemingway's own complex gendered, racialized, disabled embodiment, as revealed through his seemingly disparate yet mutually constructive private and public personas. While my partial aim in this chapter has been to better understand the role of the gendered, disabled body in the writerly construction of the multiple *Garden of Eden* texts, what remains to be further explored is the continuing impact of these same concerns on Hemingway's broad reading public. The status quo under which only a limited scholarly audience can access the queer and disabled corpo-reality behind Hemingway’s prosthetic public body reaffirms a limited masculinist ideal of modernism and modern liberal subjectivity that continues to manifest itself in our public environments and social structures, as I further explore in my coda.

Coda:

Who's Going to Care?: Providing for the Insistent Materiality of Bodies the Age of "Make America Great Again"

> U.S. policies on social citizenship and care have assumed that most care takes place within the family and is carried out as part of unpaid labor by family members. […] Seeing family and women's caring as "natural" disguises the material relationships of dependence that undergird the arrangement. Love is not enough; care requires material resources. (Glenn 193).

> The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
>
> Petals on a wet, black bough.
>
> (Ezra Pound, "In a Station of the Metro")

On January 29, 2019, Malaysia Goodson, a twenty-two-year-old mother from Stamford, Connecticut, died when she fell while carrying her one-year-old daughter Rhylee in a stroller down a flight of stairs to Midtown Manhattan's Seventh Avenue subway station. As reports of her death spread across social media, parents and people with disabilities responded by sharing their own difficulty navigating New York City's notoriously inaccessible public transit system, where they could little rely on the kindness of strangers more likely to push past them in the crush of bodies than to pause and offer help. The circumstances of Goodson's death renewed demands from parents' organizations and disability advocates for improved accessibility throughout the city's aging transit system where, the *New York Times* reports, "Only about a quarter of the subway system's 472 stations have elevators, and the ones that exist are often out of order. One survey of subway elevator breakdowns found that, on average, each elevator breaks down 53 times a year" (Gold). Multiple class action lawsuits filed by Disability Rights Advocates against the Metropolitan Transportation Agency (MTA) in 2017 argue that the city's subway system violates the federal Americans with Disabilities Act in failing to fix what is commonly described as one of the least accessible major transit systems in the world. In 2018 MTA proposed a plan called Fast Forward to "add enough elevators to the subway system by 2025 so that no rider would be more than two stops from an accessible station" (Ibid.). Estimated to cost $40 billion dollars over ten years, the plan has not yet been funded.

This dissertation has focused on the persistence of feminine, queer, and disabled bodies in the face of eugenicist discourses of cultural reproduction, but that Goodson's death occurred at a century-old subway station, the sort of uniquely modern urban space that Ezra Pound makes stand for modernist isolation and alienation in perhaps his most widely read Imagist poem, indicates the equally persistent agency of such socially organized material structures designed to accommodate only a particular form of public embodiment to leave those with different capabilities and needs behind. While modernist theories of language's materiality may initially seem like played-out relics of the past, these discourses continue to materialize through the reified social structures they enable—structures that continue to produce eugenicist ramifications for embodied difference. Such structures still define which bodies can circulate within the public and be hailed as full rights-bearing citizens, as well as which forms of labor are legitimized and compensated. Here we see language "resituated as one intensification of a bodily capability, one manner of many that the body can articulate itself, one platform out of many through which politics can enunciate, and finally one kind of matter" (Puar, *Right to Maim* 27). As I have labored to demonstrate throughout this dissertation and as Evelyn Nakano Glenn further posits, this discursive marginalization within modern social structures produces material consequences not only for those feminine, queer, and disabled individuals dependent on bodily care, but also those who provide the caring labor necessary to sustain endemic corporeal difference: "[P]aid caring has not been included in the 'modernization' of labor relations. It has continued to be treated as part of the private family realm rather than as part of the market" (Glenn 149). Twenty-first century online culture may have given such socially marginalized individuals greater access to public discourse, but inequitable access to public space, resources, and institutions persists, making plain that digital access to the public does not simply materialize into public accessibility. So while social media and other digital platforms have made the daily plights of mothers, people with disabilities, people of color, and LGBTQ folk more visible to the public eye, this does not often result in securing the material resources necessary to enact significant structural changes to correct institutionalized inequalities. The exception may be the LGBTQ community's successful fight for marital equality, which was commonly framed in terms of access to insurance benefits and hospitalized loved ones within a national health care system structured around the heterosexual family—although this argument fails to accommodate those queer individuals whose kinship arrangements fall outside the structures of heteronormativity.

While many of the nationalist, eugenicist discourses I examine in this dissertation moved underground or went dormant over the course of the long twentieth century, today's America is no less bent toward cultural reproductive futurity, which still defines acceptable forms of public embodiment through liberal ideals of individual autonomy that posit all forms of dependence as anti-American, from social security disability beneficiaries depicted as lazy cheats gaming the system to transgender servicemembers whose medical care is portrayed as a crippling drain on the military's astronomical budget. Indeed, one of the most daunting aspects of this dissertation project has been the disturbing frequency with which I see parallels between my research and the daily headlines[56]. I am regularly made to recognize the continuity of power imbalances over the course of the last century, that despite discrete moments of victory in the narrative of social progress that in part defines modernity, a limited and limiting model of liberal citizenship defined upon white masculinity continues to perpetuate the same structures of oppression I address in my readings of modernist texts. As a nation, we must face the reality that we have become the no-future enacted by a century of eugenicist cultural reproduction now enfolded within the structures of neoliberalism, that the symbolic lost generation signified by Jake Barnes's war wound correlates to the corporeal loss of generations of racialized, queer, and disabled folk removed from the public body through institutionalization and whose reproductive capabilities were stripped under twentieth century state policy. In too many ways, we as a nation are still laboring to enact Jason Compson's castration cure.

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[56] Nationalism and nationalist discourses have garnered increased public attention since the 2016 presidential election, during which then-candidate Donald Trump released a book titled *Great Again: How to Fix Our Crippled America*. On such occasions, I follow Kafer in asking, "Why is disability in the present constantly deferred, such that disability often enters critical discourse only as the marker of what must be eliminated from our futures or what was unquestioningly eliminated in our pasts?" (10).

The increasing privatization of public resources and institutions under twenty-first century neoliberalism promises to transform the structures of corporeal dependency and care work, but this reorganization has as of yet failed to adequately address the social legacy of persistent power imbalances that still overwhelmingly determine which bodies are selected to receive the care they require, who is required to give care, and how caring labor is compensated. Under the neoliberal privatization of care it would seem that, as Glenn suggests, "we have come full circle to an earlier period when the sick, disabled, and elderly were nursed at home by a female relative, neighbor, or friend" whose caring labor is made to appear as the natural action of love rather than as necessary labor with an inherent market value (155). Today's privatized care may provide increased options for those with the necessary means and access to support their bodily needs, and as Warner posits, "A notion of privacy as a right to self-determination may prove in many contexts to be extremely valuable." And yet, he continues, "A merely naturalized privacy, on the other hand, might block access to the health services and other kinds of publicly available assistance that self-determination might require" ("Public and Private" 53-54). This lack of access was the exact outcome of the Supreme Court's unanimous ruling in the case of Long Island Home Care v. Evelyn Coke (2007), which determined that in-home care workers like Ms. Coke, a Jamaican immigrant who worked for over twenty years at a for-profit senior care company, were not entitled to minimum wage and overtime compensation. The decision was made in part because of some Justices' concerns that adequately compensating care workers for their labor would make private in-home care unaffordable for millions of Americans, a concern that overlooked Evelyn Coke's own need for care as a 73-year-old woman suffering from kidney failure. Here we see that the privatization of care based on naturalized, essentialized assumptions about bodies and care work, assumptions that take white men's bodily needs as the standard of care and women's familial obligations as the standard of labor compensation, serve in practice to steer material resources away from those bodies most in need of care.

The long twentieth century has likewise seen the return from a notion of care as a public interest to the fragmented individualization of the body politic through a capitalist culture of self-care that renders individuals increasingly responsible for the care they can or cannot afford. I do not intend here to idealize notions of public care, acknowledging that, as I examined through the history of the advice column in chapter three, public institutions are as likely to produce and perpetuate debilitation as they are to help individuals access the care they require. Instead, I want to highlight a shift away from twentieth century notions of personal care in the service of the public good toward today's neoliberal culture of self-care where notions of health and the healthy body are increasingly circulated *as* goods. In the third volume of *The History of Sexuality,* Foucault outlines a history of discourses on the care of the self, which envelop both philosophical and corporeal development, where "the principle of care of oneself [...] took the form of an attitude, a mode of behavior [which] came to constitute a social practice, giving rise to relationships between individuals, to exchanges and communications, and at times even to institutions" (*Care of the Self* 44-45)[57]. This progressive notion of care, that care of the self is the necessary first step toward establishing mutually beneficial social relationships, was prominent in American federal policy through most of the twentieth century during which time public health programs, including family planning, access to vaccinations, and the fluoridation of drinking water, were credited along with public education and labor reforms with producing an American standard of living. Yet with standards comes standardization, and while institutionalized public health programs fell vitally short of providing the care necessary for all citizens, particularly the poor and people with disabilities, those with the necessary means and capabilities could supplement or substitute standardized public care with individualized self-care products and services. A quick Google search of "self-care" reveals that today's corporate culture of care is primarily targeted to those with easy access to nutritious foods and dietary supplements, exercise equipment and workout gear, and established social support systems, all of which reduces self-care to the sort of leisure activity marked by conspicuous consumption attainable only to those with the necessary material resources. At the same time we see growing numbers of people claiming the right to refuse public care, as in the case of the anti-vaxxer movement, under the individual protections of personal freedom and liberal autonomy. Under the extremes of neoliberal privatization, feminism's old liberal dictate to "keep your laws off my body" has gone rogue.

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[57] Foucault does not fully acknowledge in this text that the basis of his analysis of the care of the self is a notion of the public body as the exclusive property of male citizenship, though elsewhere he frames the public functionality of an ethic of care of the self as the purview of the "free man, who behaves correctly, to know how to govern his wife, his children and his home" ("The Ethic of Care for the Self" 7).

In this neoliberal context where power is retained by those who can afford the care coerced from minoritized others while denying them access to that same American standard of care, I want to reiterate an argument I posited in my introduction, that disability remains the most prone site for eugenicist ideologies today, particularly through its intersectionality with poverty, racialization, and citizenship. Failed twentieth century state efforts to "cure" the American body politic of disability by removing people with disabilities to government-operated institutions and through forced sterilization programs have given way to a privatized care system where "[d]isabled bodies have now been transitioned into objects of care that represent a unique site for […] capitalist profit" (Puar, *Right to Maim* 78). Under privatization, the standard of care for people with disabilities is largely measured not in terms of meeting individual needs but rather by its financial profitability. The circulation of disabled bodies as objectified goods within corporate care systems further promotes what Bennett identifies as an ideology of "soul vitalism" (88), where the paternalistic care those with power provide to those without renders them vitally inferior, less essentially human and therefore prone to exploitation through the removal of their rights as citizens. Rather than "curing" the body politic of disability, today's eugenics operates by objectifying minoritized individuals in order to extract value from their abjected bodies, thus privatized systems of care *produce* disability through "[r]elational forms of capitalism, care, and racialization [that] inform an assemblage of debilities and capabilities" in order to increase the number of bodies circulating within the system and perpetuate the gains of corporate institutions built on caring for permanently debilitated bodies, as is the case with the prison industrial complex (Puar, *Right to Maim* xvi). It must be noted that these systems disproportionately target poor communities of color, as in the detention of undocumented migrant children or the school-to-prison pipeline, so that those bodies prevented by race, citizenship, and poverty from otherwise participating in a labor market designed to exclude them might still bring a profit to the private economy.

As privatized care systems shift responsibility away from the state and toward the individual, women are increasingly made responsible for providing unpaid care work to their families, which includes caring for a rapidly growing number of aging parents and adult relatives along with more traditional child care, making women disproportionality shoulder the burden of systemic failures in providing material resources for individual care. Beyond this burden, mothers are increasingly prone to social pressures that cast them as solely responsible for their children's well-being, making the mother a particular target for blame when a child's needs are not met. This pressure begins before the child is even born, as Kafer contends: "The pervasiveness of prenatal testing, and especially its acceptance as part of the standard of care for pregnant women, casts women as responsible for their future children's able-bodiness/able-mindedness" (69). This marks a sort of return to the neuro-gynecological notion of vaginal impressibility circulated by women physicians at the fin-de-siècle, which I discussed in my first chapter. Today's medical knowledge has given us an understanding of how social injustice is inherited in the womb as mothers pass on the effects of malnutrition, stress, trauma—and in some cases, drug addiction—to their unborn children, affecting the development of their physical and cognitive capabilities, yet the responsibility for the care of their families that mothers shoulder is too rarely framed within this larger social context where women's bodies are made the carriers of structural inequalities. Against this context, women are increasingly delaying or opting out of motherhood altogether, as the last decade has seen a continual decrease in American birth rates. At the same time, America sustains the highest maternal mortality rate among developed nations. As Malaysia Goodson's death at a Manhattan subway station illustrates further still, we do not currently have a system of material structures in place to support mothers as public bodies and mothering as a public function, which in turn leads to the perpetuation of social inequality, debilitation and disability, and the erasure of non-autonomous, nonnormative corpo-reality.

If we were to finally accept and account for the persistent materiality of bodies, the shift away from a neoliberal system of paternalized care toward a social model that would better provide individuals, mothers, families, and communities access to the material resources necessary to support the full range of public embodiment would require not only a major restructuring of the American economy, but also a reckoning with the essential shortcomings in an American ideology of the autonomous liberal subject. As the nation's current unending battle over health care reform illustrates, such efforts consistently draw opposition from those individuals, industries, and institutions that draw personal and financial benefit from America's neoliberal care systems, who have labeled such reform efforts aimed at better distributing material resources to those in need of care a softening "feminization" of American culture. "You hear terms like the 'nanny state' as though there is something wrong with the idea of maternal care as a conception of what society actually does" posits Martha Nussbaum, who since the 1980s has been promoting through her capabilities model of human rights a vision of society based on mutual care deliberately aimed at the inclusion of people with disabilities within notions of justice and citizenship (120-121). While I echo Nussbaum in recognizing that a shift away from paternalism toward a more maternal, intersectional model of care that acknowledges the interdependence of all embodied subjects—a "feminization" of American culture—is exactly what is required to address systemic inequalities in the distribution and compensation of care, I also recognize, as does she, that women have been waging this battle for over a century with little material progress. Women's suffrage movements in America and England advocated for caring labor in the home to garner adequate financial compensation at the turn of the twentieth century, and they were likewise met with steep opposition, including from no less a source than *The Freewoman*, a would-be feminist little magazine started in 1911, which published in its second edition a scathing assessment that "The well-intentioned people, now utterly bewildered, [who] are pretending that housework has fallen into disrepute because it is unpaid work […] have gone so far as to set up a monstrous theory that wives should become the paid employees of their husbands! Beyond this, folly can no further go!" ("Commentary on Bondwomen" 22). Even if larger structural change has been slow or difficult in coming, or if that change is still yet to come, feminist organizations in the twenty-first century have made significant internal progress toward greater inclusivity and intersectionality in their aims, and in accepting Irigaray's feminist proposition that the care of bodies is and must remain women's prerogative, they have led the charge for improved social justice for people with all forms of embodiment.

If the 2018 election cycle was any indication, growing numbers of the American public appear to be awakening to the failures of a model of citizenship built on an antibiologist notion of liberal autonomy. The nation's neoliberal system of privatized care is perhaps the most visible target of this growing awareness, as efforts toward a more equitable health care system voiced in the slogan "Medicare for All" continue to gain mainstream support, pushed by an intersectional coalition of social justice movements that saw record numbers of women, people of color, and LGBTQ individuals elected to state and federal offices across the nation. Yet as many within these movements recognize, reorganizing the nation's health care system represents but one of many interconnected social efforts aimed at supporting the material body's capabilities to ensure everyone has access to full public citizenship, that along with health care reform we must address the sort of systemic oversights that in failing to acknowledge the full range of public embodiment led to Malaysia Goodson's death and Evelyn Coke's inability to secure the same American standard of care she provided over a lifetime. "Love is not enough," argues Glenn, "care requires material resources" (193), and securing those resources has been and continues to be a daunting task that we must not abandon. But in order to reorganize a material present constructed by the last century's eugenicist discourses and cultural reproductive futurity that today we all occupy toward a vision of greater inclusivity for our own future, to fully face our own discursive complicity in perpetuating the systemic erasure of non-normative embodiment, we must first address those public discourses that deny the material body's assemblagist corpo-reality. Only by changing our notion of citizenship to better account for the persistent materiality of bodies can we challenge the antibiologist neoliberal structures that organize out daily lives. Whether or not we choose to accept these challenges, the current system will prove unsustainable: As a century of eugenicist discourses built to shore up antibiologism has demonstrated, even if we continue to suppress and ignore the body's agential materiality, those persistent bodies will eventually rupture through.

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APPENDIX A:

NOTE ON IMAGES AND COPYRIGHT

With the assistance of Arizona State University's reference librarians, I have labored to ensure that neither of the images I have included as figures in this dissertation is currently protected by copyright.

Figure 1: Jessie Wood, "Beatrice Fairfax," cartoon illustration for the *New York Evening Journal*, July 1898.

This image appears in Marie Manning's 1944 book *Ladies Now and Then: by Beatrice Fairfax (Marie Manning),* which has since become public domain.

Figure 2: "The Hairy Chest of Hemingway," illustration for *Real*, April 1956.

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