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In today’s culture, to know who you are is to be confined to your own sexuality. One’s own subjectivity is reduced, defined, and limited by the domain of sexuality. In the midst of all, paradoxically, a proliferation of sexual identities is taking place as a form of resistance. While this unfolding of sexual identities confronts the limitation of the present field of sexuality, it nonetheless deepens, directly or indirectly, the linkage between one’s own subjectivity and sexuality. Nonetheless, this relationship between one’s own subjectivity and sexual identity requires the embodiment of specific appearances, behaviors, and practices. Ironically, this very embodiment is what allows the “cultivation of the self.” To cultivate and attend to oneself is to embody sets of practices through which one creates “not just a momentary preparation for living,” but also “a form of living”\(^1\). Through cultivating oneself, perhaps, we can overcome the predominance of sexuality in how we define ourselves. One of the important tasks of self-cultivation, Foucault suggests, is the technology of unlearning where one is empowered to critically get rid of all bad habits and false opinions he acquired from all authorities around him\(^2\). By unlearning one’s own previous perception, as well as embodiment of a specific sexual identity, one hopefully accomplishes the creation of a subjectivity that is not confined by sexual identity and carries a lifelong project of creating one’s own unique self through many other possibilities outside of sexuality.

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2 Ibid, 97.
Under the predominance of sexuality, the proliferation of sexual identities is used sometimes as a resisting strategy to the current place of sexuality in our society. However, it rather seems to serve this hegemony of the domain of sexuality by deepening the notion that one’s subjectivity is unthinkable without sexuality. This reinforcement of the predominance of sexuality that comes with the proliferation of sexual identities is due to both sharing the conditions of power as a productive force and the necessity for a system of differentiations.

When power no longer only defines subjects in the juridical sense, but also creates discourses in which subjects are assigned to specific identities, power intervenes and rules our relationship with ourselves and with others. Power is no longer repressing or eliminating; rather, it is inventing and producing. This understanding of emerging territories of power relocates one’s relation to the discourses of sexuality differently. Foucault’s *The History of Sexuality* critiques the traditional approach that conceives the relationship between sexuality and power only in terms of repression. Foucault challenges this view by emphasizing a different yet crucial objective, that “the point to consider is not the level of indulgence or the quantity of repression but the form of power that was exercised.”

The way sexuality is exercised today over one’s subjectivity demands not only a separation between them, but also a historical investigation on how sexuality and subjectivity has become interchangeable and almost identical. This investigation was made possible through Foucault’s project on sexuality. Examining the proliferation of sexual identities with the same scope, Foucault’s historiography of the establishment of sexual identity makes one wonder if today’s endless proliferation of sexuality is another era in which one’s subjectivity still entails “an incorporation of perversions and a new specification of individuals”. Today, the subjectivity of individuals is not only confined to the domain of sexuality, but also forced to keep up in the race of sexual identities. For instance, people who are bisexual, queer, asexual and many other forms of sexual identities are becoming “a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood in addition to being a type of life, a life form, and a morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly mysterious physiology,” which Foucault once described as homosexuality. It appears that both the predominance of sexuality and the proliferation of sexual identities are partners in crime, in which they reduce one’s individuality to a sexual specification, even though the latter is shown as a form of resistance.

With greater sexual choices, the field of sexuality becomes wider and full of possibilities. But even though this proliferation opens new fields of struggle and invention, it upholds the system of differentiation that characterizes the power relations of the domain of sexuality. In general, unlike democratic regimes, totalitarian regimes are built on the unification of their subjects, while democratic and liberal regimes establish themselves on the diversity and autonomy of their individuals. Juridical power is more exercised in totalitarian regimes, but on the contrary every power relation in democratic regimes “puts into operation differences that are, at the same time, its conditions and its results.” These differences range from economic and social to linguistic and cultural differences. However, they invade one’s subjectivity and individuality in which one is categorized into a specified identity or law of truth. Basing differences on identity and not subjectivity forces one to imprison her own subjectivity under the domain of identity; and today sexuality is becoming interchangeable with identity in these democratic liberal societies.

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4 Ibid, 43.

5 Ibid.


7 Ibid.

8 Ibid, 331.
Even though both the proliferation of sexual identity and the confinement to the domain of sexuality subjugate oneself to the system of differentiation, the former seems to be determined by choice, in which the individual chooses his own difference such as sexual identity through “conscience or self-knowledge.” Wherever there is a self-knowledge process, practical implications of this knowledge come with it. When one, through personal investigation, redefines his sexual identity, he begins to embody new ways of identifying, expressing and enacting his own subjectivity. To know and then to put this knowledge into action is a traditional method of discovering one’s own subjectivity. It follows the understanding of modern philosophy to the Socratic principle “know yourself” as Foucault claims. The problem of this method is that it will never achieve subjectivity. It only creates a theoretical image in which one tries to impose on his or her own reality. With Foucault, the equation is reversed. For one to live his own subjectivity, one has to begin from it. In other words, for one to know herself, one has to care for herself first, and through self-caring the individual will be able to live the truths of herself. This reversed if not fundamental principle is, as Foucault calls, the self-cultivation principle.

Interestingly, both manifesting sexual identities and employing the principle of self-cultivation encompass the embodiment of set of practices, behaviors, and techniques. This embodiment opens the possibility of a greater transformation. One hopes that the embodiment of the principle of self-care will alter the long-rooted reproduction of specific sexual identifications. To achieve this transformation through self-cultivation, one of the most important tasks is to unlearn oneself. Foucault describes this technology of unlearning as a refinement of the self from not only false opinion obtained through parents, teachers, or the multitudes, but also an attentiveness of one’s own bad habits. Perhaps, amongst this unstoppable production of sexuality and its identity, it is necessary for one to examine the false opinion he acquired about sex, gender, and sexuality. Furthermore, changing the bad habit of imprisoning one’s subjectivity under the domain of sexuality is a condition for the emergence of new ways of enacting one’s subjectivity. Thinking of myself, it is only through the unlearning of the bad habit of defining myself within the narrow and ascribed possibilities of being a heterosexual male can I replace it with a good habit of defining my sexuality by my self-cultivated subjectivity. This lifelong project is a practical performance in which one cultivates himself.

The proliferation of sexual identities makes resistance possible through cultivating oneself, for both are concerned with what one is doing and not who he is. Arriving at this, Foucault’s endeavor becomes possible: where one thinks of his own subjectivity outside of the domain of sexuality; where other domains of pleasure, innovation, and new forms of relations are brought forth not only for contemplation, but also as lifelong projects.

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9 Ibid.
Interpreting Saturated Phenomena At The Gym: Jean-Luc Marion Meets The Modern Day Bodybuilder

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This paper attempts to engage the phenomenon of selfishness by meditating on the modern day bodybuilder in relation to Jean-Luc Marion’s conception of saturated phenomena, in particular how the phenomenon saturates as an idol or icon. Marion’s claim that the ego “does not fix itself to its flesh; it fixes itself to itself as flesh” is the guiding idea for my essay. I will argue that the ego changes from first taking up its flesh as general human embodiment to then intending the world as body-as-idol or body-as-icon when it relates back to itself. How a person physically modifies their body alters how their ego takes its flesh. The bodybuilder becomes saturated as an idol because he gives the world his body as an object of fascination – a distraction – hoarding the admiration of the look upon him from seeing a deeper human meaning within the body. In contrast to the idol, an iconic embodiment gives the body, understood as the necessary material for communicating the ego’s intentions to the world, as a kenotic outpouring of one’s self-energies and resources for the physical, financial, and emotional betterment of the Other.

A general outline for how the ego relates to its flesh should be given before adequately understanding how the bodybuilder becomes body-as-idol. The taking of flesh by the ego is the

particular way that the ego “feels”, in an internal way, the unique physical dimensions of the body to which the ego works and operates within the world. For Marion, the ego does not reside within the flesh as a separate immaterial essence, but rather “throws” itself onto flesh in order to “catch”, and thus mold, itself. Marion compares the ego’s taking of the flesh to the way cement takes its mold. Like the ego before being bound to flesh, the cement – which was once malleable – takes its shape when dried into the mold. The finished product is constructed only by the cement, but is given shape by the mold’s structure. The ceramic, by passing through the process of heating and cooling, becomes itself. Likewise, the ego/body relation is not that of the ego fixing itself directly to the flesh, but rather uses the flesh as the mode for a self-relation – a self-identity – like the cement using the mold to form itself without staying affixed to the mold apparatus. “The ego”, Marion writes, “casts itself in flesh in order to fix, if not freeze, itself, and in this way take its first flesh.” Similarly, Kierkegaard once described the body as being an organ of the ego, making known the ego’s motivations and intentions to others. Without the flesh the ego is faceless, but, conversely, without the ego motivating its flesh to action, the flesh remains an inert body, and thus non-individuated, to eventually culminate in a passive death.

This is the cost of the ego’s casting itself in its flesh: it limits the ego’s self-understanding to the physical condition of the body. The ego needs its flesh to know itself, but this self-knowledge changes in that it must pass through a body subject to aging, accidental occurrences, and the intentional modifications of – for example – tattooing, hair dying, and physical exercise. To illustrate, imagine a whirlpool spinning in a circular pool, completely uninterrupted by any obstacles. The water flows freely around the circle, beginning and ending with itself. If a child jumps into the water and stands in its path, the water pattern changes from being a constant flow to now breaking around the child before reforming around the child’s back. The flow is disrupted and thus changed. The size of the child determines to what extent the disruption occurs. Likewise, a drastic physical change will alter the ego greatly as it “filters through” the flesh to know itself. As the flesh changes, as the body is altered and the ego now retakes its flesh from the body’s new particularities, the ego becomes interrupted, modified, to either be enhanced or distorted in some new phenomenological way. As such, the very ego is transformed as a concrete, fleshly, phenomenon.

Imagine a man who lost his hands in a construction accident. His taking of flesh would differ after the accident because the ego can no longer relate to itself as a flesh with all appendages. It must change and adapt to “feel” how the flesh can intend the world differently, say in seeking alternative modes of manipulation. The ego could no longer understand itself as a driver of automobiles or as a potential customer of the local boxing gym. The very identity of the ego must shift because of the body’s suffering. This drastic example is necessary to make explicit the more subtle variations that occur to us daily (e.g. weight gain, puberty, hair loss, acne, the changing color of our teeth, etc.). Every individual whose body goes through any of these changes experiences a mirror like change to their ego. Each change is unique to each individual because of a myriad of contingencies that are unique to that person; no two people have lived the exact same circumstances throughout life, making it true that each person’s taking of flesh is different from every other. What may have once been a homogenous taking of flesh for each person at birth, now leads the ego of the self down various paths throughout life, to climax in adulthood as living as body-as-idol or body-as-icon.

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12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
15 These two possibilities are not black and white, but represent a gradation of intensity which everyone lives.
Jean-Luc Marion’s account of the idol and icon is made explicit in his analysis of the saturated phenomena. J. Aaron Simmons and Bruce Ellis Benson suggest that Marion differs from Husserl’s initial phenomenological project in that while “Husserl establishes that the limits of givenness are exactly those of intuition, Marion thinks that givenness is more fundamental and thus also more worthy of setting any limits, if they are to be set”\textsuperscript{16}. The freedom allowed to the phenomena’s givenness lets Marion probe deeply into the inadequacy of the subject’s ability to conceptualize the given in its totality. Knowledge is not denied, but the extent of that knowledge is seen as falling short. In his book, \textit{In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena}, Marion defines the saturated phenomena as occurring when “the duality between intention (signification) and intuition (fulfillment) certainly remains”, when “intuition gives (itself) in exceeding what the concept can foresee of it and show”\textsuperscript{17}. The structure of the concept fails to adequately contain the overwhelming experience of the phenomena. Like a drenched paper towel held dripping water over the sink, the phenomena completely fills the constitution of the concept and overflows the concept’s limitations. There exists an unavoidable lack between the reception of the phenomena and its givenness, leaving the excess to “run off”.

The idol and icon are both saturated, but where the excess “runs to” is what makes them significant. The translators for \textit{In Excess} contrast Marion’s idea of the idol to the icon as the idol being that which “fills the aim and mirrors the limits of the observer”, while the icon “shatters the aim and reverses intentionality”. By “hoard[ing] up all admiration” of the look, the idol inhibits its excess from “falling to the outside” of the given in the sense of awe, surprise, or wonder. Rather, the excess “bounces back” to the observer, returning “to the look its proper measure”, in proportion to the observer’s expectations\textsuperscript{18}. The look sees in the idol what the look gives. Marion puts it as, “my idol defines what I can bear of phenomenality—the maximum of intuitive intensity that I can endure [of the visible]… without weakening into confusion or blindness”\textsuperscript{19}. Notice how the viewer is not able to receive that which is unexpected. The idol’s excess is an excess of multiple transactions without qualitative change between the given and the receiver. Unlike the self-reflecting idol – whose excess remains within the frame of the look and returns back to its origin – the icon represents the freedom of the excess to go beyond the given. Acting as, what James K.A. Smith suggests, a “visible indicator of the invisible”, pointing the gaze beyond itself “to a transcendence which cannot be made present”\textsuperscript{20}. The icon implies a greater sense of distance between itself and that which is present; it can point into eternity.

Let’s consider a phenomenological case study of a bodybuilder. How does the bodybuilder – defined here as someone who works out \textit{primarily} for the sake of enhancing their physical appearance – exemplify the saturated phenomena of idol? Instead of a look given to, say, a painting, we have an ego intending its desire to the body through its flesh. The bodybuilder’s ego, before his taking of flesh is successfully modified into body-as-bodybuilder, begins with an egotistic desire for


\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{21} The qualifier \textit{primarily} is important here. The focus of the present critique is for those who exercise to become physically impressive. Those who exercise primarily for the health benefits which exercise provides are excluded from this argument, however, if this type of individual were to be honest with themselves, they may admit that vanity contributes, at least a small degree, to their motivation.
admiration. The bodybuilder follows a secular version of asceticism but – instead of disciplining the body for the glory of the Divine – the body works to satisfy its ego. The discipline consists of countless hours at a local gym exercising, waking early in the morning to cook the day’s meals, with cognizance being paid to caloric intake, the amount of fat, carbohydrates, and protein to assure the proper amount of micronutrients for optimal growth, joining a community of like-minded bodybuilders to share tips and strategies for making the shoulder striations visible, and shopping around for the most effective diuretic to take before beach season. All of these activities consume the time and resources of body. Instead of the bodybuilder reaching his goal, however, he discovers that his efforts of creating a satisfactory physique to appease the vanity of the ego ultimately fail. This truth can be learned from conversing with this type of individual; no matter how great of shape they may be, the person always feels a lack of finality, a sense that their hard work is not adequately rewarded by their physique. The ego now has a problem. The failure of the body to contain the insatiable appetite of the ego causes the excess of the ego’s intentions to come out “the other end” of the flesh of body-as-bodybuilder, and revert back to the ego in the form of excessive self-consciousness and anxiety. In other words, the body becomes saturated by the ego’s given but the excess circles back to pound into the body, further weakening the body’s structure. The drenched paper towel remains held under the faucet until it disintegrates.

This economy of anxiety begins to form the identity into an obsession about how to stem the fulfillment’s inevitable failure. The ego begins to lose an objective appreciation for the real life problems of, say, the increasing social and political apathy of younger generations, how to help the homeless man living in the woods around the corner, or the proliferation of mass murders at grade-schools, choosing to focus instead on the lack of symmetry between the body’s right and left biceps. The concerns of the ego become a slave to the lack/perfection duality between the ego and its flesh. The body-as-idol becomes unbearable for the ego’s aim, so unbearable that the ego can only respond by “slip[ing] away, and this very evasion remains [the ego’s] only access to what crushes” it. Because the ego cannot leave its body and still be a living self, the evasion remains one of isolation from truly encountering the other. In describing one who has become so ingrained with this type of anxiety, Kierkegaard concludes that they are so glued to this affect that friendship fails to seem worthwhile.

This anxiety, the unavoidable duality between intention/intuition for the ego/flesh relation, becomes constitutive of the self, as when Marion writes, “I am what I look at. What I admire judges me.”

While the ego’s passage through its flesh as body-as-idol changes the ego into a selfish mode of intending the world, becoming blinded by the call of the other, with its excess given to the body-as-idol becoming a hermeneutical circle of constitutive anxiety, the ego for the body-as-icon is changed differently. The ego does not pass through its flesh of body-as-icon completely of its own accord, but rather, as the ego begins its relation back to itself through flesh, it “pauses” long enough for the other to “pull it through” this flesh into becoming an iconic embodiment. The body-as-icon can only come to be because the other is first and foremost the icon par excellence, partnering with the ego to offer himself as a receptacle for the ego’s excess of altruistic intention. Marion discovers that the icon par excellence is the other person, who represents “phenomena that cannot be looked at, that

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22 The physiological effects of anxiety and worry on the body are stunning.
escape all relation with thought in general.”26 He continues in stating that we cannot have a vision of the Face of the other, because they cannot be constituted “from a univocal meaning”. If anything can be seen of them, it “does not result from the constitution I would assign to them in the visible, but from the effect they produce on me.”27 This effect is produced on me because, since I cannot constitute the Face, and there must be some intentionality, “it will not be a question, in all cases, of mine on that of the other, but of his or hers on me.”28 The other person “decenters” my position of standing too close to the mirror of life, elbowing me out of the way so that other looks may take their turn.29

In contrast to the increasing effort by the bodybuilder of modifying the individual parts of his body, the body-as-icon has a broader use for his body. He understands that an iconic use of his body engages all of the anatomical systems as once, maneuvering his body to help ease the call of those in need. The ego may respond to the child’s tears by raising the body’s hand to touch the cheek of child, now orphaned, bending the body’s knees to kneel beside the sufferer to better hug and comfort him. Or the ego may move the body in urgency to block traffic for the bloodied biker hit by the speeding car. Or by using the body’s eyes and ears to see a poorly clothed man and girl sitting in the restaurant booth, listening to the man explain to his daughter that she must order from the cheap side of the restaurant’s menu because otherwise he could not afford to feed himself. The body-as-icon would alert the waitress that the man’s bill will be paid by his and request that she, the waitress, nonchalantly explain to him that his lunch is free of charge. These examples of the body responding to the other “pulls” the ego through its body-as-icon to know itself and discover what has changed. The ego knows itself as having accrued a greater sense of concern for the welfare of the suffering and underprivileged, realizing the dire state of desperation that plagues the other. And the constitutive anxiety that characterizes the bodybuilder is a non-issue for the body-as-icon because he is moved by his ego to become a vessel for, rather than the focus of, his ego’s intentional aim.

26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish: Justifying Durkheim’s Argument For Deviance Through Kramer’s Listening To Prozac

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Human beings like to think that they are unique. Despite this tendency, society tends to favor people who color inside the lines. Emile Durkheim’s work illuminates how little room there is for deviance in our society. However, because Durkheim could not have envisioned a scenario without human variety, he fails to truly capture the importance of including deviance in our standards of normality. But in 1994, psychologist Peter Kramer saw first-hand the danger of using medicine to eliminate variant personalities. In his book, Listening to Prozac, Kramer helps us to look more critically at our constructed spectrum of “normality.” He argues that deviance must be included in that spectrum. By using Kramer to reexamine Durkheim’s arguments, we can more purposefully differentiate between types of deviance, and understand that human variety is essential to society and to the maintenance of human nature in the individual.

For definitions of “normality” and “deviance,” we can turn to Durkheim. Durkheim understands society as being bound together by common ethics, which he calls the collective conscience30. This collective conscience fixes societal norms, which are demonstrated by laws. For

Durkheim, whether or not something is deemed “too deviant,” and thus criminal, is simply a matter of how much that thing deviates from the norm. But for Durkheim, deviance is normal, even in terms of criminality. He writes, “Since there cannot be a society in which individuals do not diverge to some extent from the collective type, it is also inevitable that among these deviations some assume a criminal character.” Human nature is too varied to allow for a uniform collective conscience. While this variation allows for crime, it also allows for the individuality we appreciate amongst human beings. “One does not go without the other,” writes Durkheim. Deviance is deviance, and deviance is good.

Durkheim’s argument about the normality of criminals is interesting, but I believe it leaves something out. While Durkheim makes a compelling case for the normality of deviance, his argument is very closely tied to his case for the normality of crime. We can imagine readers of Durkheim concluding that deviance is dangerous. Further, Durkheim leaves us wondering why human variety is so important. But in 1994, a medical prescription by a psychiatrist provided us with a previously unimaginable window into a world without deviance.

When Peter Kramer prescribed Prozac for a depressed patient, Tess, he hoped to “restore” her to mental health. But instead, Tess was transformed. She was livelier, dating more, and strangers were addressing her positively for the first time in her life. But most odd was what happened when Tess stopped taking Prozac. Though she was not depressed, Tess lost the newfound vitality she’d felt on Prozac. This made her feel “not herself,” she said. But the “self” Tess referenced was the Prozac-affected Tess. Kramer comments: “In mood and level of energy, [Tess] was ‘normal,’ but her place on the normal spectrum had changed…Tess had come to understand herself—the person she had been for so many years—to be mildly ill.” It was this phenomenon, and Kramer’s subsequent analysis, that led to Kramer’s 1994 book Listening to Prozac.

For Kramer, Tess’ transformation ignited a profound discomfort. “Medication [as we know it] does not transform, it heals. When faced with a medication that does transform, even in this friendly way, I became aware of my own irrational discomfort, my sense that for a drug to have such a pronounced effect is inherently unnatural, unsafe, uncanny.” The power of Prozac was that it changed the self-image of people who did not necessarily see themselves as ill prior to taking the drug. Kramer saw Prozac open a door to “cosmetic psychopharmacology,” the use of medicine as a sort of cosmetic surgery for the personality. Prozac could alter the self, and because of its few side effects, it could do so even for “healthy” people. “Confronted with a patient who had never met criteria for any illness, what would I be free to do?” wonders Kramer.

Kramer’s question encapsulates a possibility that Durkheim could not have envisioned: the opportunity to conform to the collective conscience by literally medicating the deviance out of oneself. Prozac opened up this opportunity, and with it arose questions about whether this would be a problem. “Since you only live once, why not do it as a blonde?” Kramer asks. “Why not as a peppy blonde?” “We are entering an era in which medication can be used to enhance the

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31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
functioning of the normal mind,” he writes. But once we enhance the functioning of the normal mind, normal begins to change.

Peter Kramer explores the possibility that Prozac could truly change our understanding of normality, or in Durkheim’s terms, our “collective conscience.” Kramer argues that personality styles go in and out of fashion; today, assertiveness is valued over timidity. Still, shyness, before Prozac, would fall within the spectrum of normal accepted by society; though deviant, shyness is neither illness nor crime. But if Prozac can make us braver, then our understanding of shyness changes. “The medication seems to justify the standard that is in place by labeling those who deviate from a cultural norm as ill and then ‘curing’ them.” In other words, the potential to be less deviant implies that deviance is a problem.

This has major implications for Durkheim. Durkheim believed that the collective conscience would always allow for some variation. But if something like Prozac can act as a “neurochemical nose job,” actually wiping out deviance, this shifts. The collective conscience can limit the definition of “normal” until all deviance becomes either criminality or mental illness.

Kramer writes, “Contemporary models of mental disorder—models Prozac has helped to legitimate—blur the line between illness and health. Minor depressive states…are normal variants, but they can also be seen as [illness].” For Kramer, Prozac opens the door to the “cosmetic” use of Prozac to conform to societal norms, like assertiveness in the workplace, for example. And the more people take Prozac, the more pressure there is on others to take Prozac. Kramer imagines, “There is always a Prozac-taking [person] waiting to do your job, so, if you want to compete, you had better take Prozac too.” As people are pressured into conformity, human variety lessens, and the spectrum of “normal” narrows.

In Listening to Prozac, Peter Kramer helps us understand human deviance in a way Durkheim alone cannot. Kramer shows us how the opportunity to cosmetically alter personality opens the door to absolute conformity. Furthermore, Kramer illustrates that absolute conformity actually changes normality, so that deviance (once included in the spectrum of normality) is eliminated from our definition of normal. Worse, Kramer fears that this process could happen almost on its own. “It is easy to imagine that our role will be passive,” he writes.

By supplementing Durkheim with Kramer, we gain a more complete picture of the importance of human variety. Kramer shows the essentiality of including some deviance in our standards of normal. He shows us that we need to be wary of forces that try to eliminate deviance—and not just forces like Prozac. When looking at Durkheim, we can understand the law as a means of cosmetic psychopharmacology, in that the law has the potential to shape people in conformity to collective norms. Just as we need to be careful of calling “shyness” illness, we must be aware that criminals are not “ill,” but deviant. Like shyness, criminality is on the spectrum of normality. Furthermore, Kramer shows us that eliminating deviance is a slippery slope: anything can be criminal if we call it criminal. In order to protect individuality, we need to be attentive to which norms we are promoting.

This is not to say that because criminality is deviant, we should not punish criminals. Certainly, a misrepresentation of Kramer might lead to such an argument. But Kramer does not say that we should allow for harmful deviance; instead, he asks us to more critically examine what it

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41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
means to be unwell. Kramer helps reveal the cost of punishing deviance. So although we are right to punish perpetrators of true harms, we must still leave room for variance in the spectrum of normality the law delineates. We must integrate some deviant behaviors into our definition of normality. If we don’t, we come too close to a world in which we all “listen to Prozac,” a world unreflective of who we really are.
Identity Of Movement

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We exist as a movement between seemingly contradictory terms. The subject, or self, embodies both sides of this dialectic simultaneously. Self-identity is formed in our relationship to, and knowledge of, the various structures of this movement (for example, but not limited to, between good/evil, master/slave, teacher/student, concept/action, active/passive). This movement is at once inter- and intra-subjective. It exists within individuals and as a social dynamic in the form of fragmentation and wholeness. To understand this movement is to place oneself between these opposing terms, to see oneself as defined simultaneously by each, and to identify with the direction that one is moving in relationship to them. Achieving this potentially elusive understanding is alike to exploring the Ancient Greek aphorism “know thyself.” Identification as this directional movement not only allows subjects to situate themselves in relation to the present world but also to see themselves, and the world, in a new light. In contrast lies the impossibility of identification as extremes. In understanding this relationship to dialectic contradiction we can establish a faith toward uncovering the truth of identity.

The Master and Slave Dialectic

The Master and Slave dialectic, written by Hegel and re-appropriated by Kojéve, is the fundamental structure of this movement. In this text, Hegel elaborates on the moment when Self-Consciousness is born. When two men meet each other they desire to be recognized by the other. Within this recognition is a potential objectification of what previously existed as a subjective certainty within each man. Such a meeting must constitute a fight for recognition; each man must be willing to risk his life in order to be recognized by his peer. However, during the fight, only one man will be able to go all the way in fully risking his life. The other has a brush with death that he
becomes faithful to as he submits to the superiority of his fellow man. In his submission he becomes a slave, with the other as his master, and the dialectic is established.

The slave does work in the master’s name while his master sits idle. Since the fight, the slave has internalized his fear of death, but he knows that the master will not kill him; the slave is useful. The master is at an impasse, neither working to transform the world in his own image nor developing a capacity towards anything. The slave, however, begins to develop a capacity for work. As he plows the field he becomes more capable, as he crafts axes he is able to envision new models of axe, etc. This work is a transformation of the world by the hands of the slave, but in the name of the master. Ultimately, neither of these men achieve the recognition that they wanted from the start. The master is recognized by the slave, but this is hollow because the master doesn’t recognize the slave as someone whose recognition is worthy. The slave, however, realizes his true desire: he wants not only what the master wants, but he also wants it how the master has it. Though both individuals are unsatisfied due to their empty fulfillment of desire, only the slave can “dialectically overcome” his situation.48

Kojève writes: “the satisfied man will necessarily be a Slave… who has passed through slavery.”49 The master is the catalyst for this overcoming because he provides a boundary experience for the slave. However, in order to overcome the limit set by the master’s existence, the slave must overcome the fear of death that he internalized from the initial fight. As he overcomes this fear he also reclaims his work from the master and begins to work for himself instead. In a sense, then, the slave’s overcoming is also a shedding of identity. Kojève explains this as a transformation, not from slave to master, but from slave to change, where slavish consciousness melted internally: “it shuddered deeply and everything fixed-or-stable trembled in it.”50 Though the master and slave identities were limited in terms of themselves, they both created the possibility for the liberated slave identity. This is the identity of the individual who is “ready for change; in his very being he is change, transcendence, transformation and ‘education.’”51

### Movement

This third identity is the liberated slave. He is the slave who has overcome his internalized fear of death and is no longer a slave. He exists instead as the movement between the master and slave identities. These two seemingly contradictory terms constitute this movement. Hegel writes:

> Since both are equally right, they are both equally wrong, and the mistake consists in taking such abstract forms as ‘the same’ and ‘not the same’, ‘identity’ and ‘non-identity’, to be something true, fixed, and actual, and in resting on them. Neither the one nor the other has truth, the truth is just their movement.52

Here, Hegel posits the impossibility of identity in its abstract form. Since both master and slave identities exist as polar, contradictory abstractions, it is impossible for an individual to exist as these identities. Instead, the master and slave identities represent two extremes of existence that an

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50 Ibid, 21.
51 Ibid, 22. [emphasis added]
individual may identify herself between. Kojève states this as a “simple-or-undivided essential-reality of Self-Consciousness” where an “absolute liquefaction of every stable-support” takes place. However, is this fluidity, implied by both Hegel and Kojève, impossible to reconcile into a third identity?

Malcolm Bull, author of Seeing Things Hidden, examines this possibility of a third term through Derrida:

Derrida considers Hegelian contradiction to consist of… ‘a resolution of contradiction into a third term’, whereas the undecidable never constitutes a third term, but is rather ‘the medium in which opposites are opposed, the movement and the play that links them among themselves, reverses them or makes one side cross over into the other (soul/body, good/evil, inside/outside, memory/forgetfulness, speech/writing etc.)

Here, Derrida considers this reconciliation to be impossible while simultaneously suggesting a form in which this resolution is affirmed. This “medium… movement and… play that links” these contradictory terms together is the very third term that Derrida attempts to deny. If this is the case than it may be possible to identify with and as this movement.

Identity

One of the many contradictory relationships between terms exists between concept and action, between thought and life. In respect to this, identity may be an impossibility in the sense that it is an attempt to fixate that which is always fluid. Just as Kojève’s slave had everything fixed-or-stable tremble within him, so too each attempt at identity may be an attempt to fixate some sense of self within an individual who is always in movement. This is like trying to catch water with a hand: as you tighten your hold, the water flows through the gaps in your fingers. However, it may possible to identify with, or even as, this movement, as the transformation, change, and transcendence that Kojève posits as the form of the liberated slave? Or does the very concept of identification disallow this?

The Master and Slave dialectic is embodied and internalized within every individual. Like Derrida writes, there are varying forms of contradicting terms that constitute movement, whether in a form of good and evil, inside and outside, order and disorder, or insane and sane, etc. Under Hegel’s idea of movement, each individual exists between these contradictory terms. This movement also implies direction and a potential to self-identify as a movement in a direction. This also implies that any identification as such is also an identification as both master and slave, existing in varying degrees within the self. If this is the case could identification as a directional movement be useful for knowledge of self?

The Fragment and Dynamite

53 Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, 21-2.
55 Ibid,39.
Nietzsche is the very embodiment of this knowledge of self. He was able to identify himself apart from the common mentalities of his time in order to better understand himself in relation to them. His hypercritical approach led to a re-examination and re-valuation of language, history, and culture. Nietzsche self-identified as dynamite, an explosive force that tears a hole in the fabric of a previously agreed upon order. Galileo was similarly dedicated: he aimed to be faithful to truth above any comfortable order. This form of change has many faces. These historical individuals portray a movement of rupture. They are the voice of disorder, the voice of doubt that order itself makes possible. In this sense they are also the voice of the liberated slave, but it is only because of their voice that they have achieved liberation. The voiceless, the workless and the passive fragment only result in madness.

Kojéve writes: “Without work that transforms the real objective World, man cannot really transform himself.”\textsuperscript{56} This man is the slave without a voice, the man who has not reclaimed his work nor overcome his fear of death. He is the fragment of society who is stagnant and afraid, ceaselessly working in obedience to the order of the master's world. He has changed, but only internally, and “this ‘internal’ change puts him at variance with the world” that he has failed to change.\textsuperscript{57} This variance eats at the slave and transforms him into a “madman or a criminal.”\textsuperscript{58} It is the voice of dynamite, the reclaimed work of this fragmented individual, which creates a rupture in the master's order and redefines the common conception of truth – but only as long as this voice is recognized as such. Copernicus, before Galileo, investigated and discovered heliocentrism, but hesitated to publish his work on the matter for fear of religious backlash.

It is through this conception of fragmentary images of humanity that we can better see the whole. Within this idea, humanity exists both as the whole that continuously splits into fragments as well as the many fragmented individuals who are working towards the whole. Nietzsche elaborates on this mutually constitutive movement as a form of growth:

\begin{quote}
The majority of people are a fragmentary, exclusive image of what humanity is; you have to add them up to get humanity. In this sense, whole eras and whole peoples have something fragmentary about them; and it may be necessary for humanity’s growth for it to develop only in parts.\textsuperscript{59}
\end{quote}

This process has a simultaneously destructive and creative quality about it. Similar to how the existence of a master (and the imposition of terror onto the slave) makes the slave’s transformation possible, so too does the slave’s obedience to the master reinforce the master’s world. The whole of society, the accepted order, makes a fragmented individual possible, and, reciprocally, the existence of a fragmented individual implies the possibility of the creation of a (new) whole.

#### The Movement Between Desire and No Desire

Bataille inquires into the relationship between the fragment and the whole in respect to the individual and entirety. He argues that individual man exists as a fragment, constituted by his desire

\\[\textsuperscript{56}Kojéve, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, 28.\]
\\[\textsuperscript{57}Ibid, 28.\]
\\[\textsuperscript{58}Ibid, 28.\]
\\[\textsuperscript{59}Nietzsche, qtd in: Georges Bataille, On Nietzsche (Great Britain: Continuum Books, 1992), xxiii.\]
and work. This fragment lies opposite to the whole man, who exists as entirety through his suspension of desire. He experiences this removal from desire in his experience of the abyss:

…the main impulse that leads to human entirety is tantamount to madness. I let go of good. I let go of reason (meaning). And under my feet, I open an abyss which my activity and my binding judgments once kept from me. At least the awareness of totality is first of all within me as a despair and a crisis.\(^6^0\)

This is a certain form of non-desire that is established in the individual who does not work. If an individual is to exist as a whole, or entirety, it is possible only through this withdrawal from desire for something. He writes: “Only in empty longing, only in an unlucky desire to be consumed simply by the desire to burn with desire, is entirety wholly what it is… Entirety lacks further tasks to fulfill.”\(^6^1\) So, though it is possible for an individual to exist as an entirety within themselves, Bataille argues that this form of existence is trivial: “Since isn’t seriousness essentially why blood flows? How could a free life, a life unconstrained by combat, a life disengaged from the necessities of action and no longer fragmented—how could such a life not appear frivolous?”\(^6^2\) This is Kojève’s voiceless slave who is estranged from her work. “Only work,” Kojève writes, “by finally putting the objective World into harmony with the subjective idea that goes beyond it, annuls… madness, crime…”\(^6^3\)

This process of becoming whole, though frivolous, is also a potential for relief from the demands of work. Bataille writes: “[e]ach of us learns with bitterness that to struggle for freedom is first of all to alienate ourselves.”\(^6^4\) This struggle, this attempt to reconcile one’s subjective certainty in the objective world, is the very process of fragmentation. When we have a desire for something, when we have a cause, our freedom is limited. He writes, not only that “… causes pluck off the wings we fly with,” but also, “[i]nfinites tasks are imposed upon us.”\(^6^5\) It is in empty desire, the individual with no desire, who longs for “laughter… pleasure, holiness, or death.”\(^6^6\) So it seems that while Bataille is critical of his perspective from above the abyss it is also a necessary experience for him, one that rectifies the alienated suffering that his desire itself implies. This movement within the individual is between fragmentation and entirety. It is a movement between desire and no desire. Entirety comes to the individual as a relinquishment of cause and an opposition to the reclamation of work.

Moving from the Fragment to the Whole

The fragmented and alienated individual, as formed by her desire and work, begins to create a new order. She experiences ultimate fear and terror in the form of and the common thought of time. She seeks to transform the world in her image through her work. In this sense she attempts to move back to the whole, to reconcile herself back into society from her alienated state. In order for her to achieve this objective transformation of the world her voice must be recognized by others, for, if it is not, her voice will be a mere “shout lost in the silence.”\(^6^7\) This act of transformation is her

\(^{6^0}\) Ibid, xxvii.
\(^{6^1}\) Ibid, xxiv-xxv.
\(^{6^2}\) Ibid, xxvi.
\(^{6^5}\) Ibid, xxix, xxv.
\(^{6^6}\) Ibid, xxv.
\(^{6^7}\) Ibid, xxix.
attempt to divide one world into two, to challenge the current doctrine of established order, and to create something new, a rupture amidst comfort.

This work separates her, alienates her from the world, but, as she transforms the world she becomes whole again. Bataille writes:

A totality like this, necessarily aborted by our work, is nonetheless offered by that very work. Not as a goal, since the goal is to change the world and give it human dimensions. But as the inevitable result. As change comes about, humanity-attached-to-the-task-of-changing-the-world, which is only a single and fragmentary aspect of humanity, will itself be changed to humanity-as-entirety.\textsuperscript{68}

If this is the case, then as the slave reclaims her work and offers it to the world she is attempting to reconcile herself with the whole. However, it is only as her work is recognized, and made objective by this recognition, that she is successful in this transformation. For Bataille this is when the fragmented individual, because of her striving, inevitably delivers the divided world back into a unity. The fragment and the whole both exist as extremes that we move between, as individuals and as a society. If Nietzsche represents the movement from one to two, the dynamite that shatters the world, than, in her work, the fragmented individual represents the movement from two back into one.

\textbf{Identity of Movement}

We do not exist as extremes. The master and slave dialectic is a river. There must be two shores for water to flow. Without either of these shores, movement will be either stagnant or directionless. This form is mutually constructive – each extreme implies the other. “Since both are equally right, they are both equally wrong.”\textsuperscript{69} Self-identification fails if it attempts to claim itself as only one of these extremes. Instead, one can only identify oneself as the river, as the movement between these shores. The ‘I’ (or self or subject) exists as both Good and Evil, as a master and a slave, as arrogant and humble, but to varying degrees. Can we situate ourselves as this movement? Can we know ourselves as the beings of “change, transcendence, transformation and ‘education’” to which Kojève refers, and if so, what would that knowledge imply?\textsuperscript{70} If we accept that we exist as this dialectical movement then we must also accept the many forms that this suggests. There are many mutually constitutive extremes. There are students and teachers, left- and right-wing political subjects, and those individuals who are afraid or courageous.

This wide variety suggests that there may be many forms of identification and many selves to which any individual can identify. As Michel Foucault states in the interview \textit{Ethics of the Concern for Self}:

[the subject] is not a substance. It is a form, and this form is not primarily or always identical to itself. You do not have the same type of relationship to yourself when you constitute yourself as a political subject who goes to vote or speaks at a meeting and when you are seeking to fulfill your desires in a sexual relationship.\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid, xxv.


\textsuperscript{70} Kojève, \textit{Introduction to the Reading of Hegel}, 22.

This form is fluid and must be recognized as such. Any attempt to fixate oneself as identity ultimately fails because within each individual are different degrees of contradiction. By labeling myself solely as a humble person I fail to recognize my capacity for arrogance. To realize this means to recognize that one exists as neither, and both, humility and arrogance. By labeling myself as a man I fail to take into account the feminine parts of myself, and so on. If we view these extremes as opposing points on a line then we could view our ‘self’ as a point on this line, either in relationship to this opposition, or as this very opposition. Foucault writes: “Undoubtedly there are relationships and interferences between these different forms of the subject; but we are not dealing with the same type of subject. In each case, one plays, one establishes a different type of relationship to oneself.”

This dialectic relationship is the play or dance of the self. To understand oneself, to “know thyself,” is to investigate one’s place amidst these many dialectic movements. This intricate knowledge of self-identity then directly relates to the position of the self in relationship to society. As Foucault writes: “…it is the power over oneself that thus regulates one’s power over others.”

The river flows between opposing shores, those boundaries that constitute one’s relationship to herself and the civilization that she is simultaneously a part of and apart from.

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72 Ibid.
73 Ibid, 438.
It is dreadful that in Germany today women no longer want to be mothers. God grant us that one day this will change.” – Heinrich Himmler

“And this,’ said the Director opening the door, ‘is the Fertilizing Room.” – Aldous Huxley, Brave New World

This paper will investigate the function of the Lebensborn: a SS-sponsored agency, created by Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler in 1935, which acted throughout the duration of the Nazi regime. Its goal was to secure an eternal Aryan race by harboring the pregnancy of “pure” Nazi blood. Also, it met the demand of the Nazi regime to challenge the diminishing statistics, while concurrently conditioning future statistics, of the German population post-World War I and throughout World War II. Through prenatal care, adoption services, health care facilities, and childhood education, the Lebensborn effectively undertook a positive re-declaration of the Volksgemeinschaft (people’s community) through its population management. Techniques of fertility became the operative function of thinking towards a chiliastic regime; a population fixed and controlled by determining devices would ensure the solidified repetition of Nazi culture, bodies, and ideology.

The theoretical position of Zygmunt Bauman’s Modernity and Ambivalence will articulate the necessity of a regime such as the Third Reich to invest in techniques of fertility. Bauman’s articulation of the modern “gardening state” will literally and rhetorically aid the paper in its essential claims; that not only was gardening used as an allusion to create future generations of a suitable Nazi.
race, but the symbolic “gardening state” will illustrate a concise function of breeding/fertility, and the value emphasized on both. It will then discuss the utopian critique/dystopian fantasy of Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* in comparison with the modern apparatus of the Third Reich. Necessarily, Huxley’s fictional World State prioritized fertility as a paramount instrument of society; Huxley’s World State has effectively solved the problem of both, over and under population. Population, for both modern and utopian societies, finds extreme relevance in the proactive fertilization of future generations.

The paper will conclude with a psychoanalytic interpretation. It will argue that - from the Lebensborn as the source - the positive eugenics of gardening fertility contextually complimented the negative eugenics of the Holocaust. The prevalent compensatory device of “holocaust now/pregnancy, reproduction, and fertility later” will be analyzed using Freudian theory; the self-justificatory nature of positive/negative eugenics will illustrate how The Third Reich cognitively worked around the implementations of the guilty conscious, and its potential negative relation to the population.

By popularizing the Lebensborn agenda, the Third Reich successfully outlined prescriptions of sexuality and gender. Roles were strictly, and traditionally, enforced and accepted. Through a gardening agenda, the Third Reich was able to apply conservative practice into a populist agenda; the females’ role would become crucial for future, and eternal, generations of Nazi purity. Thus pregnancy, and the pronatalist-sponsored policy of The Third Reich, became a paramount mission of the Lebensborn. But only because of their modern technological ambitions could they achieve unprecedented management over techniques of fertility. The Lebensborn’s reliance on overcoming the natural scientific limitations of reproduction, by harnessing technological potential, allowed the totalitarian regime to manipulate the causality of the ego by redirecting harm and guilt, with a propagandistic claim, away from their subjects. The desires of the Lebensborn could successfully orient future generations without the haunting guilt of the Holocaust penetrating the popular conscious.

**Utopian Desires, Modern Designs**

“...And the bottles come in here to be predestinated in detail” – Huxley

*Brave New World* opens with a detailed and vibrant tour of a “Hatchery and Conditioning Center.” The World State of Huxley’s impending future has subjugated the natural process of reproduction and replaced it with complete mechanized functionality. Full achievement in the possibility and potentiality of science became the operative tool for future reproduction and the basis of stability in society. Through the combined techniques of conditioning, predestining, and decanting the World State has full control over future generations; future bodies are merely the offset of the desired, and applied, sciences of the World State.

But this iteration is demonstrative of purely utopian wishes; not only can Huxley’s World State create the conditions for future generations, but they can seemingly obviously manipulate the fertilization process to cast certain characteristics and traits upon fertilization.74 Crucial to the stability of Huxley’s utopia is the normalcy of class distinctions – or, a hierarchal caste system. The modern totalitarian design utilizes many of these ideas, and parallels significantly to the intentions of utopian desires, but strictly contrasts utopianism in their methodology. At the time of the early 20th century, the limitations of science were rapidly expanding; and the early modern totalitarian regimes were quick to demonstrate control over the production of sciences. Thus, what separates Huxley’s

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World State and the Third Reich, is the newly founded exploded limitations of science compared to the achieved domination over science; while one regime was flirting with the possibility of reproductive technology, the other achieved its full dominance.

Huxley is often referential to the ingenious beginning scientific developments of the early 20th century. Often deriving plot and material from H.G. Wells, a scientific utopianist, Huxley is in direct dialogue with the impending issue of man’s tenacity to science. The play of science within totalitarian regimes is visibly uncontested, and the relevance of early 20th century political history carries a consistent wave of anxiety for presently uncontrollable – but soon to be controllable – technology; while Huxley was publishing Brave New World, Hitler was drafting the foundations of his thousand-year Reich.

Nazi strategy was necessarily aligned to solving the deficit in Germany’s population. In order to expand territorially - through militarization, colonization, and so on – the problem of population was consistent in the tactics of the Third Reich. Hitler persistently displayed anxiety when discussing the unprecedented falling rate of German births. But unavoidably, Nazi reproductive technological and ideological investment secured a racial hierarchy as a basis for social stability. Similarly to the regime of the World State, Nazism necessitated a system of class – through motions of racism and nationalism - where stability was the offset of what will later be termed as positive and negative eugenics. The concept of equilibrium, in consciousness, reveals the modern structure, and its ambivalence, of the Third Reich in comparison to the utopianism of the World State; Hitler, unlike Huxley, had to locate the affect of domestic/international policy linearly – as in, poles were nominally defined simply due to limitations of technology.

The Malthusian problem presents itself to every regime, regardless of politics and time. In Huxley’s world, citizens wear the “Malthusian belt” – a highly commoditized contraceptive device. The degree of Huxley’s utopianism, at times, reveals a heavily ridden text full of satire and irony. It is as if the World State has so cognitively solved every last problem presented to humanity that there is literally zero space for error. But while the utopianism behind Huxley reveals its satire, Hitler’s, Himmler’s et al. obsession over population control translated into very tangible social policy.

Securing the future generations meant prioritizing a modern design with utopian intentions; how can a regime determine it’s future generations without, in actuality and reality, determining the future generations?

The modern design of the Lebensborn – translated as “well of life” - was one, in an excess of social policies, designated by the Nazi authority to institute population control and management. Over its duration, more than 12,000 children were born into the Lebensborn, of more than half supposed to be illegitimate births. The illegitimacy behind the Lebensborn reveals its tenacious goals: to create a population not based upon the tradition of marriage, monogamy, or the orthodox ideas of family planning, but to insist on achieving massive results of a new and furnished population. Often, the Lebensborn would admit unwed pregnancies – in fact, this was more than common. This was not only to discourage abortion, but also to emphasize protecting the delivery of ‘pure’ German fertility. Interestingly, this inadvertently encouraged single pregnant women to turn to the Lebensborn as a safe haven for pregnancy.

The issue of secrecy shows the exact intersection of modern design and utopian desire. Nazi physicians guided patients of the Lebensborn in confidence. They were lead to the Lebensborn as

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77 Ibid.
an alternative to the anxieties of motherhood and the consequences, to a regime of control, of a wasted pureblooded abortion. Himmler could encourage the utopian desires of a racially superior breed of beings while utilizing the scientific and modern design of the Lebensborn; this equation, as shown by not only the statistics but also by the conscious prioritization of such a device, was a proven victory for the Nazi totalitarian regime for quite some time.

Pronatalist policy in the Third Reich sharply discouraged the traditional idea of family planning. Labeled as a part of the bourgeois morality that the Third Reich strictly opposed, the discourse surrounding the Lebensborn was contentiously appropriate. The Lebensborn operated in a middle, or ambivalent, space between the opposition of Nazi ideology and Christian/bourgeois morality. Regarding sexuality, the Lebensborn functioned outside the public domain. It was an operation of tangential importance to the goals of Nazism, thus necessarily it had to function at a subliminal level to the public; one had to be aware of the Lebensborn option, but contained by the overwhelming secrecy of totalitarian social policy.

Techniques of Fertility

“…We also predestine and condition. We decant our babies as socialized human beings, as Alphas or Epsilons, as future sewage works or future…’ he was going to say future World Controllers, but correcting himself, said ‘future Directors of Hatcheries’ instead.” – Huxley

The modern state, with its ambitious and utopian desires, is one marked by a controlling element towards its population. Zygmunt Bauman, a 20th century Polish sociologist, articulates the strategy of modern states as one that, specifically, gardens their population. Thus, Bauman’s “gardening state” will be topically helpful in referencing the intentions and functions of the Third Reich’s techniques of fertility. The metaphor “gardening” will be used to depict the policy towards fertility, but will also be grounded in actual rhetoric used by the Third Reich. It is in this peculiar case of metaphor and actuality, that the ideas of Bauman’s “gardening state” are relevant to a study of modern totalitarianism. The following quotes provide a conceptual understanding of Bauman’s theory, cited from Modernity and Ambivalence:

“We can say that existence is modern in as far as it is effected and sustained by design, manipulation management, engineering. The existence is modern in as far as it is administered by resourceful (that is, possessing knowledge, skill and technology), sovereign agencies.”

The modern state was a gardening state. Its stance was a gardening stance. It delegitimized the present (wild, uncultivated) condition of the population and dismantled the extant mechanisms of reproduction and self-balancing. It put in their place purposefully built mechanisms meant to point the change in the direction of the rational design.

We can take from this a couple of ideas. For one, the appropriation of science and technology are paramount in totalitarian regime’s techniques of fertility. As articulated previously, science becomes the operative tool for any reproductive technology, thus emphasis in the sciences singularly conditions the outlook for fertile gains. Secondly, there was a concerted emphasis to

80 Ibid, 20.
challenge chaotic attributes of the population. Order was derived by opposing what cannot be 
controlled; this is the ultimate technique, for Bauman, that allowed the modern state to operate 
against the uncontrollable. What is natural, under the modern state, becomes synonymous with 
what is chaotic. Modern regimes must master this potential, and subordinate and/or contain its 
force.

Modern governors had to isolate the ambivalence within society, and define it as such. 
“Nothing is more artificial than naturalness,” articulates the ability of modern rulers to define what 
is chaotic and uncontrollable under extremely arbitrary circumstances. Essential to Bauman’s theory 
the dichotomizing force of the modern state; the false tool of dichotomizing is the precise seat of 
power for modernity. Again, “modern rulers and modern philosophers were first and foremost 
legislators; they found chaos and set out to tame it and replace it with order.” The ambiguity that 
arises from natural processes, like fertility and reproduction, fails to meet the demands of the 
ordering, and gardening, modern state.

The work of Jacques Derrida is referenced explicitly and implicitly throughout the entirety of 
Bauman’s work. Relevant application of Derrida occurs when the line between metaphor and reality 
become intermittently obscured. The text soon becomes reality, reality soon becomes text, and the 
immediate result is delirium. What is contained in simple allusion, the imagery of a garden that 
necessarily needs to be tended or else it is overcome by invasive weeds, becomes the platform and 
justification of an oppressive administration.

Bauman’s sociological nature alludes to the politically grounded application of his 
abstraction. As a 20th century Polish Jew, he is in consistent dialogue with Nazi policy. The allusion 
of gardening, its relevance to Nazi policy, and its continuity with metaphor comes full circle within 
the public work of Nazism. Nazi ideology remains consistent with Bauman’s theory; within the 
Nazi publication, Marriage Laws and the Principles of Breeding, leading Nazi ideologist Richard Darré 
articulates the following:

He who leaves the plants in a garden to themselves will soon find to his surprise that 
the garden is overgrown by weeds and that even the basic character of the plants has 
changed. If therefore the garden is to remain the breeding ground for the plants, if, 
in other words, it is to lift itself above the hard rule of natural forces, then the 
forming will of a gardener is necessary…thus we are facing the realization that 
questions of breeding are not trivial for political thought, but that they have to be at 
the center of all considerations.

Bauman responds: “To underline the ambitions of the state now firmly set on substituting a 
designed and state-monitored plan for uncontrolled and spontaneous mechanisms of society, the 
medical metaphor soon joined forces with the tradition gardening one.” What happens here, in true 
Derridean fashion, is a complete collapse of the historical text. What was once allusion and 
metaphor becomes the realistic operation of totalitarian regimes. A benign text of social policy 
becomes the cornerstone of positive eugenics. One must necessarily deconstruct the fictitious 
metaphor of gardening with a regressive apparatus; the relation that subsumes reveals the potential 
of techniques of fertility in their actuality. Within Derrida’s essay Structure, Sign, and Play in the 
Discourse of the Human Sciences, he identifies how the lack of a center problematized discourse

82 Ibid, 24.
involving a center-set; as in, the role of presence or being was conditioned by the centered belief in itself. But, Derrida critiques the center as an area of concern, and dismisses it as a major prejudice of Western thought. Substitution, or *bricoleur*, becomes the dependent tool of presence, man, and being; only by substituting text and speech with language, can one use text for themselves. Textual representation exists solely as supplement.

At the interplay of fiction and reality – or the written policy and the actual implementation – one is revealed of the decentering of any sort of original point from which this relationship stems. It is beyond the subject’s ability to comprehend this point of origin; one can only assume a decentered source, “The absence of a center is here the absence of a subject and the absence of an author.”

Here, one sees the allusionary depiction of gardening adjacent to eugenic reproduction and is immediately lost.

The attempt to locate a source, and its infinite regression of totalization results in the subject simply supplementing speech, text, and action with play; defined as, “a field of infinite substitutions only because it is finite, that is to say because instead of being an inexhaustible field, as in the classical hypothesis, instead of being too large, there is something missing from it: a center which arrests and grounds the play of substitutions.” The use of play becomes the operative tool that blurs the distinction from what is actual and what is replicated; there is no center because there are infinite centers, the main tension that arises is between play and history itself.

Techniques of fertility are clearly appealing to totalitarian regimes. They allow the conditioning devices for future generations to come to be – they effectively determine the ontological presence of the regime. Thus, for a regime concentrated not only on immediate success, but also with obligation towards the future – such as Huxley’s World State or Hitler’s Third Reich – fertility becomes an essential component to any party platform. With devices such as the Lebensborn and “Hatchery and Conditioning Centers,” totalitarian regimes can refine and edit their place within their very own history. But within the tension of history and text (Derrida) one assumes the limiting of sources of original history with a device of supplementation; it becomes obvious, under the example of the Lebensborn, that Derrida’s critique is forcibly applicable to Himmler’s techniques of fertility.

**Himmler, the Father, and Psychoanalysis**

“Our Ford - or Our Freud, as, for some inscrutable reason, he chose to call himself whenever he spoke of psychological matters - Our Freud had been the first to reveal the appalling dangers of family life. The world was full of fathers - was therefore full of misery; full of mothers - therefore of every kind of perversion from sadism to chastity; full of brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts - full of madness and suicide.” - Huxley

The fascist right often located danger within prominent philosophers, theorists, and analysts of the time. For Nazism, this was especially true in the case of Sigmund Freud. Often, such as in the rampant Nazi student literary “cleansing,” book burning would explicitly target the works of Freud, and his psychoanalysis, as detrimental to Nazi values. This section will be riddled in one major assumptive paradox: that the ideology behind Himmler, and the motivation behind devices such as the Lebensborn, complimented and ultimately followed the works of Freud. Also, the works of Freud will supplement the history of the Third Reich with an alternative explanation for the implementation of positive eugenic devices such as the Lebensborn.

86 Ibid.
The reliance on “anti-bourgeois morality” rhetoric within the Nazi party is central in their unconscious alignment with Freud. They adamantly opposed the bourgeois mentality in avocation of a mass movement ideology. For Himmler, the tradition of bourgeois mentality was what weakened the German birthrate. Family planning, which encouraged monogamous marriages, was not in the interest of a hopefully rapidly expanding population. Similarly to abortion, family planning was considered an economic waste in the eyes of the Nazis. Religious fundamentalism governing sexual conduct had no place in the prosperity of a thousand year Reich, and Himmler was certain of the detriment of such a mentality.

As the father of the Lebensborn, Himmler assumed a major paternalist ego gratification; his obsessions with techniques of fertility lead to his fascination with every aspect of the Lebensborn. The “positive” function of the Lebensborn – birthing of children, providing orphans with homes, offering health services to mothers, and so on – motivated Himmler to continue and prioritize the role of the Lebensborn; its definite effects on Himmler’s ego is uncontested. The singular role of the Lebensborn was to produce, efficiently. Anything inhibiting these results was labeled as wasteful and ultimately bourgeois. Thus, Himmler “asserted that sex was natural and that in establishing artificial restrictions on sexual relations society created the unhealthy conditions which currently threatened Germany.” Moral repression lead to marital fidelity and sexual chastity. Himmler, as both father of the Lebensborn and cultural critic of the Third Reich, denounced asceticism while promoting natural instincts, desires, and sexual impulses – quite the Freudian position.

A crucial component to Civilization and Its Discontent, Freud’s socio-historical opus, is the concept of guilt, “the sense of guilt is the most important problem in the development of civilization and to show that the price we pay for our advance in civilization is a loss of happiness through the heightening of the sense of guilt.” The way in which society manages guilt significantly alludes to the way in which modern subjects must as well. Guilt arises as a natural affect of civilization, but its direction and motivation is significantly determined by the social forces at will. For Freud, one feels guilt when one doesn’t necessarily commit to “bad” actions; all one needs is the intention, will, or desire to do something bad. This can relate to any action that can be deemed morally wrong, such as the negative eugenics of millions, Final Solution, and the Holocaust. Paramount to Nazi ideology was the complete elimination of the Jewish culture. For Freud, one cannot simply disperse an entire population without inflicting difference within one’s psychological compartment. Thus, the operation of the Lebensborn acted as a redirection of guilt; from the negative eugenics of the Holocaust to the positive eugenics of the Lebensborn, Nazis were relieved of the guilt inflicted to their conscious. Theories such as these are strengthened when one has, as a major case-in-point, figures like Himmler – who took it upon himself to make sure the Lebensborn reached its objectives.

This theory is based upon the use of compensation within the subject. A compensatory apparatus arises out of the need of the ego to find happiness and suitable love for oneself. Guided by narcissism, Himmler and his colleagues issued the ultimate act of love through the controlled birth of thousands of pureblooded Aryan babies – an ultimate ego satisfaction. But also, the subject’s ego distances itself from bad actions and its implications. Violence and aggression are welcomed as natural to the ego, but dispersed to realms beyond the conscious subject. The social anxiety that arises from this complex places the subject within a “bad conscious”; a predicament that

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88 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
is not only unhealthy to the subject, but is cognitively disavowed. Thus, the Lebensborn and other similar operations played a crucial role in alleviating the violence inflicted to the conscious as a result of the negative eugenics of the Holocaust by satisfying subjects through compensation.

Returning to Bauman, “modern genocide is not an uncontrolled outburst of passions, and hardly ever a purposeless, totally irrational act. It is, on the contrary, an exercise in rational social engineering, in bringing about, by artificial means, that ambivalence-free homogeneity that messy and opaque social reality failed to produce.” The negative eugenics of the Holocaust complimented the positive eugenics of the Lebensborn and solved a conscious equilibrium within the ego of the perpetrators of the Third Reich. Even without the application of Freudian theory, Himmler unconsciously distributed the guilt of murder away from the happiness and love of childbirth. Himmler, Hitler, and the SS didn’t need to make the connection for themselves; the ego is unaffected by such attempts. Instead, psychoanalysis shows the instinctual desires of the mind and how these desires promoted a severe underpinning of real events by revealing tenacity for compensatory devices, such as the Lebensborn.

Conclusion

The Frankfort School thesis that liberal ideology masks a deep authoritarianism comes full circle within the context of Bauman’s modernity. The concerted effort of modern regimes to classify and categorize order contrasts its inability to locate chaos and ambivalence. But nevertheless, this strategy is at the forefront of totalitarianism - seen throughout the context of Huxley and Himmler. But for Bauman and the intentions of this paper, modern experience does not neatly conform to these modern dichotomies; there are, inevitably, natural forces that remain outside the rhetoric-induced power of categorization. But for the totalitarian regimes of utopian desire and modern design, science becomes the operative tool to remove the ambiguity of ambivalence and to predestine their very own presence.

The Lebensborn utilized techniques of fertility to its fullest potential. It acted as an apparatus that not only saw concrete methodological influence to the stability of the Nazi party, but also alleviated the social anxiety of a regime based upon genocide. Psychoanalysis works to unpack the drives that inspire subjects to commit conscious action, but particularly looks at the unconscious consequences of these actions. For Himmler, the Lebensborn was penultimate to Nazi Ideology itself; they were synonymous and one of the same. Singularity within the party position allowed an extreme ambivalence towards the goals and intentions of the Third Reich; thus what subsumes the consciousness of the Nazis is the equilibrium provided by the calming Lebensborn. Derived from the positive eugenics of the Himmler and the negative eugenics of the Holocaust, the Lebensborn provided soma to murderers, babies to Himmler, and a euphoric happiness to the directors of the Third Reich.