Labyrinth

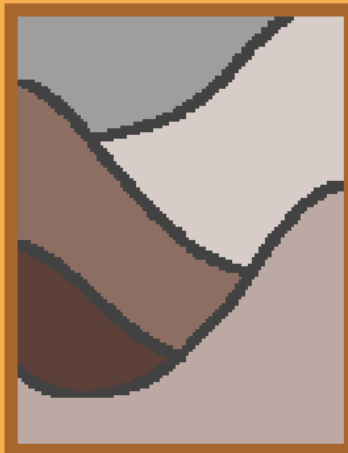# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Essays

Women's Navigation of Sexualized Cultural Practices

Amna Haider

My exposure and belonging to both Western and non-Western cultures has inevitably led me to notice the puzzling degree of autonomy that women lack within each culture. Cultural practices like the veiling of a woman's head and applying makeup may be rooted from religious doctrine or beautification; however, the discourse around a woman's choice to participate in these kinds of practices has oddly tended to affirm her status as a sexually-objectified entity. In this way, certain cultural practices have been *infected by*, or unavoidably involve, sexual scripts. According to Jessica Moorman, sexual scripts are "recurrent, culturally sanctioned norms that inform our understanding of relationships and gender roles," driven by sexual socialization, which is a process that shapes our "knowledge, attitudes, and values" about sexuality (Moorman 2020, 3). A foundational feature of sexual scripts in heteronormative, cisnormative, and patriarchal cultures is the objectification of female women.

This paper will explore how women can empower themselves in a non-sexualized way while consensually participating in cultural practices that are ultimately infected by sexual scripts, which are further grounded in male-driven objectification. I will first argue why the discourse around cultural practices reveals a conundrum about a woman's ability to autonomously partake in cultural practices like wearing the *hijab*. I will then draw on the research of Uma Narayan, Catherine Mackinnon, and Jessica Moorman to explain why women's choices vis-à-vis these practices are controversially bounded by male-dominated sexual scripts. I will then apply Charles Taylor's Social Imaginary Theory to this explanation to demonstrate

possible solutions for women to redefine their participation in cultural practices on their own terms. All in all, I argue that in a social imaginary that perceives women's choice to participate in cultural practices as inevitably reinforcing their sexual socialization, women can make empowering choices and ultimately transform the social imaginary by actively recognizing how their available choices are implications of sexual socialization.

As an Arab-American Muslim woman, I have witnessed some rather uncomfortable debates about what it means for Muslim women to veil themselves. The *hijab*, or the practice of a woman veiling her head, is a common feature of Near Eastern and Islamic traditions that has its roots in religious doctrine. While the Islamic holy book (the Quran) solely dictates that both Muslim women and men practice modesty, the *hijab* is a purely cultural practice that fulfills most religious scholars' interpretations of modesty. Therefore, the debates about a woman's choice to wear *hijab* have extended beyond religious instruction and have mainly revolved around cultural justifications in Muslim-majority societies, which I will focus on instead of its religious context.

Reflecting on the often Western-based stance that labels the *hijab* as oppressive, there seem to be two different positions that women can assume when they participate in this practice. Either the hijabi woman has internalized oppressive attitudes about women's sexuality and has accepted this oppression as her choice, or she is forcibly subject to these oppressive attitudes and longs to be freed. Uma Narayan explains these two positions that a "Third World woman," or Muslim woman in this case, is deemed to take as being a "dupe of patriarchy" versus a "prisoner of patriarchy" respectively (Narayan 1993, 418). While the prisoner of patriarchy practices a cultural practice like veiling as a result of literal coercion, the dupe may appear to impose the practice on herself because she genuinely endorses it. While these two positions ground the

identity as a major aspect of her belonging to a culture. The contention around the *hijab* demonstrates that the problem is not the religious function of the *hijab* itself, but the ambivalent expectations for women to act, or react, to patriarchal-based sexual scripts. One can also identify cultural conundrums within other cultural practices like wearing makeup, dieting, plastic surgery, heterosexual marriage, and attaining sexual consent. The commonality between all these cultural practices is the idea that a woman's role in these practices always reduce her down to her sexual status, even when she decides for herself whether to participate or refrain from these practices. While a woman deliberates on wearing makeup to empower herself, she will either beautify herself to intentionally enhance her physio-sexual attractiveness or wear makeup to "feel" beautiful, which also reduces her self-worth down to affirm the objectifying nature of beauty standards.

The contentious degree to which women's agency operates under this cultural conundrum prompted by sexual socialization prompts us to explore why women's choices are bounded to judgements on her sexual identity. The pattern within the debates above show that we see everything women do through a lens of sexual and gender oppression. This oppressed lens operates against women; our understanding of women's choices in this lens normalize and reinforce cross-cultural sexual scripts that define women as unjustly subservient to men's decisions and always bound to the male gaze. Catherine Mackinnon discusses how a woman's desirability to men is supposed as her form of power, "because she can arouse and deny its fulfillment" (Mackinnon 1989, 175). Mackinnon claims that men attribute the cause of their initiative and the denial of their satisfaction to a woman's actions. While this rationalizes force, a woman's consent to sexual relations and the male gaze is "more a metaphysical quality of a

debate about whether a woman is constrained by the *hijab*, conversations about *hijab* also reveal a conundrum when one tries to justify whether a woman should or should not wear the *hijab* for the sake of empowerment and gaining autonomy.

The male gaze— or the tendency for heterosexual men to objectify or sexualize women— consistently appears in the debate about whether or not practicing the *hijab* is empowering. To empower oneself is to trump the cross-culturally existing male gaze. Interestingly, each side of the argument that either defends or rejects the *hijab* uses the male gaze as a tool to undermine the other side's position. Defenders of a woman's choice to wear the *hijab* claim that a woman veiling herself frees her from the male gaze, allowing her to represent her intellectual and personal attributes and virtues as the core of her identity rather than her physio-sexual attractiveness. Some involved in this discourse even claim that wearing the *hijab* is a Muslim woman's feminist stance against being sexualized. However, on the other side of the debate, the critics of a woman's choice to wear the *hijab* claim that if a woman partakes in this practice, this directly signals that a woman's value is reduced down to her attractiveness under the veil. Subsequently, the hijabi woman is reduced down to an inherently sexual object who chooses to veil to falsely retain a sense of dignity, affirming and even promoting the male gaze rather than defeating it. The critic of the *hijab* might also employ Narayan's "dupe of patriarchy" attitude to claim that the hijabi woman has mistakenly internalized this oppressive practice as freeing, and true empowerment comes from rejecting the practice.

As one can see, any choice a woman makes regarding whether or not she wants to partake in the *hijab* tradition reduces down to an explication of her sexuality. Indeed, her sexuality as directly related to the *hijab* reveals a cultural conundrum that places women's sexual

woman's being than a choice she makes and communicates." The cultural conundrum regarding women's choices to partake in cultural practices thus finds its roots in her perceived constant attachment to men's sexual gratification. As Mackinnon even concludes, "exercise of women's so-called power presupposes more fundamental social powerlessness." (Mackinnon 1989, 175). All conversations about a woman's agency within cultural practices thus attach her powerlessness against male-driven sexualization to her decision-making. Her attempts at feeling empowered presupposes more powerlessness. However, this lens of understanding women's agency undermines all efforts to look for alternative ways in which women can feel empowered without reaffirming her sexual identity.

How much agency might a woman have considering her choices constantly reinforcing her status as a sexually objectified person? In her own analysis of cultural practices, Narayan cites Mackinnon as mistakenly believing that women's agency is "pulverized by patriarchy"; to Narayan, Mackinnon also seems to reduce women's choices to mere symptoms of being individuals-subject-to-patriarchy (Narayan 1993, 422). Narayan herself suggests the importance of maintaining a "dual awareness" of how some cultural practices like veiling may impose constraints on women's choices, and how women autonomously make choices within these constraints (Narayan 1993, 422). Narayan discusses how women's choices, especially within communities who practice veiling, realistically assess their lack of power. However, Mackinnon also argues that passive receptiveness to rape and distorted ideas of sexual relations are also choices women make under the constraints of male-dominated sex cultures. In light of rape being defined in "male sexual terms," notions of consent have revealed how women have been socialized to become passively receptive to sexual violence. Yet Mackinnon believes women also

perceive no better alternative to acquiescence; women "submit to survive" and to avoid risk of injury and humiliation. Simultaneously, women may even eroticize dominance and submission, as "it beats feeling forced" (Mackinnon 1989, 177). From the surface, Mackinnon and Narayan might appear to have conflicting conclusions as to whether women can act autonomously when subject to patriarchy, but both view women as realists. However, for both Mackinnon and Narayan, a women's agency operates under the constraints of male-driven sexual scripts. Even more so, women's culture of "bargaining with the patriarchy" (as argued by Narayan 1993) or accepting male-dominated sexual relations derives from the sexualization they face under the overarching male-driven culture.

Reflecting on Jessica Moorman's research on American black women, I will argue that we must navigate these cultural conundrums by realizing the need for women to defect from expectations to endorse the current sexual scripts that make their way into many cultural practices. Moorman's research focuses on how single black women navigate their singlehood by redefining singlehood for themselves rather than being subject to the stereotypes that label them as desperate and dysfunctional. Moorman shows how single black women have started codifying memories and advice from friends and family to develop a healthy sense of singlehood and an "ultimate shared reality" that defies negative connotations about their singlehood.

The women in her study had experienced how singlehood elicited negative responses from some men and family members who accepted patriarchal notions of marriage and the negative stereotypes about single black women. While some of these women desired marriage and were dissatisfied with being single, Moorman notes that they were also "unwilling to compromise their life goals or safety for men" as sexism and economic inequity threatened the

relationships they had with men (Moorman 2020, 14). Simultaneously, a divorced woman felt free to practice femininity that they were not able to as they assumed the traditional identity of being a wife and mother, who is sexually bound to only one man (Moorman 2020, 9). This defies a critique that feminizing practices actually reinforce a woman's objectification, while others may oppositely argue that marriage itself disempowers women to practice femininity, revealing yet another cultural conundrum. However, Moorman notes that participants like the divorced woman felt a sense of ownership over their choices as they defined their lives outside of "traditional gender ideologies" (Moorman 2020, 9). The women in these situations acted under the constraint of being single, but in doing so they felt "free" as they preserved their safety, security, and pursuit of happiness away from patriarchal expectations and gender-based violence (Moorman 2020, 12). They also defined singlehood for themselves after accepting the endearing support from their social networks and empowering films about single black women, allowing them to choose singlehood without endorsing the sexual scripts that affirm their oppressed status whether they were married or single. As a collective, the participants in Moorman's study felt liberated to pursue economic empowerment and opportunity because of this support, while some members of their social networks consistently questioned their sexual identity and competence in womanhood (Moorman 2020, 11). This demonstrates the importance for women to realize that they should redefine their choices as unconnected to their sexual identity by collectively recognizing the unsexual rewards of participating or refraining from practices and ignoring how others use sexual scripts to judge and constrain their choices.

Charles Taylor's proposed "Social Imaginaries" offer another angle that links an explanation to why we see women through the lens of their objectified sexual status and the

possibility of undermining the sexual scripts to resolve the cultural conundrums. These instances of women's choices consistently being reduced to an explication of their sexuality demonstrate that the social imaginary has been established to perceive women through their existential dependence on men. We must realize that a woman's sexualization is a core feature of the social imaginary in place today, which is how people "imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, and the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions that underlie these expectations…carried through images, stories, and legends" (Taylor 2002, 106). Cultural conundrums derive from the fact that a woman's sexual status in relation to men's sexual gratification is at the center of our understanding when legitimizing participation or rejection of common cultural practices. Thus, in any way one tries to justify critique or defense of cultural practices, women's objectification is de facto embedded in that justification. Because of the dominance of patriarchal cultures and the almost-universal power of cisgender/heterosexual men over women, the social imaginary has evolved from widely shared understandings by the men who initially legitimized different practices, values, and beliefs about social existence. Women's choices are consequences of men's attitudes and beliefs, which translate into societal attitudes and beliefs. Consequently, men's validation of a woman's choice to participate in cultural practices translates to societal validation, as embodied through the discourse and debates about women's agency.

Taylor's description of the existence of the social imaginary contributes to our understanding of how we perceive women in relation to men. Encouragingly, Taylor also claims that the social imaginary *can* be transformed. Taylor describes that new practices can modify older ones through a "long march" or slow process in which "certain groups or and strata of the

population" improvise or acquire new meanings for people (Taylor 2002, 111). I believe that this gradual process of forming a new social imaginary starts with actively recognizing the existence of this social imaginary that distorts women's choices.

Women ought to recognize how their available choices are implications of sexual socialization, which is a core feature of our current social imaginary. Narayan proposes to view women as "bargaining with the patriarchy" by justifying their choices to partake in sexualized practices with reasons that relate to other parts of their identity (e.g. religious, ethnic, financial desire). Moorman channels the social imaginary by showing how single black women display resourcefulness and create an ultimate shared reality through sharing support that promotes non-sexualized reasons to practice singlehood. Drawing on these solutions, I think one can resolve cultural conundrums by shifting the narrative as to why partake in cultural practices. For example, one could perhaps emphasize and internalize the belief that Muslim women choose to veil solely because of religious doctrine. We should also encourage women to refrain from judging other women. In order to form a new social imaginary, education must reflect a consensus that rejects judgment based on sexual scripts, and women ought not defect from this consensus. This might be done through pulling more women into cultural leadership positions and by shifting the values taught in the home that reinforce sexual scripts. Moreover, we might potentially abandon some cultural practices that result in cultural conundrums, if they cannot be justified by reasons that do not reaffirm a woman's sexually-objectified status. Finally, men that accept heteronormative traditions and perceptions of women must reject the idea that women are inherently (and subservient) sexual beings who react to men's sexual gratification.

The solutions I have posed offer a way to escape the cultural conundrums involved in discourse about women's autonomy. The first step is to recognize these cultural conundrums and find justifications for women's choices that transcend them. Future research should seek to explore these solutions in respect to mobilizing communities worldwide. Judgement and sexual scripts are inevitable phenomena, making it harder for women to defect from the sexualization of their choices. When and how to mobilize entire communities is the key to transforming this unfortunate social imaginary that characterizes our reality.

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AMNA HAIDER

AMNA HAIDER (SHE/HER) IS A SENIOR WHO IS DOUBLE MAJORING IN PHILOSOPHY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND PURSUING A HUMAN RIGHTS CERTIFICATE. WHEN A QUESTION ABOUT THE WORLD WRACKS HER BRAIN, HER INQUISITIVE PRACTICE OF PHILOSOPHICAL INTERROGATION ALLOWS HER TO STAY LEVEL-HEADED AND PRODUCTIVE IN FINDING ONCE-CONTROVERSIAL TRUTHS. A PHILOSOPHICAL EXERCISE LIKE WRITING THIS PAPER HAS PROVED USEFUL TO HER AS SHE NOW CITES HER OWN WORK AND THE SCHOLARS SHE REFERENCED TO ENGAGE IN INSIGHTFUL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT TIMELY ISSUES WITH HER PEERS, FRIENDS, AND FAMILY. SHE THANKS THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA'S PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT FOR ENDOWING HER WITH THESE MUCH-NEEDED SKILLS THROUGH A WORTHWHILE JOURNEY OF EARNING A PHILOSOPHY DEGREE.

Control, Alt, De-link: "The Right to Be Forgotten" and its Role as a Human Right

Brian Russo

With the advent of the internet, the world has shifted towards one in which information and resources are readily available to us in a moment's notice. Search engines like Google and Yahoo allow users to instantly connect with news articles, message loved ones, and research topics all with a few clicks. However, as the internet continues to grow exponentially, individuals are finding it increasingly harder to hide their private information from domains open to the public. Anyone can simply type a person's name into a search engine and within a few minutes uncover a significant amount of data pertaining to that subject's past and present life. The ease with which one's data can be accessed online can create a vicious cycle of stigmatization for the person. It prevents individuals from moving past any damaging, sensitive, or false information about them on the web. In a recent ruling by the European Court of Justice, citizens in the European Union now possess the "right to be forgotten" online. This decision allows users to request that their personal data be "erased" from specific company databases. In this paper, I will argue that the "right to be forgotten" should be considered a human right, as it protects one's reputation and privacy, allowing the individual to pursue a worthwhile life. I will defend my argument by addressing these four questions:

1.   What is the "right to be forgotten"?

2.   Under what grounds should this right be a human right?

3.   What duties does the right to be forgotten give and to which agents?

4.   What foreseeable objections/criticisms are there for this claim?

First, let's examine how the European Union defines the right to be forgotten. According to Article 17 of the General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR"), the right to be forgotten gives data subjects "the right to obtain, from the controller, the erasure of personal data concerning him or her without undue delay and the controller shall have the obligation to erase personal data without undue delay" ("Art-17" 1). This regulation gives individuals the authority to request that a controller (company) erase any and all data they may have pertaining to that individual. However, not all requests for data erasure must be approved. Article 17 further explains that an organization must adhere to a subject's data request only if one of the following conditions are met:

1. The personal data collected is no longer necessary for the purpose which the company processed it for.

2. The processing of the data was originally dependent on the user's consent, but the user then revoked their consent.

3. The company was relying on *legitimate interests* (sound reasons) as a basis for processing their data, the individual then objected to the processing of their data, and no overriding legitimate interest was provided to continue their data processing.

4. The processing of the data was intended for marketing purposes, but the the user then objected to its processing.

5. The processing of the user's data was done in an unlawful way.

6. The company must comply with a legal obligation to erase the user's data

7. The company processed the personal data in order to offer information

broad, it is designed to ensure an individual's data is protected in all forms, including its "collection, recording, organization, structuring, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, restriction, erasure or destruction" ("What Is" 1). With these statutory terms now defined and explained, let's examine how the right to be forgotten is grounded as a human right in Question #2.

As previously stated, I believe that the right to be forgotten should be a human right as it protects a person's reputation/privacy, allowing them to pursue a worthwhile life. This claim was molded by qualities found in both the naturalist and practical accounts of philosophy. In his novel, *The Idea of Human Rights,* Charles Beitz argues in favor of what he calls the "practical approach" to human rights. As a practical-approach philosopher, Beitz frames the concept of "what is a human right" by first locating *how* it is used in our daily political discourse. James Griffin, however, takes a slightly different approach with his "naturalist theory." Unlike Beitz, Griffin argues that by answering the conceptual question of "what is a human right" first, only then would it answer how it *could* be used in our political discourse.

These two practices, while contradictory, both provide elements necessary for defending my claim. For example, Beitz believes that human rights are grounded in what he termed a "precautionary apparatus." According to Beitz, "[I]f we were to assume that human rights served to protect an individual's urgent interests against standard threats, then recognizing that the global order has the capacity for self-regulation, we ought to limit a state's ability to pose such a threat" (Beitz 131). His understanding of human rights centers around those rights being a "tool" used to prevent a state from threatening an individual's interests. Much like a precautionary

society services to a child ("Right to Erasure" 1).

Using these criteria, organizations can decide whether they must approve or deny an individual's request for data erasure. For example, let's assume that a person downloads a popular social media application on their phone and then consents to the processing of their data within its terms and conditions. The company, relying solely on the user's consent, is now able to begin collecting personal data from the application. But years later, the person decides to stop using the service and makes a request for data erasure. If the social media company is unable to provide any reasoning as to why the data processing is necessary (i.e., legitimate interests), then the company must erase all of the user's personal data. This scenario, taken from the second criteria, is a perfect example for how the right to be forgotten regulates companies by ensuring they do not overextend their unnecessary retention of an individual's information. Additionally, these companies must also comply with the user's data request "without undue delay and at the latest within one month of receipt of the request" ("Right to Erasure" 1). This places the responsibility back on the controller to erase the user's data in one month or less.

In order to understand the statute, it's also crucial to define both "personal data" and what it means to "process" it. Article 4 of the GDPR defines "personal data" as "any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'); an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier" ("What Is" 1). Examples of this type of data could be one's name/surname, home address, phone number, doctor or hospital data, etc. Furthermore, Article 4 explains how "data processing" is "any operation or set of operations which is performed on personal data or on sets of personal data, whether or not by automated means" ("What Is" 1). While this definition is very

apparatus, the right to be forgotten is a tool grounded in preventing third-party organizations from using one's personal data to threaten their online reputation and privacy. Griffin meanwhile argues that human rights are protections of an individual's normative agency. To him, human rights are rights we have "by virtue of our humanity" and whose protection is required "to preserve our capacity to choose and pursue our perception of a worthwhile life" (Griffin 7). By giving individuals autonomy over their personal data, the right to be forgotten ensures one's reputation and privacy are more firmly in their own control, thus allowing them to pursue a worthwhile life. But how do reputation and privacy tie into the right to be forgotten?

Reputation is essential to the way one is perceived in society. A negative online reputation can carry ramifications that disenfranchise an individual from achieving their pursuit of a worthwhile life. For example, let's assume a minor uploaded a photo of themselves online. The child committed no crimes in the photo but did portray socially abhorrent behavior. After a few years, the minor, now a grown adult, tries to apply for a job but is turned away on account of the photo. While the individual could contact the web owner to have the image taken down, without the right to be forgotten, the owner could simply refuse to remove it. And even if the web owner did take the image down, there could be hundreds, if not thousands, of other websites that may have re-posted that same image. The inability to regulate one's personal data prevents individuals from being able to change the way they are perceived online. In a world where one's reputation can determine their life prospects, it is imperative that an individual has the ability to control what information, or misinformation, is posted about them. In this way, the right to be forgotten builds upon the more general right to privacy.

According to Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ("UDHR"), no entity "shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation" ("Universal" 1). This article grants individuals protections from outside interference in their personal lives. However, while the right to be forgotten is similar, in practice, to Article 12's right to privacy, they should both be considered separate. The original declaration, created in 1948, could not have understood the concept of the internet, nor could it have predicted the emerging threats the internet places on one's digital privacy.

Before the World Wide Web, information could be placed into two distinguishable categories: private and public. Private information was not generally available to the public unless the owner made it explicitly known. This included information like one's bank statements, health information, date of birth, etc. On the contrary, public information *was* easily accessible to the general population. If an individual wanted to find a certain arrest record or research a topic for a report, all they would need to do is go in person to request the information from the appropriate sources. However, since the invention of the internet, the lines between what information is considered private or public have begun to blur. Simply by agreeing to an app's terms and conditions or by allowing a website to use cookies, an individual's right to data privacy is relinquished.

Additionally, companies may even share your data with other companies that may use it in ways to which you may not have agreed. With the right to be forgotten, however, an individual is able to self-govern and regulate the removal of their private data from search indexes. This gives them greater control over their online presence, which protects their reputation both online

and offline. And while the UDHR's right to privacy is an essential human right in its own terms, its concept should be treated as an umbrella category for more specific rights like the right to be forgotten. This separation between an individual's right to privacy and their right to *digital* privacy should be established, since the internet is an easily accessible tool with an emerging range of threats. Now that we have discussed how the right to be forgotten is grounded as a precautionary apparatus for one's reputation, privacy, and pursuit of a worthwhile life, it is important to discuss what duties this right gives and to which agents.

As previously mentioned, Beitz argues that human rights are requirements whose objective is to protect an individual's urgent interests from standard threats, first directed at the state, and when the state fails in their duties, then they become the responsibility of the international community. Using this framework, Beitz is able to distinguish three essential agents: the individual, the state, and the international community. However, while the right to be forgotten does incorporate individuals as one of its listed agents, it does not refer to the state or the international community. Instead, the right to be forgotten places agency on the individual, the controller, and the government as its sole duty bearers. But what are their duties?

Let's begin with the individual. If a user feels the processing of their personal data has affected their reputation or digital privacy, then they have the responsibility of initiating a request for erasure. While this request can be made digitally or written by hand, the individual cannot file for a request if it does not meet the criteria listed on page two. Once the user has submitted their request for erasure, the responsibility then falls to the controller to whom the request was sent.

A controller can be listed as any third-party entity (i.e., company, organization, etc.) that has processed the personal data and information of a user. When individuals submit their appeal

to be forgotten, the controller has the duty to ensure all of the necessary data pertaining to that user is "erased" or de-linked from its servers. Moreover, the controller is obligated to contact any organization with which they shared the user's data and confirm that they too erased that information. However, a controller is not obligated to erase the data if they feel it meets one of the following criteria:

1. The personal data the controller holds is needed to exercise the right of freedom of expression.

2. There is a legal obligation to keep the data.

3. It is needed for reasons of public interest (for example public health, scientific, statistical or historical research purposes).

4. The held data has undergone an appropriate process of anonymization to prevent the identification of the user ("Do We" 1).

If the request for erasure does not meet these requirements, then the controller has one calendar month to confirm the de-linking of the user's data. If the controller does not meet this deadline, then the responsibility moves to the next respective agent: the government. As the last and final agent listed under the right to be forgotten, the government has the duty to ensure the controller's compliance for each valid request. In order to prevent the abuse of an individual's personal data, the government also holds the responsibility of issuing warnings, imposing bans, or even penalizing controllers. In some cases, a controller can be fined "up to €20 million, or 4% of the firm's worldwide annual revenue from the preceding financial year - whichever amount is higher" ("What Are" 1). With a penalty that severe, organizations are incentivized to comply

results relating to that individual. Essentially, this allows web pages to remain unaltered and running but makes it *much* harder for traffic to be directed to those sites. If someone goes through the process of data erasure, and they go to search their name, the information that would have appeared before is now buried under the billions of web page results published online. While the user is not actually "forgotten," it does provide relief knowing that their private information is not easily accessible to the general public.

The right to be forgotten is a basic human right as it serves to protect one's reputation and privacy. These two elements are not only essential to the well-being of the individual but provides them with the opportunity to pursue a worthwhile life. Additionally, the right to be forgotten, through its many agents and corresponding duties, prevents the mismanagement and subsequent abuse of one's personal data. While arguments can be made against the right to be forgotten, as it is currently applied in the EU, this fledgling right does its best not to impede on the public's right to know nor their freedom of speech by allowing exceptions in order to balance competing interests. As technology continues to evolve, so too will our online presence. In order to live Griffin's "worthwhile life," people must be able to regain control of their online reputations—lest it poison their offline livelihoods. For that reason, it is imperative that the right to be forgotten be established as a basic human right for *every* individual.

with the GDPR standards and process an individual's erasure request. Now that the agents and duties have been identified, it is time to address the criticisms regarding my claim.

Two of the biggest criticisms of the right to be forgotten are that some individuals feel it hinders the public's right to know and that it promotes censorship. However, as it is currently being implemented, the right to be forgotten does its best to balance the individual's right with these two concerns. Much like the separation between the right to privacy and the right to digital privacy, there is a line drawn between what the public *needs* to know and what they *want* to know. The right to be forgotten does not require the deletion of any information, such as criminal charges, that may pose a threat to the health and safety of the general public if it were made undiscoverable. But beyond the narrow carve-outs, it allows individuals to request erasure of online information that may cause reputational damage. For example, one can argue that the public has a right to know about the location of a sexual predator within their neighborhood. Not only is it public information, but it protects the welfare of the citizens living within that community. However, one cannot argue why the personal information of the predator's victim should be made public knowledge. Something as simple as the victim's name could make it more difficult for them to pursue a worthwhile life. Between these two scenarios, the right to be forgotten would only be permissible in the erasure of the victim's personal data. Additionally, the concept of "erasure" leads into the second criticism of this right: censorship.

One of the many issues with the right to be forgotten is the use of negatively perceived words like "erasure" or "forgotten." Without context, if one were to hear these words, they would incorrectly assume that their data were being deleted when, in fact, they are not. The right to be forgotten does not censor or erase information, but rather de-links certain data from search

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Shared Autonomy in Human Relations

Owen Hoff

Those who theorize about the autonomy of persons seem to agree that one shouldn't seriously consider the concept of self-creation to mean *ex-nihilo* self-creation, or to build oneself alone without influence. In order to develop the skills to "make" oneself, certain habits and values must, as Joel Fienberg wrote, "be "implanted" in a child if she is to have a reasonable part in playing the direction of her own growth" (1989, pg.34). John Stuart Mill would likely agree, having asserted in his piece *On Liberty* that "persons of genius, it is true, are, and are always likely to be, a small minority; but in order to have them, it is necessary to preserve the soil in which they grow." (2011, pg.121) While Mill wrote of the exceptions to the norm, I believe that the need to "preserve the soil" also applies to the development of all persons, regardless of whether they possess exceptional mental faculties. One aspect of fostering a healthy environment for autonomous habits, then, is emphasizing the role of interconnective experiences, or post-natal nurturing, in the development of such habits. I intend to articulate what constitutes a trait of human relations I call "shared autonomy" and discuss its possible role in the development of healthy and informed societies by favoring interconnectivity in tandem with individuality. In doing so, I will also present an argument in favor of valuing this trait to instill autonomous habits.

First and foremost, "shared autonomy" is a distinct concept from autonomy itself. While both are desirable traits and both are more or less developed and understood through valuing certain habits of existence, (which often overlap) they differ in the sense that one is distinctly a

trait of an individual, and the other is distinctly a trait of the dialogue and general interconnectivity between persons. Thus, it is like so: shared autonomy is not a desired trait of an individual person like autonomy itself, but rather a desired yet often unarticulated trait of the way persons perceive *each other*. (Another aspect of human relations that has this interconnective aspect to it is mutual respect. Both inherently require reference to another person, and suppose a sort of shared understanding)

But how exactly does one identify the presence of shared autonomy in human relations? Shared autonomy is present when each member of an interaction approaches it with the assumed perception that other people, like themselves, are autonomous enough to be accountable for themselves in these ways: answerable for themselves, and receptive to others. It also requires this unspoken agreement: *"you will be answerable for your beliefs and receptive to mine, and I will likewise be receptive to your beliefs and answerable for my own."* I draw definitions of "answerability" and "receptibility" quite heavily from Andrea Westlund, who uses these terms to define an autonomous individual.

In "Selflessness and Responsibility for Self: Is Deference Compatible with Autonomy?", Westlund highlights the need for the first concept, answerability, in her definition of an autonomous person. In summary, she writes that to be answerable is "ultimately to be appropriately dialogically responsive to intersubjective demands for justification." (Westlund, "Selflessness and Responsibility for Self…", 2003, pg.502) In other words, an answerable individual has justifications for their actions and thoughts, and can provide these justifications when held to do so as they are willing to receive criticism. Westlund also puts forth the following: "to treat someone as autonomous is to treat her as her own representative—as one

and development of their beliefs. But before I elaborate on the importance of this point and why shared autonomy itself is valuable, I must turn to the second concept that completes this idea: receptibility.

When defining shared autonomy, I wrote that it involves the assumption that others "are autonomous enough to be accountable for themselves." *The assumption* (a specific noun) that another person will be accountable for their own beliefs and thoughts because they are autonomous adds the expectation of answerability from both parties; *the act of assuming* (a verb) demonstrates receptibility to the other party's assumed autonomy by recognizing the value of the other party's experiences. This is because assuming another person is autonomous even despite their differences to oneself requires that one recognizes a person can express themselves or believe differently and still be answerable for themselves; that their differences are not a sign that they are not self-governing and have nothing to seriously engage with.

All too often, as Patricia Hill Collins points out in "Mammies, Matriarchs, and Other Controlling Images", "difference is defined in oppositional terms. One part is not simply different from its counterpart, it is inherently opposed to its "other."" (2000, pg.70) In this way of thinking that Collins termed "binary", she outlines that people become categorized "in terms of their difference from one another" and that this streamlines the process of minority oppression. Since binary thinking defines difference as opposition, it categorizes what isn't "normal" to a person (particularly a person in a majority group) as opposition to normal life, rather than just another way of living. This pushes different groups into the realm of "The Other": differences are emphasized, similarities are seen as exceptions, and most importantly, thoughts to try to engage with other groups are implicitly discouraged. Not because engagement is portrayed as

who speaks for herself, and whom we expect to speak for herself… our treatment of one another as autonomous agents crucially involves our holding one another answerable for our action-guiding commitments." ("Selflessness and Responsibility for Self…", 498) Here, Westlund discusses *why* we should see answerability as a necessary trait of an autonomous person: since treatment of another person as autonomous "crucially involves… …holding one another answerable for our action guiding commitments", answerability must be a crucial aspect of an autonomous individual. I concur, but furthermore I think Westlund also speaks to a fundamental aspect of shared autonomy and autonomy development here: mutual expectations. If, in attempting to foster shared autonomy, we expect someone to be "answerable for their beliefs and receptive to ours" (as I stated above) we must also expect ourselves to be able to offer that in return. Answerability as Westlund describes it is inherently an interconnective concept; it is born from the expectation that we will be held answerable for ourselves by others.

While I agree with Westlund that it is good to hold oneself answerable for the sake of the concept's value internally rather than the pressure of others, or as she puts it, when "the demand for an answer is not simply felt as a pressure from without, but also as a requirement to which she is held from within… she feels their normative weight…" (Westlund, "Selflessness and Responsibility for Self…", 2003, pg.497), the benefits of the external expectation are clear and valuable: they motivate answerability! When answerability is motivated to become a habit or perhaps a trait of a person, that person will in turn motivate others to pursue answerability as well due to the trait's inherently interconnective benefits toward debate. In this way, answerability is not just a trait of an autonomous individual, as Westlund uses it. It is also a trait of a sort of human relations where its participants are motivated to be autonomous in the support

that they have justifications which seem like they *could* be scrutinized this way if only they would let them be. Used this way, such justifications are not defenses or supports, but tools to avoid critical discussion. The desubjectifier, no matter their reasoning, *loses* receptibility.

Westlund captures receptibility quite well in this way, writing in a forthcoming work "Education for Autonomy, and for Care: A Comment on Asha Bhandary's *Freedom to Care*" in discussion of value-neutrality that it is "imperative that individual opinions or world-views be subject to intersubjective standards of evaluation." ("Education for Autonomy, and for Care…", Forthcoming) I heavily concur, as the necessity that the "answers" we have for ourselves are held to the evaluation of others creates the necessity that we do not seek to support beliefs or views simply for the sake of supporting *them* but for the sake of supporting what is *worthy* to believe in. Receptibility, as such, encourages one to see others as autonomous and in turn encourage them to be receptible as well; for only by being receptible to views other than one's own can one hope to truly demonstrate that their own views are worth believing in. As with answerability, I pose that receptibility is an inherently interconnective concept, and that while it is quite valuable when seen as an individual's habit to be fostered, it has more value when also seen as a trait of relations.

From these concepts of answerability and receptibility as interconnective, I propose the following for why shared autonomy, the encouragement and assumption of these things in human relations, should be valued as we develop. Where shared autonomy exists between persons, I believe that the individual autonomy (at least in terms of critical involvement in one's beliefs) of persons is enhanced. I have discussed that to have shared autonomy means to foster the assumption that persons will be answerable and receptible. From this, I add that if people were to

bad, but as *futile*. I propose an explanation for this: when this binary thinking festers and it categorizes what is different as oppositional to normal life, (assuming there is such a thing as "normal" life, indeed), different views and beliefs are seen as occurrences that cannot possibly have developed in a way worth considering respectfully, for if they were worth considering, they would be deemed "normal". People who hold such different views and beliefs are thus "desubjectified." I define "desubjectification" like so: when one ignores the possibility of another person or group of persons being able to be receptive to other views as well as answerable for their own. One who is desubjectified is no longer seen as capable of understanding another's point of view, nor is *their* point of view capable of *being* understood. (This is separate from understanding that someone may have a serious mental disability; this perception is based solely upon physical or social factors) I do not seek to argue for the existence of desubjectification as fact; I have not considered this concept enough to be able to do so, and I regret that deeper elaboration on what constitutes "normal" in reference to desubjectification is outside the scope of this paper. I only seek to use this hypothetical state of human relations to further define receptibility and to provide contrast to shared autonomy.

One who would desubjectify another would be *un*receptive to what that person has to share. In doing so, they would ignore the possibility that the other person could provide a contrasting idea that would require oneself to reassess their views or defend them. They assume that there is no room for improvement in their ideas. Here we see an example of why answerability alone leaves much to be desired: it permits thinkers to suppose that since they are answerable, their views are valid. *Mere* answerability holds no one accountable because it does not necessitate that they find justifications that *are* subject to interpersonal evaluation, but only

I have already written as to what value neutrality *isn't* in the process of articulating receptibility: we shouldn't think that to encourage value neutrality is the same as accepting an idea like "as long as you have reasons, your view is valid", for reasons viewed in this way are not expected to be held to scrutiny. Under this idea, opposing points in debate are seen as threats to what it means to respect reason, for under it, reason alone is all that one needs to hold a belief, not reasons which survive answerability and receptibility. Westlund writes: "the ability to appreciate and respond to the perspectives of others, with whom one may have little in common, should be included amongst the skills we take to be crucial to autonomy." ("Education for Autonomy, and for Care", Forthcoming) Without this, she posits, students are likely to accept the "as long as you have reasons" idea of value-neutrality (which may be better understood if referred to as an "agree to disagree" concept) and become unlikely to notice their own inconsistencies and biases while being quick to notice those of others.

Put simply, value neutrality needs shared autonomy, or perhaps just receptibility, as Westlund argues, in order to be a value which supports critical thought by individuals without having been pushed from one "side" or another. Thus, the encouragement of value neutrality in education should be understood as the encouragement of receptibility and answerability for one's views without pushing one in particular. Without accepting an idea such as "Other people may be able to point out inconsistencies in my beliefs, just as I may be able to do so for them", critical thought is *incomplete*, no matter how unbiasedly our students are taught. If shared autonomy is encouraged within education in this way, I argue that it will do more for students' autonomy development for the same reasons shared autonomy itself is valuable: it fosters interconnectivity in reason for individuals.

successfully do this, they would have to discover value (and perhaps even excitement!) in the possibility of being mistaken about one's own beliefs, for shared autonomy supposes that being wrong is a chance to improve oneself, not necessarily a sign of incompetency. (This supposition arises from the fact that answerability and receptibility together, as I've written of them, imply value in aligning oneself with what is worth believing in) Additionally, when the habit of fostering shared autonomy in instilled in individuals, they are more inclined to simultaneously pursue answerability and receptiveness for themselves *and* pass on that instillment to those they come across. In short: the interconnective framework of shared autonomy firstly encourages one to see those with different views and values than them as potential sources of enlightenment to one's inconsistencies, causing one to value the presence of other groups in society such that interconnectivity is a positive influence on individuality. Also, it necessitates that these "sources of interconnectivity" are seen as individuals themselves, not mere microphones of a generalized group, for shared autonomy would encourage identifying the subjective experiences of all and thus to point out inconsistencies in all persons, thereby seeking to enhance all persons' individual autonomy. It is through all this that I argue the presence of shared autonomy in human relations would promote both interconnectivity and individuality for a well-rounded society that fosters the development of autonomous behavior by encouraging these things.

Relatedly, another reason in support of highlighting shared autonomy is its benefit in the teaching of autonomous habits. As Andrea Westlund does in her forthcoming piece, I think a certain definition of value-neutrality in education can streamline the process of autonomy lessons, but I wish to add upon Westlund's definition of value neutrality and write that shared autonomy, when encouraged, fosters this positive form of value-neutral education in question.

conversation to have shared autonomy. While conversation is where it is most obvious, shared autonomy also exists as one simply passes strangers on the street.

Secondly, while I may have implied that shared autonomy consistently provides "productive" debate, this is not necessarily the case. There is still room for "a tie" in debate and discussion with shared autonomy, as long as the impasse doesn't result from one saying, for instance, "let's agree to disagree." A tie should be considered an event in which members of discussion find that their beliefs have reached a stalemate even after they have demonstrated an understanding of each other's views and shown that they are able to retain their own despite the discrepancies (Perhaps due to differing definitions of metaphysical concepts, such as the nature of a fetus). Avoidances such as "let's agree to disagree" result from an unwillingness to reflect upon, consider, and respect others' ability to form an argument. These avoidances do not comprise shared autonomy, and I argue that they themselves should be avoided on the basis that they discourage interpersonal engagement. However, I also don't wish to imply that "a tie" means we should simply end the discussion there. With a tie, one needn't feel that they are *avoiding* the discussion if they leave it.

Lastly, I wish to articulate that one may still avoid discussion for many reasons. Some are mundane, like exhaustion or wariness, some are even related to self-defense (one may *want* to engage with another person, but not do so because they have expressed a perceived need for violence), and some may be related to a realistic perception of one's understanding of an issue (we shouldn't pretend to know more than we do). The relevance of this point is perhaps tangential, but I do not wish to indicate that one fails a certain duty if they are not enthusiastic

Before I conclude, some final clarifications are crucial. Firstly, the assumption of autonomy that I speak of must also include the assumption of *potential* autonomy, for cases where one's critical involvement in themselves is not obvious, or where their autonomy itself may need development. Here I want to convey another layer to the threat of not having shared autonomy in human relations: hand-in-hand with any assumption that other people are not autonomous tends to be the additional assumption that they *will never be* autonomous. I concede that in some cases this latter assumption may be true, for many reasons. (Perhaps a mental deformity or even powerful socialization) However, even after taking that into consideration, to *assume* that one isn't and cannot be autonomous in average interactions further encourages one to desubjectify (or otherwise invalidate) the experiences of others such that their inclusion in society is superficial, and also discourages the inclusion of such peoples in serious education programs and other benefits. I have already hinted at the idea that shared autonomy encourages people to be *more* answerable and receptible; the reason for this is not simply social pressure, but also the implications of this assumption of potential autonomy. While it is certainly possible, even likely, that one will not become more reliably autonomous than before after one conversation, it is also possible that one may begin to understand the error in their thought processes after they are brought to light, or better understand how to present their ideas after receiving advice on how to do so. Part of shared autonomy is *seeking* the reason behind another person's stances if their reasoning isn't obvious. If one doesn't seem to make sense, it shouldn't be assumed that it is because they aren't worth listening to, but rather that one should ask "can you elaborate?" or "can you phrase this with more brevity?" It is also because of this potentiality idea that I refer to shared autonomy as relational rather than conversational; one need not be in a

and prepared to discuss every matter available in this world. To not respect these reasons would

likely mean to expect more from others than we do from ourselves.

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"I am She": Issues of Lockean Substance-Identity in Guadagnino's *Suspiria*

Anna Banerjee

There are few questions more natural than that of "what makes me who I am?" The hunt to discover what it means to be a person inhabiting a body is an integral issue in our spiritual and philosophical existence. Major attempts to answer the question have been made by a plethora of philosophers, but the work of John Locke is especially noteworthy. In his work "Essay Concerning Human Understanding," originally published in 1689, Locke provides an interesting and compelling way of dealing with the ideas of personal identity and the persistence of such across time and substance. He argues that personal identity is best understood in part through ideas of substance, man, and person.

The material implications of Locke's distinction become incredibly pertinent when considering the case brought up in book two, chapter twenty-seven, "Identity and Diversity," in which Locke asks, "Can it be different persons if the same substance does the thinking throughout?" Because this situation is out of the realm of ordinary possibility, it is best elucidated through a secondary story to which one can apply a methodological approach. Thus, in the following essay, I will argue that the events of *Suspiria* (2018, dir. Luca Guadagnino), and specifically the case of its main character Susie Bannion and her dual identity, are useful in making the Lockean analysis comprehensible, thus providing more evidence in support of Locke's theory on personal identity.[1] The plot of the film and the situation of Susie Bannion's

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[1] This paper will specifically use the 2018 remake as opposed to the 1977 film by the same name, directed by Dario Argento. The original film, while having interesting philosophical implications in other capacities, has a slightly different story arc with a very different ending than the 2018 remake and thus does not involve the same concerns re: substance and diachronic identity, and thus is outside the scope of this investigation.

What opens this revelation to further analysis is the introduction of this dual identity. The situation of Susie-Suspiriorum complicates the nature of identity as a consciousness within a substance. As it pertains to Susie, the film does not make it entirely clear as to what the revelation of identity means to her. There are three routes given by the film: Susie was possessed at some point by Mater Suspiriorum, "Susie" was a moniker used by Mater Suspiriorum to infiltrate the coven, or, finally, Susie and Mater Suspiriorum are dually in possession of Susie's body (two consciousnesses interwoven within a singular substance).

Initially, there is an immediate inclination toward assuming that Susie Bannion was at some time possessed by the spirit of Mater Suspiriorum, with Suspiriorum assuming control of the body and abolishing the original Susie. This theory would clearly differentiate Susie as the young woman from Ohio and Mater Suspiriorum as the witch (with no overlap aside from perhaps the moment of possession) and would fit with the mechanics of the original ritual planned by Markos. Additionally, there is some textual evidence that hints toward this interpretation of the identity issue near the middle of the film, with Susie, while practicing for the final dance-ritual, calling toward a figure, some sort of Death-incarnate, seemingly noting her devolution into darkness (58:26).

This invites a simplistic reading of the film, but I believe this to be the least likely option within the cinematic world presented to us. Considering the emphasis put on Susie maintaining her affiliations and memories in the final act, even following her "I am she" moment, puts into question the validity of the possession argument. Susie-as-Suspiriorum upholds both identities simultaneously within the "I am she" sequence, maintaining her relationship to the other dancers in a gesture tied to both her personal allegiances and her knowledge of them as a mother-figure

(2:08:45-59). It is surely possible that there could be a scrupulous possessor who is able to cloak its invasion into its host so that it mimics with absolute perfection all of the ideas, memories, and affiliations of the previous identity. But, given the larger context of the film, I find this incompatible with the information provided by the film. *Suspiria* offers no moralist reading of the coven, beyond seemingly pitting the motivations of Blanc and Markos against each other. The Mothers of the coven are similarly assigned no moral code. It does not feel like the natural leap within the film's ethos to consider the "I am she" revelation to be one of violent take-over either, as there seems to be a positive, cathartic release associated with it. Moreover, even granted the possibility of this option, it is not the most compelling route to consider as it does bring a stale ending to the philosophical pursuit concerning Susie's identity, and I will still pursue the Lockean analysis with more depth.

The difficulty in pinning down the exact identity of Susie is an immediately recognizable Lockean issue. *Suspiria* follows, though presumably not intentionally, many of the hypothetical situations that Locke wrestles with throughout "Essay Concerning Human Understanding," including the differentiation of personal identity into three separate modes of thinking. The first aspect, substance, is the closest material representation of identity, tied to the body and the process of thinking. Locke is clear that the "body" is not always identical to the "person," alluding to the example of the Prince and Cobbler. He notes that even if the Prince were to be put into the body of the Cobbler, no one would consider his identity as Prince to have fundamentally changed (2.27.15). Unlike the Prince and the Cobber's situation, however, Susie can be considered to be concurrent, or nested with, Mater Suspiriorum. While this does do some work in

The last aspect of identity that Locke establishes, person, however, has a much more complex definition. A person is "a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing at different times and places," i.e., a being with a consciousness. A consciousness itself is defined as "inseparable from thinking…and essential to it" (2.27.9). It is this thinking process, the consciousness, that becomes the key player in the question of how one defines personal identity: "personal identity consists not in the identity of substance but in the identity of consciousness" (2.27.19). Thinking is the one action that Locke considers utterly necessary to personhood, to the creation of self. The question of consciousness majorly affects how we decide to approach the locus of Susie's identity.

It is as difficult to simply say that Susie is reducible to Mater Suspiriorum during the duration of the story as it is to say with any surety that Susie is only *Susie* at any point in the film. At the beginning of the movie, Susie is introduced in a montage of her watching her dying mother lay in bed, as attendants—presumably women in the community as well as Susie's multiple sisters—and a doctor tend to her, establishing a distinctly human connection which is simultaneously troubled by her physical and emotional distance from the events. Later, Susie's mother is seen in bed shortly before her death, telling the pastor attending to her that, "My last one. She is my sin. She is what I smeared on the world" (1:31:10-21). For many reasons outside the scope of this paper, sin and sexuality are major motifs within the film, but they specifically provide an interesting insight into the film's ontological views vis-à-vis Susie's creation. Textually, she is the biological child of a human woman—a devout human woman, in fact, one who would reject any notions of "witchcraft." It is also clear that Susie's wrongness is linked with the "sin" of her birth. Susie, or at least others' perception of Susie, seemingly held some

the appropriate direction in acknowledging the potential fragmentation of Susie's self-referential knowledge of her identity due to the limits of her substance, it is not quite strong enough yet.

The second aspect of identity, man, is best described as "the idea of an animal of a certain form" (2.27.8). It differentiates a person from a talking parrot, for example, who may be capable of similar rational capacity as a man but lacks the exact form of a human and is thus a parrot and *not* a human. The use of "human" in the context of *Suspiria* additionally troubles Susie's identification. While substance and form are deemed to be secondary to the identity as a person, to be discussed in the following paragraph, there is an interesting component of how form affects identification. Is the ancient witch entity Mater Suspiriorum rendered as a human through Susie's human form? Are Suspiriorum and Susie the same man, so to speak?

In discussing how to define the same man, Locke references three options for sameness: "1) the same *individual*, immaterial, thinking substance; in short, the numerically-same soul and nothing else, 2) the same *animal*, without any regard to an immaterial soul, [and] 3) the same immaterial *spirit* united to the same animal" (2.27.21, emphasis mine). Under some of these options, we can begin to parse the identities of Suspiriorum and Susie Bannion. They are the "same human" insofar as they share the same animal—Susie's body—but that still provides little context to the overall problem. Mater Suspiriorum exists beyond Susie but is inextricably linked to Susie through the very conventions with which the film provides us. It is as Locke says, "On any of these accounts of 'same man,' it is impossible for personal identity to consist in anything but consciousness," (2.27.21) which naturally brings the discussion of identity back to Lockean personhood.

sort of awareness of the larger figure of Mater Suspiriorum, who perhaps had used Susie's body as a conduit for existence in the world. It is difficult to say that Susie did not exist at any point, for she was born, and she did know herself through the lens of Susie Bannion, thus establishing the locus of her consciousness with her self-identification; but, at the same time, there has always been a darkness in her that can only be attributed to the simultaneous existence of Mater Suspiriorum, who is also able to conceive of herself as herself.

Here, we return to the heart of the problem: "Can it be different persons if the same substance does the thinking throughout?" (2.27.12) While Locke finds it acceptable to acknowledge that "different substances might all partake in a single consciousness and thereby be united into one person," he requires more analysis to imagine the inverse situation: multiple persons united under one substance (2.27.10). It becomes clear, through Locke's own methodological analysis of substance, human, and person, that Susie and Mater Suspiriorum must be of the same substance (at least for the duration of the film) and the same human (again for the duration), but they are not the same person necessarily. While they share a source of thought, the body, there is a clear sense of multiple modalities of thought, each with processes that are very different in source, occurring throughout the film.

Pre-"I am she" era, Susie seems to engage in thought processes which would not aid or help the end goal of Mater Suspiriorum, yet it would be unfair to say that Mater Suspiriorum was uninvolved in her life (refer back to her mother's declaration of sin). Post-"I am she" era, however, Susie does seem to engage in thought processes which would have been entirely unavailable to her—i.e. knowledge of the vote cast in Markos' favor, the ability to utilize Mater Suspiriorum's powers—while simultaneously engaging in knowledge individual to Susie's

interests—i.e. the love for her fellow dancers. I find Locke to be amenable with the ideas presented in *Suspiria* considering the question of multiplicity of persons within a substance. If consciousness can be located in the modalities of thought, as Locke suggests, and more than one modal capacity of thought occupies a single substance, it would only follow that according to Locke's own definition of personhood, that both Susie and Mater Suspiriorum exist as separate but tied persons within the same substance.

There are a number of ideas and questions posed within the scope of this argument that seem to trouble a strictly Lockean analysis to some extent. For example, the notions of "darkness" and "sin" in the discussion of fantastical witches are difficult to easily align with Locke's devoutness and belief in God. There is an argument to be made that the scope of the investigation is out of the area of concern for Locke and would be considered heretical at best. It is also possible that there is no evidence that Locke would necessarily apply his own logic in the ways presented. From this arises a very reasonable objection to the entire premise of the paper—that Locke is not only right but that his correctness in regard to personal identity has any merit being applied to *Suspiria*. This objection, while understandable, however, does little to really sway the content of the argument. A plethora of other theorists, such as Leibniz or Spinoza, may provide a justifiable answer to the question of how to define the Susie-Suspiriorum complex, but I argue that there is an overwhelming presence of evidence that indicates *Suspiria* is perhaps best illustrated by a theory that gives such an emphasis on consciousness and the delineation of identity into substance, body, and personhood. If we are to consider film as a reflection of something innate in mankind, as is much of art's purpose, there is validity in considering a fictional reality as a reflection of our own philosophical, spiritual truths as well.

Through the work of establishing Locke's theory, the question of whether Susie *is* Mater Suspiriorum or if Susie ever existed in the first place becomes absurd: rather, Susie's statement that she "is" Mater Suspiriorum is a colloquial manner of indicating she has regained an active awareness of the thinking processes of Suspiriorum, and thus reached a sense of return or fuller realization of the extent of her existence. The Lockean approach helps to further comprehend the complexities of the Susie-Suspiriorum issue, and likewise, *Suspiria* aids in the fuller realization of Locke's theory, expanding on places where Locke had not without necessarily rejecting any of his thought.

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ANNA BANERJEE (THEY/SHE) IS A FOURTH-YEAR UNDERGRADUATE TRIPLE MAJORING IN PHILOSOPHY, ENGLISH AND CREATIVE WRITING, AND CINEMA STUDIES. THEIR INTERESTS LARGELY LAY IN ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY AND PHILOSOPHY OF LOGIC, HOWEVER THEY OFTEN WORK IN CROSS-DISCIPLINARY AREAS, MERGING FILM STUDIES WITH PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT.

Reading Recommendations

"Feed" by M.T. Anderson
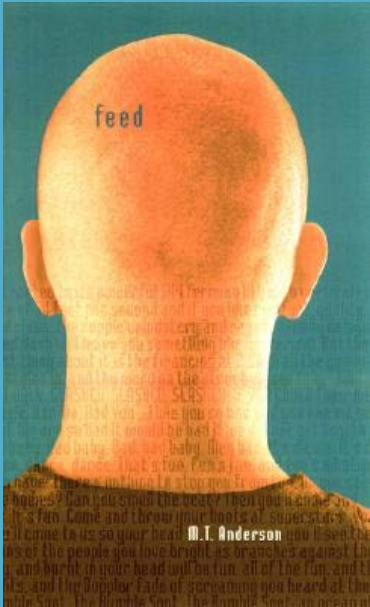
Written to be a satirical commentary on suburban life and the "typical" family unit in the U.S, "Feed" is known for its dystopian, futuristic setting in an otherwise familiar world. In consideration of consumerism, information technology, and environmental destruction, much of the plot is driven by "The Feed" (which is like the internet, but stored in one's mind) and how society has adapted to its everyday use and regular advertising.

Follow Titus, a teenage boy who just wants to have fun and party, as he goes to the moon for the weekend and meets Violet, who wants to try living a normal life while being ever aware of the world seeming to crash down around them.
In a sometimes witty and amusing, sometimes cynical and somber tale, (with a romantic roller coaster just the same) let the author's unique use of dialogue and his impressive depiction of a boy who doesn't think he's part of the problem guide you through a country consumed by consumption and ignorant to its ignorance.

Reading Recommendations

"Don't Believe a Word; The Surprising Truth about Language" by David Shariatmadari

How does language structure our thoughts? Our identities? Our history? In "Don't Believe a word," David Shariatmadari takes readers on a journey through linguistics and many common myths about language that people tend to hold as truth. With expert use of his knowledge and research, this novel provides a merry introduction to linguistics that one can absorb without feeling lost, and leaves its readers with many refreshing takes on language that make the very concept seem rediscovered.

Let Shariatmadari guide you through many chapters dedicated to a particular falsehood or area of nuance. Among the deconstructed misconceptions are the idea that some languages are better than others, the idea that some words are untranslatable, and the idea that "Italian" is a language! In any case, novices and experts alike will appreciate "Don't Believe a Word" and its study of the world around us.

DAVID
SHARIATMADARI

DON'T
BELIEVE
A WORD

THE SURPRISING TRUTH
ABOUT LANGUAGE
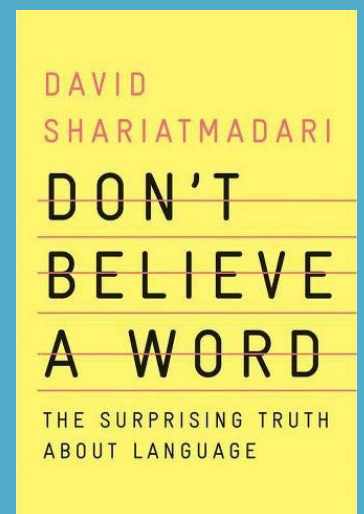
Reading Recommendations

"Scythe" by Neal Shusterman

Consider some of the painful matters of our existence: hunger, disease, war, and others like them. Now imagine a world without these things and more, where we have even discovered how to avoid death. In this futuristic Utopia, humanity lives without any fear of death by natural causes. Yet, populations still rise and resources are limited, so it has been accepted that those called "Scythes" will carry the responsibility of equitably choosing who dies and when in order to maintain a sustainable population. These individuals have held reverence and honor since their role was founded centuries ago, although it's no secret that a Scythe arriving at one's door is no occasion to celebrate.

In "Scythe", by Neal Shusterman, bear witness to the beginning of a science fiction trilogy that tackles themes of mortality, compassion, power and corruption in an intricately designed "post-mortal" future. Follow your protagonists Citra and Rowan as the teens find themselves thrust into the world of Scythes as apprentices. Reading this story, as well as its sequels, will gift any reader with a gripping tale of suspense and action, a frightful account of the rhetoric of corruption, and a soulful dialogue between different perspectives on what it means to live.

Philosophy References in Music

"Therefore I Am" by Billie Eilish: Eilish references René Descartes' famous "cogito, ergo sum" ("I think, therefore, I am") in the hit song released in 2021. She also alludes to idealism in the lyrics *"Don't talk 'bout me like how you might know how I feel / Top of the world, but your world isn't real / Your world's an ideal".* Eilish has remained tight-lipped about what might be the underlying meaning of her song, but it is impossible to miss the references to philosophy.

Flame by Sundara Karma: This catchy, pleasantly repetitive song references Plato's "Allegory of the Cave". Within its beat, the musicians express how exhausted they are of *"watching the shadows on the wall",* and when they finally break free, they wish that everyone would come with them. They call out *"Hold my flame and set alight / Hold my fire screaming inside out",* implying that together, they hold the fire themselves, and are ecstatically free. Also, it's a bop.

A Peek into Philosophy Club

Throughout a semester of Philosophy Club with Dr. Swanson, students attend movie screenings, absorb other philosophical activities, and enjoy talks sponsored by the philosophy department here at The University of Iowa. As proud members of Philosophy Club, we would like to dedicate the remainder of Labyrinth to some of the smaller-scale work done in our discussions.

What follows are introductions to some of the screenings we enjoyed the most, and some slightly shortened editions of Dr. Swansons's prompts paired with some of our answers regarding those showings.

The Ascent
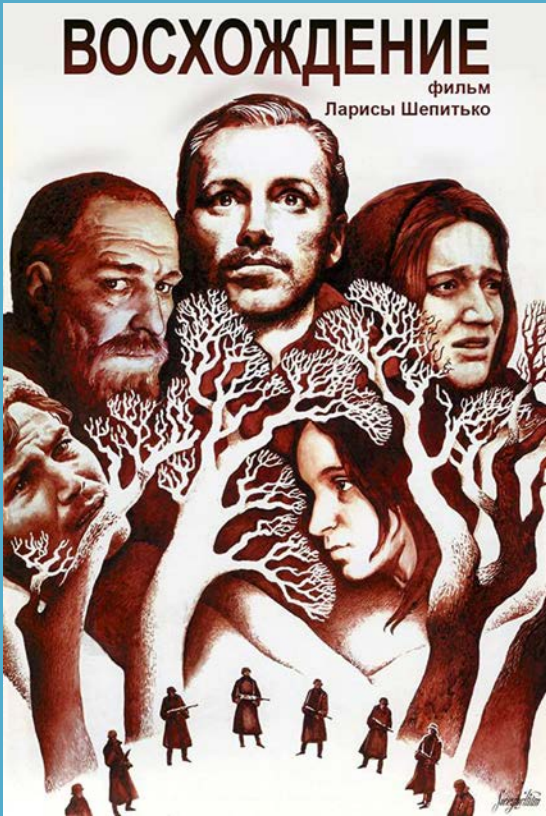
In *The Ascent,* a 1977 film from Moscow directed by Larissa Shepitko, the trek of Soviet partisans Sotnikov and Rybek as they struggle against Axis forces presents a tale that tackles themes of mortality, humanity, and integrity.

The Ascent

Q: In defiance of the interrogator Portnov, Sotnikov declares 'I won't betray anyone. Not anyone. There are things more important than one's own hide'. But Portnov replies to Sotnikov's appeal to an apparent abstract principle: 'Where? What is it? What is it made of? We're mortal: with death, everything ends for us.' He continues to argue that... ...his integrity is pointless because if Sotnikov doesn't reveal information then someone else will (as Rybek immediately proves). Portnov concludes: 'You'll discover something in yourself that you'd never imagine. You'll be taken over by fear. The fear of losing that hide'. If Sotnikov perseveres he will only find out who he really is: one who is alone, deserted; 'a simple human non-entity...' Explain how Rybek seems to actually take up Portnov's argument ('Play it like your human!' he pleads with his companion.) Do they have a point? Is Sotnikov's courage more than human?

A: "...with death, everything ends for us" says Portnov, after asking our protagonist Sotnikov where and what something "more important than one's own hide" could possibly be. But, perhaps it could also be asked from where and what a desire to prioritize one's life over their "integrity" or morality comes from and is. Repeatedly, Portnov and even Rybek attempt to appeal to what I believe both would refer to as "humanity", which based on their threats and/or pleads, they might define as "what is natural for people to feel, beliefs and values aside." Yet, does it being natural equate it to being good? Sotnikov seems to either think otherwise or believe that Portnov and Rybek's concept of humanity is not natural at all. Based on his thoughts in the film, Sotnikov would likely find one's beliefs and values to be essential in what is "natural" for one to feel, and thus find them essential to "humanity."
So here we arrive at a concept perhaps ironic: that what we term "natural" is not universal to everyone, but rather subjective to each person's developed values. While fear may indeed be a "human" thing, I think it is also very human to tie one's very being to an idea, and perhaps consider it important enough to die for, even as "a simple human non-entity..." So no, I do not think Sotnikov's courage was more than human. I'd say it's more like Portnov and Rybek both had underestimated the human capacity to feel.

-Owen Hoff

Happy Go Lucky

Happy Go Lucky is a film written and directed by Mike Leigh, that gives its audience a look into the life of Poppy, a colorful, playful, and talkative schoolteacher whose positivity sometimes rubs people the wrong way. Within, one finds a tale that asks how a radically wholesome outlook can fit within maturity.

Happy Go Lucky

Q: Do you think Poppy undergoes any kind of transformation or learning curve over the course of the film, especially as she digests and reflects upon her final encounter with the deranged driving instructor Scott (a character who may be described as her polar opposite in many ways)? Or was your impression that it is precisely Poppy's resources as the person she already is that allowed her to (so to speak) weather the storm of this encounter?

A: The concept of "The Character Arc" is one that is likely familiar to any story-lover; characters in stories tend to deal with conflicts, and many often show growth after the conflict reaches its climax and the story reaches its resolution. However, there is more than one way to write a story, and with the case of "Happy Go Lucky," it seems less intent on showing growth and more on revealing a character's depth progressively, rather than all at once.

The audience is first introduced to Poppy while she's whimsically going about her day, being "happy go lucky", as promised. In that moment, she in contrasted with what's around her in such a way that she might seem cartoonish to some: she's persistent in attempting to start conversation with a shop owner who clearly isn't interested in chatting, and she reacts to her bike being stolen with regret at not being able to say goodbye to it. As the film continues, however, the audience sees more from Poppy that makes her more relatable, or at least more genuine. As a result, her "happy-go-luckiness" itself seems more genuine as well. Part of this is shown as she seeks to aid the child in her class who was hitting others. While this action may have been inspired in part by her previous conversation with Scott about his childhood, it seemed that her conflict resolution skills were already well understood.

So, upon her final interaction with Scott at the end of the film, it was evident (to me, at least) that the film's message was less about transforming toward realism and away from silliness. Rather, it presented how fittingly a "happy-go-lucky" attitude can fit within the realities of life's conflicts… …I think the film does a swell job of portraying a perhaps unusual attitude as entirely within the existing infrastructure of life.

-Anonymous

Breaking Bad

Two of our later showings were the first two episodes of *Breaking Bad*, a tv show about a high school chemistry teacher who, after being diagnosed with terminal cancer, turns to crime in order to provide for his family in his final days.

Breaking Bad

Q: Comment on some of the particular ways that the screenplay invites us to 'buy in' morally with Walter White's murder of the drug dealer Krazy-8/Domingo Molina. What effect did these devices have on you as a viewer, and how did they affect your perception of Walter as a moral agent?

A: The first way that I noticed the screenplay was inviting the viewer to "buy in" morally with Walter White's murder of Krazy-8/Domingo Molina was the scene in which Walter is making a list of reasons why he should or should not kill Domingo. Even though the list of reasons why he should not kill Domingo is much longer than the reasons for killing him, Walter's reason for murder is that his entire family is in danger of being killed by Domingo. The first few episodes of this show have shown the viewer different aspects of Walter's life, making the audience familiar with his growing family and desire to support them. Especially with seeing the scene of Walter and Skylar in the ultrasound room, the viewer sympathizes with the fact that Walter has more people outside of himself to be concerned with in this situation. These scenes made me see Walter as someone who is selfless and determined to protect his family, rather than a violent murderer. In addition, the screenplay invites us to "buy in" morally with Walter's murder of Domingo through the scene with Walter discovering Domingo has a shard of a broken plate and was planning on using it to stab Walter. In this way, the viewer now sees Domingo as the aggressor in this situation, justifying Walter's actions in killing him. For me, this reasoning seemed to work, as I did not see Walter as a completely evil person after he killed Domingo. I, of course, would have preferred if Walter did not have to harm anyone, but I can see how the screenplay pushed this narrative to have the viewer side with Walter. However, I do not think these scenes justify the entirety of Walt's actions. He clearly has committed some morally wrong actions, but when considering the context of the show, the viewer has reasoning to "buy in" morally with Walter.

-Alexis Redshaw

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS