

**MADNESS, MASCULINITY AND THE MODERN INDIVIDUAL:
PARANOIA AND GENDER IN MID-TWENTIETH-CENTURY NARRATIVE**

by

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Abstract

What if Freud were right? What if his identification of homosexual denial — the fear of being changed from a man into a woman — as the psychogenetic mechanism of paranoia is not an embarrassing example of Freud's naive sexual reductionism, but an indicator of something more interesting: of a pattern of culturally hegemonic narrative convention linking a certain kind of masculinity to a certain kind of body to a certain kind of thinking, a pattern that fundamentally informs dominant articulations of sexuality, corporeality and agency in the first half of the twentieth-century? This study examines the way in which gender is configured in certain narrative patterns available for expressing self-understanding in the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century. Noticing the way in which Freud's notion of paranoia yokes a profoundly isolated, anxious and radically suspicious subject to the fear of being changed, physically, from a man into a woman, the project follows this path in both directions, looking both at the way in which the paranoid "attitude" is enmeshed in larger cultural patterns of self-understanding and with cultural anxieties about the relation of "masculinity" to the male body.

After providing an account of the ways in which paranoia has been used, the project considers the way this connection between masculine anxiety and paranoid suspicion is figured in the narrative of Freud's paradigmatic paranoid, Dr. Schreber, and the way those figures are reproduced in Freud's own thought. Next, I examine the hard-boiled detective genre through Raymond Chandler's The Long Goodbye to articulate the ways in which this relationship between masculinity and characteristically paranoid self-understanding was narratively configured as a model of popular heroism. Finally I look at the way in which the terms of "paranoid" masculinity inform narratives that attempt to articulate exactly that which Schreber most feared: the physical change from a man into a woman. The autobiographies of early male to female transsexuals, I argue, work

within the gender framework that informs both Schreber and Freud's understanding of sexuality, while inverting the valuation of "masculinity" and the significance of the male body.

This study explores the way in which the latently paranoid narrative configuration abstracted from Freud's reading of Schreber and traced through these two different mid-twentieth century genres functions in three ways to structure self-understanding: i) in establishing the nature of valid individuality with regard to some kind of extra-individual agency, ii) in establishing the relation of that individuality to a notion of masculinity associated with (among other things) a privileging of the active over the passive and instrumental (intellectual) over empathetic object relations, and, iii) with establishing narratorial legitimacy by indicating, via a first person protagonist that works to establish itself as a figure of identification, that true reality is not what is apparent or culturally understood to be true, but is in fact a deep structure formed in accordance with a powerful, hidden Agent with a special connection to the protagonist/narrator.

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Contents

Abstract	iv
Acknowledgements	vi
Introduction:	
Schreber's delusion, the gender of modern individuality, and the niche of narrative analysis.	1
1) Schreber's contexts:	
Paranoia and the discourses of modernity.	16
2) Freud and Schreber:	
Sexing paranoia.	68
3) Schreber's delusion and popular heroism:	
narrating masculinity in the hard-boiled detective story.	117
4) Schreber's delusion inverted:	
narrating femininity in early male-to-female transsexual autobiography.	172
Conclusion	231
Notes	236
Bibliography	260

Introduction:

Schreber's delusion, the gender of modern individuality, and the niche of narrative analysis.

“The projective apprehensions of severely paranoid ... people, for example, are more or less explicitly concerned not merely with a general threat of external aggression, but with the more specific threat of aggressive destruction or subjugation of will or intentional capacity... It is interesting to note that in the case of the female... it is not the homosexual, that is, masculine inclination that is repudiated, but, as in the case of the man, it is the passive feminine temptations to surrender that are repudiated, as it were, from a masculine point of view.

David Shapiro

“After all I too am only a human being and therefore limited by the confines of human understanding; but one thing I am certain of, namely, that I have come infinitely closer to the truth than human beings who have not received divine revelation....”

All attempts at committing soul murder, at unmanning me ... have failed. From this apparently so unequal a battle between one weak human being and God himself I emerge, albeit not without bitter sufferings and deprivations, victorious, because the Order of the World is on my side... Perhaps the personal misfortunes I had to suffer and the loss of the states of Blessedness may even be compensated for, in that mankind will gain all at once, through my case, the knowledge of religious truth in much greater measure than possibly could have been achieved in hundreds and thousands of years by means of scientific research with the aid of all possible intellectual acuity.”

Dr. jur. Daniel Paul Schreber

“Though the subject may be discursively constituted it remains meaningful.”

Henry Rubin

This study can be considered a meditation on Dr. Daniel Paul Schreber's Memoirs of my Nervous Illness, not because it devotes much of its time to a detailed consideration of the Dresden *Senatspräsident's* memoirs, but because of the way in which Schreber lays out the central problematic

it investigates. Schreber's memoir is a turgid, complex, bizarre story of his struggle with dark and powerful forces. In it individualism and autonomy are defended from the often insidious efforts of Others to rob him of his dignity and destiny, a struggle expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity whose main arena is Schreber's sexed body itself. The memoirs merge terms of late-nineteenth century cultural expectation with fantasies of gendered anxiety and sexed deformation. It is fascinating stuff, and it has drawn explicators of all stripes. But it is also deeply moving, for while explanation sets Schreber up as an object and his words up as signs of his insanity, the very impetus to write the memoirs is Schreber's passionate, deeply felt conviction of the truth and worth of his insight, and of the dignity and gravity of his message. This is the crux of paranoia as explored in this project: from the outside it is comic and pathetic, but from the inside it is deeply tragic and romantic. As a structure of delusion, it communicates in its deformation of communicative convention fascinating insight into the tropes, stories and discourses with which normality and cultural values are appropriated to the project of self-understanding. But its heartrending challenge to the project of discursive explanation is the visceral fear, anxiety and demand for dignity and respect that emanates from the delusion. As paranoid delusion Schreber's memoirs are rich objects of cultural analysis, but as the appeal of a person begging, demanding, occasionally commanding at times almost, the recognition of such by other people, they are moving articulations of subjectivity. Can these two be reconciled? This project will not claim to have effected such a reconciliation, but in its tracing the shared topology of paranoid delusional narrative with that of a form of mid-century popular romance and early male to female transsexuality it will hopefully frame the problem in ways that will at least contribute to the debate surrounding critical representations of marginal subjectivities.

Schreber was worried that a hostile supernatural force was trying to change him physically

from a man into a woman; his anxiety centered around what might now be recognized as a concern about transsexuality, though the term was not available to him, or Freud. His assertion of his masculinity informs his narrative: he resists, he is active, he cultivates an intellectual superiority over his opponent, he exploits the limitations of his opponent's knowledge, motivated, above all, by a concern for his *dignity* and by outrage over the way in which his opponent seeks to *degrade* him by making him a woman. The characteristically paranoid response he describes — heightened suspiciousness, “scanning” behaviour of hypothesis formation and testing, dual existence (a “public” face and a private struggle), the intricate and highly complex structure of his delusion — is an *intellectualized* response to anxiety about his sexed body.

Though bizarre, Schreber's delusions are organized around a key attribute of “normal” male self-understanding; they address the meaning of manhood and its relation to things such as the male body, the ability to act as a man and the properly masculine relationship of thinking to feeling. Even more interesting from the point of view of this study is the combination of the anxiety about masculinity with the way in which Schreber knows himself to be one of those people in whom cultural power is “naturally” invested: he is of the upper-middle class, extremely well educated, a distinguished member of a well-respected profession that is central to the operation of his modern state, as well as a husband who understands the dignity and cultural responsibility of his masculinity. In short, he is an exemplar of the modern, rational man. In his delusion, however, the figure of cultural centrality is turned into a figure of moral right that necessitates heroic and almost impossible defence. Though his memoirs undoubtedly describe a “nervous illness”, the self-understanding generated by that illness centers around a profound anxiety related to each term of his modern, rational, masculine status and recasts the relation of each of these terms to the others in a fascinating light.

The most famous and influential reader of Schreber's memoirs was psychoanalyst Sigmund

Freud, who recognized Schreber not only as a paranoid — with reference to the psychiatric terms of the day — but recognized in Schreber’s narrative *the basic causal mechanism* of paranoia itself. As paranoia became to be a discernible psychiatric term at the beginning of the twentieth-century, it was primarily associated with a rather specific interpretive posture, a discernible way of understanding one’s self with relation to the world. Paranoia (in its various forms, which have shifted around considerably within this general descriptive envelope) was characterized by a pervasively guarded, suspicious attitude geared toward the gathering of information that could be used to construct a story of the self at the focal center of a broad web of hostile relations. While paranoia was understood to be characterized by a preoccupation with autonomy and a particular kind of individuality, Freud located its psychogenetic mechanism in the negotiation of what is now often called *gender* (though the continuity of the corporeal and the social in Freud’s model of the psyche rather undermines the opposition to *sex* which informs this term); paranoia was, in effect, an effort to reconstitute — through delusional narratives relating the self-to the world — an integral *masculinity* within a psyche riven by homosexual desire. This connection between paranoia and homosexuality seems today like one of those embarrassing instances where Freud’s cultural biases against homosexuality and his tendency “to reduce everything to sex” (this often offered by Jung and Adler to explain their break with Freud, for example) led to a quite embarrassing explanation, on a par with similarly embarrassing notions such as “penis envy.” But, though this psychogenetic hypothesis of paranoia has been almost completely discredited both with paranoia in general¹ and with relation to paranoid schizophrenia, which tends to locate the onset of paranoid symptoms with potentially genetically predisposed changes in brain chemistry,² my study will take this connection at face value, asking the questions: why did Freud connect paranoia with “inversion” (a term that indicates the conflation of homosexuality with what will come to be called transsexuality), and in what terms did that connection make sense? Freud’s attribution of a psychogenetic role to

homosexuality in paranoia, I will argue, is the result of a convergence of the culturally available understanding of masculinity in Freud's thought and in the narratively articulated experiential reality of Schreber's delusion.

In Schreber's narrative notions of autonomy, individuality and masculinity are often overdetermined, condensed, that is, into a single figure or action. The object of the present essay is to unpack that structure in Schreber's narrative, to decompose it into its constituent terms, to displace it into a primarily narratological discourse and to trace those terms through these other modern narrative patterns. Rather than attempting to evaluate Schreber's paranoid universe or to re-articulate paranoia in psychological terms, (doing to my critical objects what Freud did to Schreber) this essay will address Schreber's memoirs and the other stories *as stories*, and will address the ontic and phenomenal reality of human existence only at a distance, recognizing that in any discussion of the cultural life of stories we speak about the forms with which people partly articulate and understand their own realities, their own relations to their worlds.

This paranoid way of thinking — understanding one's self as an isolated individual in a hostile world apprehending others in highly intellectualized instrumental terms, constructing elaborate, intricate narrative and logical (if irrational and even psychotic) structures of explanation — that Freud found in Schreber's memoirs was associated thematically with the content of Schreber's delusion (that God was trying to steal his masculinity and turn him physically from a man into a woman), but it was also associated formally. The *type* of story Schreber appropriates to structure his delusion is already predisposed to value those things — activity, aggressivity, intellectual vigour — that Schreber values in his delusion, and already assumes the association Schreber makes between these things and masculinity. Schreber fits with Freud so well because Freud appropriates the same kind of story to inform his most basic ideas about the development and internal dynamics of the human psyche. Freud "found" sex in paranoia because paranoia, as a way of thinking about one's

self in the world, was already inscribed within the gendered narratives that informed his own narrative of human psychic development.

While the first half of the project is concerned with the cultural contexts of the notion of paranoia and the way in which its gendered associations inform Schreber and Freud's understanding of normative selfhood, the second half of the study will examine two early and mid-century genres of first-person narrative which appropriate these patterns in almost diametrically opposite ways. In the Chandlerian hard-boiled detective story masculinity moves from its position in Schreber's narrative as the thematic locus of pathogenic anxiety to a figure of heroic agency, without fundamental alteration of its "paranoid" expression. What changes is the relation of the individual to the world: no longer is the individual insane and society benign, but individual autonomy becomes the locus of moral insight and effective action, while society becomes a structure of alienation, corruption and conspiracy. The hard-boiled detective story speaks paranoia from the inside, as it were, idealizing rather than pathologizing the paranoid ethos.

Marlowe, Chandler's best known hard-boiled detective, is a narrative figure of radical individuality, and in his incipiently commodified world of American modernism, collectivity itself is the medium of corruption. Marlowe — his character falling somewhere between the more sadistic heroes of the Mickey Spillane adventure-thriller tradition and Dashiell Hammett's ascetic, amoral heroes like Samuel Spade or the Continental Op — is the quintessential figure of the hard-boiled detective (what Jerry Palmer calls the central form of the "negative" thriller), his combination of world-weariness and persistent, if seemingly misplaced idealism an influential image of mid-century American heroism. For Marlowe, the role of the private investigator is not merely a job, it is the only ethical mode of social engagement available to him, and anything which would tempt him to abandon its stance of guarded, observant isolation is, in this genre, figurally a locus of both desire and danger. Self-determination for Marlowe is a rational and ethical principle threatened on the one

hand by the resistance of his pain and desire prone body to conscious control and on the other by the spectre of social alienation figured in men — criminals, bureaucrats, wage-slaves or middle-class family men trapped by wife, house, job and kids — who have abnegated the power of self-determination by participating in some collective.

This sense of true, morally responsible, autonomous selfhood being proper to an individuality threatened by an unreliable body and a hostile external environment is common also to Schreber's delusion. Like Marlowe, with his hunches and "feelings" about people, Schreber "feels" the world powerfully and profoundly but struggles to bracket off this powerful sense of connectedness from his rationality, governed by intellectual strictures and moral axes, that allows him to understand his "self" within a narrative of effective agency. Like Marlowe, Schreber is an investigator, striving to know, to explain, to assign value and guilt and to determine beginnings and endings. And like Schreber, Marlowe's investigative prowess is ultimately an exercise and defence of his masculinity. Masculinity in both narrative patterns is a function of control and autonomy: of the ability to be in full conscious possession and instrumental mastery of one's own body, and to protect that self-control against the efforts of powerful collectives to erode that control by appealing to or working against one's body. Masculine agency is generally figured as defensive; it is the power to keep the hero separate from that which would corrupt him. In this genre there are few legitimate outlets for a "productive" masculine form of action. Marlowe's figuring out (and surviving intact and uncorrupt) the case is the climax of his defensive masculine action; often his next step, the arrangement of a vigilante solution to the problem of justice, is really the only "positive" form of action this genre offers. In Marlowe this paranoid principle of masculinity, taken to its logical extreme, culminates in a maximally isolated character confined to long stretches of surveillance and information gathering punctuated by brief, furtive acts of violence or aggression.

In the articulation of the femininity that informs the early male-to-female transsexual

autobiographies we consider, there is an opposite movement; from a figure of the self defensively struggling to maintain control while pressed from the one side by an unintelligible body and from the other by a hostile externality, to a figure of a self attempting to tear down those boundaries, engaging its self in a dialogue between its body and some broadly conceived Other. With this change the overriding emphasis on the rational structures of effective investigation — intellectual determination, the need of clear narrative definition — are left behind in favour of a primary emphasis on empathy, present sensation and inchoate corporeal experience as the narrators change into “women.”

As psychoanalysis emerged in the early twentieth-century and reconfigured the relationship of psychological sex to selfhood in accordance with certain culturally pervasive narratives, so too emerged medical technology capable of reconfiguring the sexual body and with it the relation of physical “sex” to selfhood. Apart from forcing a reconsideration of the biological and psychological nature of sex, transsexuality presented a narrative problem to its subjects. How could this action — directed at one’s own body for the purpose of effacing its masculinity — be represented as something legitimate and acceptable, when, as Schreber’s delusion illustrates in an exaggerated form, culturally legitimate action required that the body be treated as an instrument rather than an end and that masculinity and all it stands for be defended, valued and cherished rather than effaced. This illegitimacy of their actions frames the stories of the early transsexuals I consider; the rhetorical object of their narratives is the redefinition of their action from something bizarre, pathetic and pathological to something — in a sense — heroic, dignified and necessary. To that end, the autobiographies that I examine invoke the kind of masculinity presumed by Schreber and Freud, but reverse the valuation of its terms, articulating their identification with the “feminized” attributes of that model (ie. passivity, a valuation of “nature” over culture and intuition and feeling over intellect and the structures of self-assertion, modification or retreat from artistic creation, submission to

authority and an acceptance of tradition and social structure, withdrawal from a public sphere to an enclosed private or domestic sphere).

Like Schreber, the protagonists of these autobiographies portray themselves as essentially “normal” people in an extraordinary situation that allows them to see that there is a layer of truer reality obscured within the everyday world of appearances. The difference in the postulated nature of the source of “reality” is a gendered one within this narrative pattern: in Schreber’s case, the true cosmos is ruled by a hostile, powerful, bizarre figure (first the “soul” of his physician, then an odd, polymorphous “God”) that he must resist; in the transsexuals’ case, the fluidity and Mystical nature of sexuality is only realized by abandoning one’s resistance to its truth, which resides outside of the narrow confines of the individual, rational self. In either case the narrative is concerned with three things: i) establishing the nature of valid individuality with regard to some kind of extra-individual agency, ii) establishing the relation of that valid individuality to a notion of masculinity associated with (among other things) a privileging of the active over the passive and instrumental (intellectual) over empathetic object relations, and, iii) with establishing the legitimacy of the narration by indicating, via a first person protagonist that works to establish itself as a figure of identification, that true reality is not what is apparent or culturally understood to be true, but is in fact a deep structure formed in accordance with a powerful, hidden Agent with a special connection to the protagonist/narrator.

As I make clear in the discussion below, this narrative configuration appropriated and modified by these early transsexuals it is the subject of fierce debate within the transgendered community. And whether it is castigated as reactionary or defended as the attempt to articulate the profound, almost ineffable sensation of gender dysphoria, it does have everything to do with *the cultural conditions of self-articulation at the time of the emergence of the technology that facilitated male-to-female “trans-sexuality.”* Though I examine the discursive structures with which transsexuality has been

apprehended and expressed, in this study I do not speculate about the psychological, sociological or biological origins or nature of transsexuality. The consideration of male-to-female transsexual autobiographical narrative in this essay should be understood to explore these terms in reverse order of specificity; the object will be *narrative* analysis, of which “autobiography” is the condition through which narrative structure is related to the concept of narrative self-understanding through the key concept of “reality.” If gender dysphoria is ultimately the product of gender “cross-identification,” this project seeks to articulate the terms of the representation of the poles of that crossed identification. It explores gender as an attribute of a sexed “body-in-narrative” (thus avoiding the confusion between real and phantasmatic bodies that vexes discourse and phenomenological analysis). To the extent that behaviour is in part a manifestation of self-understanding, the narrative structures of self-understanding can be understood as a causal factor, but I should make very clear that in my following discussion of narrative and transsexuality, I do not mean to suggest that story-forms *cause* transsexuality. This project is less concerned with individual cases of transsexual or paranoid “psychopathology” than it is with the project of reading individual stories of early transsexuality or popular heroism against the figure of paranoia in order to articulate the narrative contexts of these conditions.

The decision to have narratological analysis this study’s primary critical discourse was made in order to best accommodate the nature of the phenomena under consideration. My first inclination was to adopt a historicist method, in which the subjects of the narratives would be understood as constituted by historically specific discursive structures. And it was fairly easy to approach paranoid delusion, Freudian metapsychology and the hard-boiled detective genre in this way, for it provided a fairly fresh way of considering paranoia: it was a well-established tradition of Freud scholarship, and it allowed a powerful counter-narrative in which the toxic individualism of the hard-boiled detective could be displaced and countered. But in my research into transsexual

autobiography I began to realize the inadequacy of this form of analysis for my project.

It is easy for critical discourses to speak *about* — rather than *with* — the paranoid, and as easy to dismiss or frame within a more authoritative discourse like psychology or social constructivism (or some mix of the two, as in many contemporary critical discourses of subjectivity) his or her delusory vision, even though that act validates, in some sense, the paranoid's own fear of loss of autonomy and external determination. The paranoid's very claim to radical autonomy and extraordinary agency is a symptom of his pathology, a frustrating condition to be sure, and the very anxiety about autonomy that fuels paranoia is fulfilled in the moment when the prophet becomes institutionally recognized as a paranoid. The paranoid, by definition, sees the world differently. He or she feels the truth of his vision and his or her experience, yet its difference, when expressed by the institution of psychiatry, is marked as the sign of insanity. There is a yawning gap between the experienced reality of the clinical paranoid and that of the psychiatrist, but because the psychiatrist is understood as protecting both the person and the public from harm, the paranoid's reality is pathologized and his experience is rendered simply an object of clinical analysis: "Through the filter of official pathologization, the sounds that come out of my mouth can be summarily dismissed as the confused rantings of a diseased mind," the paranoid can be imagined to complain, futilely.

But these words are not those of a paranoid; they are transsexual Susan Stryker's (1994, 244). As bioethicist James Nelson points out, the diagnosis of transsexuality, like the attribution of paranoia, undermines any claim of the diagnosed individual to legitimate subjectivity, allowing the utterances of the newly recognized patient to be taken "not as expressions of a responsible moral agent, but as potential symptoms of a disease" (233). Over the past two decades transsexuals have increasingly questioned the clinicization of their condition, demanding that their stories be interpreted not as symptoms of a pathology, but as representations of the interiority of a legitimate, autonomous subject. I concur with Nelson when he describes the critical shortcomings of methods

that apprehend subjectivity as the function of power relations. For Nelson, “discourses of power” or analytical methods that seek to articulate the discursive constitution of subjectivity, are inadequate in some ways to explore the ‘interiority’ of subjectivity, which is often articulated around complex structures of values. Historicist and social constructivist discourses “do not typically explore the notions of moral deliberation and choice that are involved in people’s subjecting themselves to others, nor do they examine in detail the moral justifications offered for different forms of human relatedness. Though the theorist takes a prescriptive stance ... (typically ‘subjection is bad’), the moral justification of that stance is not deeply defended” (215). Nelson argues that the ethicist must also consider “discourses of value” that “provide prescriptive accounts of some domain by using moral notions (duties, obligations, rights, virtues) in ways that reflect the conviction that their critical employment can defensibly guide action and policy. Value discourses typically configure human beings not simply as exploiters and exploited but as complex moral agents” (215).

Phenomenology, centered on the experience of the subject, offers such a critical position better able to articulate the way in which transsexuality and, potentially, paranoia, is lived by a complex moral agent. It works, transsexual Henry Rubin asserts, “to return agency to us as subjects and to return authority to our narratives” (271), and modifications of phenomenological analysis in the work of Rubin and others — most significantly Jay Prosser — provide fascinating insight into the life-world of transsexuality. However, while these discourses of value offer another way to understand power relationships, they are, as Nelson points out, “often not very clear about the relations of power that go into their own formation and maintenance” (215). The evaluation of ethical subjects, Nelson argues, requires a combination of both kinds of critical discourses. Simone de Beauvoir was extraordinarily successful in theorizing such a mixed discourse, modifying the absolutism of early-Sartrean phenomenology with a mechanism able to accommodate the social construction of subjectivity in her articulation of the body-as-situation.³ More recently, and with

more direct reference to transsexuality, Jay Prosser, working generally within Judith Butler's terms (themselves influenced by Beauvoir's interpretation of Sartre⁴) has also produced a criticism that mixes discourses of value with discourses of power.

Given that subjective interiority — defined by Bidy Martin as a person's relationship to "power, autonomy, attachment and vulnerability" (106) — is exactly what is contested by the paranoid in his or her delusion I realized that, in addition to some mechanism for exploring the way in which the subject is historically constituted, my analysis had to be able to recognize the legitimacy of the expression of the subject's experienced reality. Treating identity as a structure of *meaning*, "neither innate nor simply acquired, but dynamically (re)structured by forms of fantasy both private and public... which are culturally available and historically specific" (de Laurentius, xix) allowed me to explore the mediate plane in which subjectivity became manifest as a structure of *both* exteriority and interiority. It is in the realm of representation, the realm of narrative self-articulation where individual and social, autonomy and external determination are fused and negotiated, and it is the narrative manifestation of subjectivity that is the object of this study, for reflection on narrative gives us the opportunity to realize that discursive analysis as such is an *ironizing* act which fundamentally misrepresents the predominantly *romantic* experiential reality of the subjects of analysis. In addition to doing violence to the real or fictional voices being considered, this misrepresentation *misses* a valuable platform for cultural reflection. The language of narrative analysis, I fully realize, can get no closer to the "truth" of subjectivity than can any other analytical discourse. But its particular form of knowledge can complement others to contribute to a more nuanced understanding.

Narrative is a rather unfashionable object of study in contemporary criticism, associated with the structuralist attempt to map the systems with which human experience becomes meaningful, and in that attempt, in Peter Brooks' words, neglecting "the temporal dynamics that shape narratives... the play of desire in time that makes us ... strive toward narrative ends" (1985, xiii),

neglecting, that is to account for the *experience* of the lives lived and understood within narrative. With Brooks, I am “more concerned with how narratives work on us... to create models of understanding” (1985, xiii), models that mediate the social and the cultural to the individual, while constituting that individual in his or her ability to represent selfhood to self. A frequent theme expressed in transsexual autobiography is the sense of the body’s “resistance” to the attempt to make it mean, sexually.⁵ Despite Butler’s recourse to Sartrean notions of “pre-reflective choice” and some version of the psychoanalytic “unconscious” as modifiers of her idea of discursively constituted sex and gender, she has been, unfairly associated with ideas of gender voluntarism and contingency. This association prompts Bidy Martin to call for a theorization of (gender) identity that accounts for the indeterminately manifest “resistance” of the body to its discursive structuration, that accounts for the body’s ability to function as a counter-pressure or “drag” upon the social construction of gender. In a similar vein my usage of narrative is an attempt to theorize a site of “resistance” or “drag” to the historical contingency of gendered self-identity. Though subjectivity is historically contingent and discursively constituted, the ways in which its meaning is represented to self and society, while not some universal, ahistorical law, is not simply of the historical moment either, but is something that allows the historical moment to come to meaning through a process of subjective self-representation that has its own logic and forms. Frederic Jameson recognizes this semi-autonomy of narrative, but his materialist emphasis tends, once again, to have little room for a notion of the autonomy of the speaking subject. In my experience it is Northrop Frye who best provides a model of narrative that while not strictly determined by is (despite common misconceptions) not dissociated from material changes in social organization, and that is ultimately grounded in embodied experience and the body’s “subjection to representation.” Frye offers ways to articulate the narrative dynamics of self-representation while at least being able to engage or account for the interiority or experiential reality of the speaking subject. Whatever the veracity of Frye’s claims, his understanding of narrative allows a polemical intervention in the linked

notions of paranoia and transsexuality that frames the debate in new and productive ways.

1) Schreber's contexts:

paranoia and the discourses of modernity.

- **Paranoia**

“[a] mode of thought dominated by an intense, irrational but persistent mistrust or suspicion of people and a corresponding tendency to interpret the actions of others as deliberately demeaning or threatening... The essence of paranoia is a malfunctioning of the capacity to assign meanings and understand causes for events... Of all psychological disturbances, paranoia is among the least understood and the most difficult to treat.

Allan Fenigstein, The Encyclopedia of Mental Health (83, 90)

The understanding of paranoia most prevalent in the human sciences draws from a body of work published in the 1950's and 1960's addressing its interpretive and behavioral attributes rather than its association with specific mental illnesses or psychopathological conditions. Paranoid delusion, this work holds, is a pattern of fixed belief which persists even though social reality contradicts it. Delusion is the compensatory response to the anxiety generated by a perception of an inexplicable change in the individual's internal environment or an increasingly untenable situation in the individual's social environment. The narrative structure of the delusion addresses this anxiety by articulating the individual within an antagonistic social context, a paranoid pseudo-community whose antagonistic attention allows the self and its body to be understood as an instrument of resistance and a site of vulnerability. Its pervasive antagonism, by extension, also allows the paranoid individual a way to position his or her self metaphysically within a reality shaped by cosmic conspiracy. Characterized by rigidity, suspiciousness, centrality, grandiosity, projectivity, hyperacuity, and intellectual ingenuity in the service of the internal consistency and comprehensiveness of the delusional structure, paranoia is widely used to describe intellectual or cultural formations exhibiting some or all of these attributes.

- **psychiatric usages of the term.**

Though often delusional and always rather idiosyncratic, paranoid thought is often distinguished from “normal” thought by its *excessive* intellectuality, its *too* highly “organized” quality. Only in paranoia is it possible to speak about a psychotic rationality; paranoia shows us that it is possible to have an internally coherent, complex, abstract, narratively articulable often persuasive *ratio* of reality that may have little of the ability to integrate the phenomena privileged in the consensual realities of the paranoid’s society. It can make its own kind of sense while still being psychotic. Following Piaget’s model of information processing as necessarily finding a balance between the immediate, affectively moving stimuli of perception and the abstracting, intellectualist function of cognition, the non-paranoid schizophrenic was often categorized as unable to properly abstract perceptual stimuli and the paranoid was seen as governed by intellectual images that were too little affected by perceptual stimuli: the schizophrenic was overwhelmed by “reality” while the paranoid was too little influenced by the pressures of “reality,” in the divergence of his or her self-understanding from consensual reality. However, as Peter Magaro (1980) shows, paranoids often show higher than normal intellectual functioning in measures like the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale. Just as Freud noted the “grain of truth” that is in every paranoid delusion, and the ability for paranoids occasionally, through intellectual perseverance to make strikingly perceptive discoveries, Magaro finds that Kant was equally ambivalent about the paranoid cognitive style. Kant, to whom we will return below, speaks of a

disturbance of mind in which everything that the madman says is indeed consistent with the formal laws of thinking ... but in which subjective impressions of a falsely inventive imagination are taken for actual perceptions. Of this class are those who believe they have enemies everywhere; who regard all expressions, remarks or indifferent actions of other persons as intended for them or traps set for them. Often, they are in their unfortunate madness, so ingenious in analyzing that which others do to explain it to their own satisfaction, that, if their data were only accurate, one would have to pay tribute to their intelligence. (in Magaro 1981, 636)

However, if the “unbalanced” (Piaget) subordination of affective pressure and the impression of perceptual stimuli to a ruthlessly consistent and inclusive intellectual system can lead to occasional powerful insights, it is also subjectively debilitating. This paranoid “spread of meaning” is a caricature of conspiracy theorists, but, as Vincent Descombes points out, it is an oppressive condition that seriously impairs subjective function. To find meaning in everything makes it difficult to privilege and sort meaning in order to respond flexibly to the demands of everyday life.⁶ “It is not the case,” he writes,

...that everything has meaning which claims it: otherwise nothing could have meaning. A situation where everything is meaningful is certainly oppressive: the logical extreme of such an attitude is paranoia, a condition in which reality becomes so pervasively, ominously meaningful that its slightest fragments operate as signs in some sinisterly coherent text. (quoted in Eagleton, “Bakhtin...” 9)

My discussion in this essay will be largely confined to this general usage of the notion of paranoia with an emphasis on it as a way of understanding a self’s relation to its world. Though this general self-world relation is phenomenologically roughly consistent through the various manifestations of paranoid behaviour, it is important for this project to recognize the psychiatric context of the term. Though therapeutic procedures and psychogenic theories have come and gone, the description of paranoia has remained fairly stable, conforming generally to its outline in the discussion of “dementia paranoides” in the “Dementia Praecox” section of Emil Kraepelin’s influential late nineteenth-century psychiatric textbook *Psychiatrie*.⁷ In their comprehensive discussion of paranoia, David Swanson et al. propose, in rough accordance with Kraepelin, that the basic characteristics of paranoid thinking (or “the paranoid cognitive style”⁸) are: projective thinking, hostility, unwarranted suspiciousness, centrality, delusions [of persecution], fear of loss of autonomy and grandiosity.

In the mid-twentieth-century, the period most pertinent to this study, the term entered common usage and broadened its reference. Even as this period in American culture will be vilified

in succeeding decades as one of pervasive paranoia, the word "paranoia" itself in this period ceases to be a term used to describe specific psychopathological states, and also begins to be used, as the OED remarks, "trivially." The 1940 edition of the Psychiatric Dictionary notes that "Perhaps no term in psychiatry has undergone wider variations of meaning than the term paranoia" (v.2 395). In 1954's compendious Clinical Psychiatry, Willy Mayer-Gross indicates that the term has become bifurcated between a description of one manifestation of a particular mental illness, and a larger constellation of behaviours and attitudes: "much of the age-old controversy about 'paranoia' has arisen from the difficulty of distinguishing between paranoid reactions and paranoid schizophrenia" (158), he writes, adding, later, that "[t]he effort to maintain paranoia as a distinct condition has also failed" (256). "The trend," as William Messiner explains, "has been in the direction of using the concept of paranoia with greater flexibility and with greater applicability. It is used not only as a diagnostic category, but also as a descriptive personality trait... (1978, 3). "Paranoia," after the Second World War, began to enter common and clinical language as a term used to describe a "syndrome," a diffuse cluster of behaviours which may participate in a specific psychopathology, but which are also deeply, if ambiently, rooted in "normal" psychology, and which can as easily be examined in terms of social implication or cultural origin. Meissner, the psychiatrist who has published probably the most comprehensive work on paranoia to date, summarizes this difficulty of separating "paranoia" from the thought patterns of "normal" society. "The basic mechanisms" he writes,

whether they play themselves out in distorted and exaggerated forms in the pathology, are in fact the same basic mechanisms endemic to the human developmental process. These mechanisms contribute meaningfully and in profoundly important ways to the building up of human personality, to the establishment and sustaining of human identity and to the elaboration and maintenance of the social and cultural structures within which such identities take shape and find their ultimate expression and cohesion... The question remains ultimately to what degree the deviance and impairment of paranoid forms of pathology are related to the price we pay for the constructive achievements and attainments that characterize human society and culture. (1978: ix-x)

The behavioural characteristics noted above (projective thinking, etc...) allow the American Psychiatric Association in its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM IV :1994) recognizes "paranoia" in conjunction with three mental disorders: "delusional disorders: persecutory," "paranoid personality disorders" and "schizophrenia, paranoid type." It is noted in the DSM, however, that "[t]he boundaries of this group of disorders and their differentiation ... [is] unclear" (195). As Allan Fenigstein explains,

...it may be useful to consider the different paranoid disorders as related syndromes existing along a continuum which varies in terms of the frequency and severity of paranoid thoughts, the degree to which reality is allowed to influence perceptions and the extent to which functioning is impaired (1994, 84)

Paranoia is diagnostically deduced from an interpretive posture and a practice of self-narrativization when factors specific to the etiology of other mental disorders is absent; it is a relatively integral and lucid way of thinking and of understanding one's self (what David Shapiro calls "the paranoid slant") rather than the manifestation of any particular mental disorder (though its delusional types may also be associated with a wide variety of mental disorders, most specifically schizophrenia).¹⁰ The standard characteristic of a delusional disorder (including the paranoid persecutory delusion), the DSM notes, is characterized by "an unshakable delusional system accompanied by clear and orderly thinking. Frequently the individual considers himself or herself endowed with unique and superior abilities" (197).

Paranoid Personality Disorder is a less acute form of paranoia in which what David Swanson calls "the scanning phase" — the phase of hypervigilance and suspiciousness prior to the formation of a delusion — is most prevalent.¹¹ In PPD, the individual is without a single "unshakeable delusional system," but exhibits "a pervasive and unwarranted suspiciousness and mistrust of people ... not due to another mental disorder..." (307). "These individuals' affectivity is restricted," the DSM notes, and they may appear 'cold' to others. They have no true sense of humour and are usually serious. They may pride themselves on being objective, rational, and unemotional. They

usually lack passive, soft, sentimental and tender feelings" (307). "Often," it notes,

there is an inordinate fear of losing independence or the power to shape events in accordance with their own wishes... They usually avoid intimacy except with those in whom they have absolute trust. They show an excessive need to be self-sufficient, to the point of ego-centricity and exaggerated self importance. They avoid participation in group activities unless they are in a dominant position. (307)

The prevalence of this form of paranoia is undetermined "since such persons rarely seek help for their personality problems" (308). However, the DSM notes, "it seems likely that individuals with this disorder are over represented among leaders of ...religious, pseudoscientific and quasi-political groups. "Impairment [of social function] is generally minimal..." it continues, "[as] individuals with this disorder usually realize that it is better to keep their unusual ideas to themselves," or, presumably, formulate those ideas in such a way (such as by becoming a leader of a small group) that they can produce the desired conditions of centrality and autonomy.

Schizophrenia, which is a more specific form of mental illness, is often exhibited by characteristically paranoid behaviour, except that the delusions are far more likely to be "multiple, fragmented, or bizarre (i.e., patently absurd, with no possible basis in fact)" (182). However, schizophrenia and schizophreniform delusions are characterized by a fundamentally disrupted sense of self. This "is frequently manifested by extreme perplexity about one's own identity and the meaning of existence, or [in the case of the paranoid type] ... a specific delusion... involving control by an outside force" (183). It is in the schizophrenic manifestation of paranoid delusion that there "may be doubts about gender identity or fear of being thought of as a homosexual..." (191), which is why Louis Sass, in his reading of Schreber's Memoirs concluded that Schreber's delusions were manifestations of schizophrenic or schizophreniform paranoia.

In his seminal work on the subject that also addressed Schreber's memoirs, Sigmund Freud hypothesizes that paranoid delusion is part the ego's attempt to reintegrate after being riven by the repression of homosexual libido. Through the mechanism of projection, that which was internally

repressed returns in the external environment represented in the delusional narrative. Because Freud associates homosexuality with narcissism — the attraction to a similarly sexed person being a manifestation of the narcissistic urge to take one's self as one's love object — paranoia is theorized as an intellectual sublimation of the narcissistic libido, a way of understanding the world, relatively speaking, more in terms of the fears and desires of the self rather than in terms of its "reality." For Freud this sublimation is collectively articulated in primal animism and in the ultimately narcissistic formation of the explanatory narratives of religion, philosophy and science (including his own theory), all of which ultimately seek to understand the cosmos in terms of the self.

Following Freud, Jacques Lacan understands human knowledge as paranoid in its most general structure. For Lacan, the self is split, anxiously trying to cope with the discrepancy between its fragmented experience of its own body and the unified image of its self it knows is externally apprehended. It intimates that the fluctuating, nebulous reality of the world and the self are misrecognized in the stability and fixity of the images with which they are known. The rigidity and hostility of paranoid thought is a function of its halting of the self's continuous modification of its identificatory images of others and objects. But, of course, Lacan writes, this is an exaggeration rather than a deviation for "it is precisely that denial of the constant flux of our experience that characterizes the most general level of knowledge itself" (*Écrits* 29). Lacan's understanding of paranoia and its psycho-social dynamics are considered in more detail below.

The use of "paranoia" in non-psychiatric academic discourses tends to waver between identifying a way of seeing the world that is essentially deluded in a paranoid kind of way, and between identifying the way in which social organizations conform in some real but hidden or effaced way to those typically envisioned in paranoid delusion. In the first usage, "paranoid" designates a general personality type that craves order, and that postulates a "proper" order of things to which he or she claims adherence. That legitimate order is inevitably presumed to be undermined

by the activity of some clandestine or ill-recognized force. In this usage of “paranoia,” “conspiracy” becomes the term used to describe the folly of this person’s unpleasantly rigid inability to cope with the flux and indeterminacy of contemporary social reality. In the 1960’s this use of the term “paranoia” and its variants is most often associated with Richard Hofstadter, who, in his The Paranoid Style in American Politics examines the behaviour and formal aspects of the self-representation of political groups on the (mostly right-wing) fringes of the political spectrum from his own liberal-democratic perspective.¹² He is careful to note, however, that

there is a vital difference between a paranoid political figure and a clinical paranoid. Although they both tend to be overheated, oversuspicious, overaggressive, grandiose, and apocalyptic in expression, the clinical paranoid sees the hostile and conspiratorial world in which he feels himself to be living as directed specifically against *him*, whereas the spokesman for a paranoid style finds it directed against a nation, a culture, a way of life whose fate affects not only him but millions of others also. (29)

This distinction — between understanding one’s self as part (or representative or defender) of a majority community that is being subverted, and understanding one’s self as part of a tiny dissenting minority (often of only one) that is capable of perceiving a general corruption or threat — will be important to this study’s consideration of the hard-boiled detective novel. Narratively, it marks the difference between what Jerry Palmer calls the “positive” and the “negative” thriller forms, and between what Steffan Hantke calls a “literature of conspiracy” and a “literature of paranoia.”

The second usage became more prevalent in the 1970’s and 80’s, when the term is used to trope the authoritarian substructure underpinning the ostensibly democratic mechanisms of liberal governance. Here the term expands to describe the inherent nature of power within any institution to propagate centralism and redundancy, blocking the propagation of meaning which would interfere with the operation of the organization. The project of the intellectual for Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari and fellow travellers like Michel Foucault, is to interfere with the “paranoid apparatuses of power” (to “sap” power), not by “raising consciousness” (because even critical knowledge operates within the matrix of power), but by struggling against the forms of power that

render him or her its instrument within the sphere of knowledge.¹³ This view of the relation of thought to power falls within the tradition Paul Ricoeur calls “the hermeneutic of suspicion,” the incipiently paranoid interpretive posture which presumes that the deep organization of culture is unintelligible to the knowing subject and which seeks mastery of this unknown for that subject.¹⁴ This posture is often figurally located in a radically individual subject implicitly or explicitly opposed to some collective that generates and disseminates a false or illusory representation of reality. This comment by Nietzsche, along with Marx and Freud identified by Ricoeur as a modern master of radical suspicion, describes the relation of his over-man to the world in just such terms:

...colder, harder, less hesitating, and without fear of "opinion"; he lacks the virtues that accompany respect and "respectability," and altogether everything that is part of the "virtue of the herd." If he cannot lead, he goes alone; then it can happen that he can snarl at some things he meets on his way... There is a solitude within him that is inaccessible to praise or blame, his own justice that is beyond appeal. (WP § 124)

Responding to the phallocentrism of evident here, in the 1970's books such as Elaine Showalter's A Literature of their Own identified this hermeneutic of suspicion with the patriarchal-colonialist drive toward mastery, exhorting its rejection in favour of critical forms that formally or thematically *empathize or translate* rather than criticize; forms which position the critic as part of, rather than opposed to, a “community” that includes the critical object. With reference to his work on Kafka with Guattari, Deleuze speaks to Claire Parnet about such a critical mode:

Think of the author you are writing about. Think of him so hard that he can no longer be an object, and equally so that you cannot identify with him. Avoid the double shame of the scholar and the familiar. Give back to an author a little of the joy, the energy, the life of love and politics that he knew how to give and invent. So many dead writers must have wept over what has been written about them. I hope that Kafka was pleased with the book that we wrote and it is for that reason that the book pleased nobody. (Dialogues 119)

The subtlety of this analysis relating paranoia to *specific* modes of social organization and intellectual activity was quickly lost as “paranoia” became a term of political derogation used to tar any regime or institution — almost independently of ideological affiliation — with the brush of “fascism.”

More significantly, it tended to miss one of Deleuze and Guattari's central points: while wealth tends to be a capitalist expression of "power" and therefore participates in this "paranoid" tendency of power toward centrality and obscurity, as money within the capitalist economic structure becomes more and more to be manifest as *capital*, (wealth oriented to the production of new wealth), its logic is inherently "schizophrenic"; it seeks, in part, to destroy centralized organizations of wealth dissemination in order to open up new opportunities for exploitation and wealth creation. In Deleuze and Guattari's work, especially, the two usages tend to converge; the nature of capitalist society is indeed "paranoid" in some of its aspects while profoundly "schizoid" in others, and it does tend to generate paranoid ways of thinking and acting, though these paranoias tend to reinforce the real conspiracy of power, rather than address and resist it.

Structuralist and post-structuralist re-evaluations of Marxist thought by Louis Althusser, Jacques Lacan, Jean Baudrillard, Jean Lyotard and Fredric Jameson develop similar analyses of the relation of consciousness to socio-cultural dynamics, using, in part, paranoia and, later, schizophrenia to trope certain attributes of subjectivity within the "culture of the commodity."¹⁵ For Jameson "the cultural logic of late capitalism" is marked by the increasing inability of social groups to legitimize narratives that can claim to explain everything worth explaining and to move toward narratives with very limited and non-exclusive explanatory claims (politically, the logic of liberal pluralism), at the same time as more and more of people's lives were becoming "commodified" or understandable as potential capital. For Jameson, while culture provides people with an intelligible world by facilitating the exchange of stories that tell of causes and effects, intentions and discrete actions, the increasingly hegemonic dynamic of the social world and primary determinant of cultural value is the capitalist "market." Value, then, emerges from the market into culture, but since the market is almost infinitely complex and does not function according to the kind of discrete cause-effect causality that stories are capable of representing, we have the stories ending up chasing meaning, instead of meaning emerging from a certain set of stories. The subject of the commodity occupies a

latently paranoid subjective situation in that he or she *knows* that meaning is produced but cannot finally determine *how* it is produced. With its invocation of a unitary, pervasively powerful conspiracy, paranoid delusion offers a satisfying if inevitably misguided way of understanding this situation. It offers a narrative articulation that places the sense of powerlessness so pervasive in a culture finally determined by the market in a story in which that powerlessness is merely a *moment* — the present — preceded by a past and, hopefully, a future in which the subject presumes the possibility of real subjective agency. Where this kind of totalizing vision offers the possibility of resistance to the alienation of commodity culture, it might better be understood in terms of what Thomas Pynchon calls “creative paranoia,” similar to what Gayatri Spivak has called “strategic essentialism” or what has been called “identity politics”: the adoption of a self-consciously delusional narrative of identity and conspiracy whose limitations are provisionally ignored while it is used to support a pragmatic political intervention. For Jameson Marxism affords a totalizing vision of this kind, though it is more flexible and less delusional because it is tied to the less concrete causal figure of “History.” However, as Marxists like Terry Eagleton point out, Jameson seems to have emptied that conceptual figure of so much concrete specificity that its ability to inform political resistance is questionable: as it recedes from its “delusionality” (to use the terms of this essay) it cedes its ability to legitimate resistance to the postulated “conspiracy.”

If paranoia, as it is used as a trope in the social sciences and humanities is tied to some form of external social reality then, presumably (following Jameson’s exhortion to “always historicize!”) the relation between a state of “cultural consciousness” and social organization can be explained in historical terms. Without weighing in on the vexed debate as to whether a (creatively) paranoid perspective is in fact healthier (depending on one’s definition of health), I want to provide a cursory and hopelessly oversimplified overview of ways in which this historical relation between this “cultural paranoia” — as Patrick O’Donnell and others call it — has been explained as a function of the abstract structures of the “culture of the commodity” and as the institutional/ technological

organization of what Foucault has called “the culture of the panopticon.”

- **Lacanian paranoia and the commodity.**

According to Lacan, between six months and two years of age, the child constructs a set of imagistic, bipolar relations between herself and the objects of the world. These relations, in effect, map the coherence of the world on to the phenomenally fragmented and incoherent body through the prevailing figure of the mirror image. In the reflected image of its body the proto-subject finds a "self"; it recognizes through that reflection in its body a discrete object in the world which can be made the ground of identity and agency. The world known through these relations is fundamentally bipolar; not only is meaning in this stage a function of the self's relation to the world, but the integrity of objects in that world — most significantly the integrity of the body (known through its reflected image) — support the enabling illusion of integrity which gives the proto-subject selfhood. This imaginary ego (the *moi*) is paranoid in a general sense, as, in coping with the discrepancy between a fragmented bodily experience and a unified self-image, it must determine relations of identity and non-identity between the image and the objects of the environment. This identificatory anxiety underlies Lacan's claim that human knowledge is paranoiac in its "most general structure" (17). What the forms of [paranoiac] aggression have in common is a “stereotypical quality, an unrealistic pattern of behaviour that gives the appearance of being the result of a denial or a halting of the ongoing dialectic of identification between the *moi*, others and objects. But, of course, it is precisely that denial of the constant flux of our experience that characterizes the most general level of knowledge itself” (Écrits 29). This leads Lacan to brush up against a definition of "paranoiac knowledge.” Lacan writes:

Now this formal stagnation is akin to the most general structure of human knowledge, that which constitutes the *moi* and its objects with attributes of permanence, identity and substantiality, in short, with entities or 'things' that are very different from the *Gestalten* that

experience enables us to isolate in the shifting field, stretched in accordance with the lines of animal desire. (Écrits 17)

This latently paranoid need for knowledge of solid, stable things based on being and identity — Lacan uses *connaissance* to describe this kind of knowing — is explicitly linked with paranoia in the work of Deleuze and Guattari. In his later work Lacan increasingly speaks of a kind of knowledge (*savoir*) associated with psychoanalysis that seeks to approach the threshold for comprehending flux rather than stability, a knowledge approaching some kind of cognition of its own limits.

The paranoid structure of the *moi* is sublimated, according to Lacan, when it is superseded by another form of knowing provided by an external authority that inheres neither in the self nor in the object. The imaginary identifications of the *moi* are now absorbed into a cultural locus of selfhood. Knowledge is still fundamentally figural and based on the body's ability to guarantee the integrity of the self with relation to objects, but the figures of body-world are now supplied culturally rather than generated individually, and are then used to imperceptibly support the seemingly "neutral" body of cultural knowledge. This knowledge, which Lacan calls *Symbolic*, is complexly differential and a product of cultural history (rather than dualistic and the product of individual sensation). To use this knowledge the individual must identify with the culture which knows with that knowledge. The subject of the Symbolic order identifies not with another imaginary subject, but with a subject which knows and which, through identification, can grant knowledge but which is itself unknowable: an Other. This alienation of the *moi* within the symbolic subject Lacan calls the "I" (*je*) is an uncomfortable subordination of the *moi*'s dualism within the structural diffuseness of the subject apperceived in language. Collective understanding — the Other's form of knowledge — is fundamentally alien to the "individual" understanding of the *moi*, but that alienation is repressed in the *moi*'s uneasy identification with the *je*. Inasmuch as the Other promises an ability to find coherence in the world, the Symbolic subject's desire to know is then a desire to know as the Other knows, what Lacan describes as its "desire for the object of the Other's desire" (Écrits 19)

The rejection of Symbolic meaning and the reconstitution of meaning within a new, post-Symbolic Imaginary dualism is the precondition, for Lacan, of active, psychopathological paranoia. This occurs when the underlying aggression of the *moi* overcomes the subject's desire for the object of the Other's desire. This requires some explanation. The Symbolic subject always senses that the world is constitutively mis-recognized because its meaning always seems to come from an outside and prior source and because that meaning is very palpably of a different order from the true nature of the world itself. That mis-recognition is partially assuaged by the assurance that even if the world is unintelligible and misrepresented, intelligibility and accurate representation do not really matter as long as one lives as one should, identifying with the image of the Other. Identifying one's self fundamentally with a given set of representations (the "real" world) and a figure which understands those representations (the Other) requires belief. When the *moi* no longer subordinates itself to the Other in this belief, it rejects the knowledge of the world granted by the Other's representations. It cannot, however, return to the mute non-representational forms of knowledge appropriate to the *moi*. Instead, it posits another figure of the Other, one capable of mediating representational knowledge, but now an extension of the *moi's* itself. Paranoia is the result: the subject still requires an underlying Imaginary dualism, but constructs that dualism — and a new set of Symbolic meanings to supersede the rejected cultural meaning — him or herself. With this new Other mediating knowledge in accordance with the *moi's* desires, we now have what Lacan calls "the phenomenon of the *Unglauben*...the absence of one of the terms of belief, of the term in which is designated the division of the subject" (Lacan, Four 238). Active, psychopathological paranoia is essentially the supersession of a "normal" subjectivity by a subjectivity which "believes" in an Other that is responsive to the individual's own desire and that mediates knowledge shaped by individual identifications rather than by cultural history and collective patterns of knowledge production. The absent term which designates the division of the subject is the term which mediates the Imaginary/Symbolic relation. When Symbolic relations are *subordinated* to a model of Imaginary

specular dualism, when the Symbolic Other which haunts language in its constitutive absence is made into a literal figure of worldly antagonism, one enters an actively paranoid configuration.

In narrative terms this "phenomenon of the *Unglauben*" is manifest in a figure that often takes the form of a mysterious "They." Like the apparatus of torture — the complex assemblage of differently vectored rays disseminated through the proliferating realms of heaven — assembled by Schreber's collective yet unitary God to torment that protagonist suffering in defence of his masculinity, the knowledge of this "They" figure is often characterized in paranoid delusion as something inhuman, mechanistic, frequently technological or quasi-supernatural in nature. The "human," and therefore the ethical site of heroic protagonism, is associated, in Lacan's terms, with the primary figures of self-world identification based on the individual's phenomenal experience of reality. The "inhuman" in this narrative, the ethical source of "evil" and antagonism, has a reality which shares the characteristics of "Symbolic" knowledge. It is the product of a complex web of signification, except that it is understood skeptically rather than through an identificatory gesture of belief. The "inhumanity" of the Symbolic marks a fundamental antagonism instead of being the figure of the individual's mystical participation in a community greater than the self. Protagonism, in this narrative, has two valid forms: penetrating and exposing the deceptive illusion that the "They" has foisted upon society and the hero, and restoring an order shaped around the ethical extension of the individual's identificatory reality. This is a thankless, almost impossible task; the protagonist is always overwhelmed by the obscurity and vastness of his target. The workings of this "They" structure are accessible to the subject only through what Freedman calls the paranoid's "ruthless hermeneutic" (17), and then only in the incomplete and suspect form that accompanies the translation from collective to individual intelligence. One, by definition, can never know what "They" are up to. But, like Schreber, who knows the truth of what it means to live (as opposed to God, who only knows corpses), the individual's humanity provides deep resources of resistance and promises eventual victory. The paranoid delusion, in these terms, is a narrative of the *moi* rampant.

How then, does Lacan link a latent paranoia to Marx's commodity and explain its prevalence in commodity culture? For Lacan the commodity is structurally isomorphic to language itself; like language it depends on a complex differential system of meaning distribution, and its value invokes a pre-identification with a general subject in whom exchange between particular subjects can be conducted. One speaks to another from within a language, just as one exchanges with another from within an understanding of the conventions of exchange. The tendency toward semantic stability within a community of language users is analogous to the generally paranoid structure of knowledge, with its need to articulate the experiential reality of flux and becoming in terms of being and identity.¹⁶ But, as Deleuze and Guattari argue in their analysis of the anti-paranoiac structures of capitalism, the commodity, as an abstract form, is governed by a logic of capital, a logic analogous to but far less conservative than that which produces meaning through conventionalization in language use.

To Freedman's question: "[i]f, as we have seen, paranoia operates by a hermeneutic logic, what is it in bourgeois society that we are compelled to interpret" (17), the answer lies in the semiotic nature of the commodity. Capitalism, in Marxist terms, can be defined as generalized commodity production, a condition which embraces its necessary correlative, generalized commodity fetishism. The commodity satisfies some human need or requirement, it has what Marx calls "use value," but it is manifest to the subject in terms of its exchange value, the value given it through its participation in the complex differential web of other valued objects for which it can be exchanged. This exchange value has little to do either with the cost of making the object or with its use-function. Its value is ultimately determined by the hegemony of the exchange-value system. The value which might have arisen from its use by a human being has been superseded by the purely semiotic value it has to a subject of capitalism, and since this value has no real meaning in human use terms, it is mysterious, it has to be figured out and negotiated. "Value" writes Marx, "transforms every product of labour into a social hieroglyphic. Later on men try to decipher the hieroglyphic, to

get behind the secret of their own social product: for the characteristic which objects of utility have of being values is as much men's social products as is their language." The primary reality of the commodity to the capitalist subject lies in its culturally negotiated meaning rather than its individually determinable use. Therefore, as Freedman writes, "if we are economically constituted as capitalists and workers who must buy and sell human labour that is commodified into labour-power, then we are psychically constituted as paranoid subjects who must seek to interpret the signification of the objects - commodities - which define us and which, in a quasi-living manner, mystify the way that they and we are defined" (18).

In Lacan's terms then, while a non-capitalist subject may be split, and may feel alienated with regard to the desire of the Other, at least that Other is manifest as a reassuring presence in each encounter with language. In each conversation, act of reading or even of thinking, that *belief* that is at the basis of the divided subject is called back into the fore, because every use of language yields meaning in spite of the fact that no individual makes that meaning themselves. The ability to find meaning in spite of the knowledge that it makes sense only because it participates in the linguistically suspended consensual reality of an entire social group — this impossible fact of meaning is the basis of the belief that keeps the Imaginary alienated within the Symbolic and the pre-social *moi* within the social *je*. Commodity exchange has the same *form* of meaning as language, without invoking the *belief* which underwrites it, that pre-communicative faith that in some realm external to any communicating individual, meaning will arise. Instead, commodity exchange is understood as inherently antagonistic and self-consciously deceptive. Though there is a price attached to the commodity, that price does not inspire belief in any kind of reservoir of value; instead, it is recognized, in the abstract, as the product of an incomprehensibly complex system of production, distribution, marketing and consumption, and, in the particular, as the product of an antagonistic struggle between buyer and seller in which relative advantage determines the price and the decision to buy or sell rather than any "inherent" or Other-granted value. The commodity-exchange

reproduces the form of meaning which sustains the socialized split subject, but it strips that form of its ability to support that term of belief "in which is designated the division of the subject"; it reproduces, in its place "the phenomenon of the *Unglauben*," that, if predominant in the subject, is manifest in paranoia.

We have moved, it is clear, from a consideration of paranoia as a type of self-understanding to a consideration of it as an organizing historico-cultural dominant that validates that self-understanding in terms of the individual (such as the Freudian ego or Lacanian subject). We can take a second pass at the commodity form, which Lacan identifies as integral to a kind of ambient cultural paranoia before considering the relation between this form of self-understanding and forms of social organization that produce it. It is beyond the scope of this project to evaluate historico-sociological theories, but since this project considers narrative forms of mid-twentieth-century Western culture in relation to the vicissitudes of "paranoia," and since paranoia is tied in Lacan's account to the commodity form, we shall consider theories that correlate commodity capitalism and mid-twentieth-century Western culture. For this purpose we will turn to the work of Frederic Jameson.

To explain his claim that postmodernism is the cultural logic of late capitalism, Jameson theorizes that as capital has taken "quantum leaps" in the "penetration and colonization of hitherto commodified areas" ("Cognitive" 348) different kinds of dominant commodity relation are produced and with them different subjectivities and experiences of the world. For Jameson "classical" or market capitalism is organized

in terms of a logic of the grid, a reorganization of some older sacred and heterogeneous space into geometrical and Cartesian homogeneity, a space of infinite equivalence and extension... namely, the desacralization of the world, the decoding and secularization of older forms of the sacred or the transcendent, the slow colonization of use value by exchange value, [and] the "realistic" demystification of the older kinds of transcendent narratives... ("Cognitive" 349)

The next stage, “the stage of imperialism” is characterized by growing “problems of figuration” associated with “the growing contradiction between lived experience and structure” (“Cognitive” 349). “While in older societies and perhaps even in the early stages of market capital,” Jameson writes,

the immediate and limited experience of individuals is still able to encompass and coincide with the true economic and social form that governs that experience, in the next moment these two levels drift ever further apart and really begin to constitute themselves into that opposition the classical dialectic describes as *Wesen* and *Erscheinung*, essence and appearance, structure and lived experience.... The structural coordinates [of the “meaning” of the commodity] are no longer accessible to immediate lived experience and are often not even conceptualizable for most people. (“Cognitive” 349)

This stage, for Jameson, finds its articulation in the Romantic attempt at individual transcendence in accordance with a super-real intuitive power and the modernist version of negative transcendence — the postulation of an inherently unknowable reality — , culminating in a return to the minimal realities of individual experience and an abnegation of agency to extra-individual forces like “science” or “method” or “nation.” In this situation, Jameson notes, “we can say that if individual experience is authentic, it is not true; and that if a scientific or cognitive model of that same content is true, then it escapes individual experience” (“Cognitive” 349).

The representation of this experience, Jameson argues, conveys “the sense that each consciousness is a closed world, so that a representation of the social totality must now take the (impossible) form of a coexistence of those sealed subjective worlds and their peculiar interaction, which is in reality a passage of ships in the night... The literary value that emerges from this formal practice is called “irony”” (“Cognitive” 350).

Early and mid twentieth-century Western culture, in Jameson’s analysis, is lived in the experience of individual disengagement from ideas of “social totality” before the individual subject itself becomes completely vacuous. There is, in other words, still the sense, even though it proves impossible to bear out or to understand as an individual, that *there must be* some way to understand it all, that there must be some locus of coherence, and that the task of addressing the possibility of

that coherence is still legitimate. In Jameson's historical sketch, this period retains a sense that there is a real reality beneath a deceptive surface (before surface and depth collapse into the simulacrum or "the hyperreal"), and there is still the sense that totality is the form of truth, even if that totality is expressed in negative form, in an assertion of its impossibility to an individual who understands him or herself as hopelessly isolated from others or the social whole. The mediating function once provided by society and its institutions is eroded; the ability to see self as a particular within an integrated totality governed by a cosmic metanarrative of social birth and transformation fades, creating an anxiety and a desire which is addressed with exhortions to mass consumption. The ability to have faith in the fixity of being in things is eroded, as is the ability to have faith in the nature of the cosmos. There is in short, a general situation in which the ability to understand one's self as part of a total communal organism has been undermined.

There are few alternatives: the first is the substitution of a *serial* or diachronic cosmological framework for a synchronic or apocalyptic cosmological framework of self-understanding: if one cannot know the beginning and the end, at least one can buy "total" fulfillment one day at a time. In the commodity relation ("outside of which the capitalist subject cannot be said to exist" [Massumi 7]) there is the *repetition* of the act of consumption. It is a series of acts of affirmation and partial fulfillment that can stand as *indicators* of the possibility of complete fulfillment and identity. This process, governed by what Baudrillard has called the logic of "the fun morality" ("whose imperative is enjoyment and the complete exploitation of all possibilities of being thrilled, experiencing pleasure and being gratified" [49]) centers on *want*, the objectless desire that the *valuable* but not *meaningful* commodity elicits. But that diachronic, desire-based relation can be rejected in favour of one based on anxiety and demanding a *synchronic* articulation: in place of the need to buy one's place in the world, one can easily substitute the need to *know* one's place in the cosmos. The continual *deferral* of identity can be replaced by a desire to identify one's relation to totality *now*, either in the ironic statement of the total impossibility of knowledge and final identity, or in some romantic narrative in

which the individual itself is expanded to take the place once occupied by “community,” and in which the individual is postulated as the source of final truth within an absolutely uncertain environment.

Nihilism, conspiracy or consumerism seem to be the alternatives for self-understanding within this culture of imperialist/monopoly capitalism. A latently paranoid environment is erected, and a consumerist solution is offered, but subjective intensification (paranoia) or subjective dissolution (melancholy, cynicism, nihilism) are alternative possibilities. None, as Jameson would point out, offer a subjectivity capable of channeling any form of resistance to the increasing hegemony of the commodity: the first contributes to the process, the second misrecognizes the enemy (because it is incapable of individual recognition), and the third withdraws from the sphere of political engagement altogether.

Jameson’s work represents a second tradition of scholarship which discusses how subjective relations are produced through social institutions and cultural forms, both of which stand in a semi-autonomous relation to economic organization. This kind of scholarship looks more closely at the mechanisms with which this anxiety latent to the commodity is organized and administered. If this anxiety is produced at the level of the subject Brian Massumi asks:

Is fear then still fundamentally an emotion, a personal experience, or is it part of what constitutes the collective ground of possible existence? Is it ontic or ontological? Empirical or virtual? If, in a sense, we have become our fear, and if that becoming is tied up with movements of commodification carrying capital toward intensifying saturation of the same social space suffused by fear, does that mean that when we buy into fear we are buying into our selves? (viii)

Jacques Donzelot describes the way in which “fear” is seen as a necessary companion to the penetration of capital into heretofore uncommodified areas of life. “If the capitalist economy is indeed a war economy only able to proceed by an always more advanced and intense colonization of terrestrial space,” he writes,

it must be recognized that this economy implies an administration of the prospective terror which radically modifies this space... Now it is not solely by means of “the flow of stupidity”

that the State produces this fear with regard to space, but by rendering space truly, biologically, uninhabitable. (quoted in Massumi 25).

For Donzelot the production of capitalist subjects requires an increasingly efficient penetration and exploitation of environments that generates a lived experience of environmental or social degradation inseparable from a sense of technical and individual improvement. The *product*, Massumi extrapolates, is held out to the *individual* as that which could protect him or her from the pervasive degradation and corruption, even though that degradation and corruption is a by-product of its own production. Fear — often legitimate (with reference to environmental and social degradation), often manufactured (with reference to rampant crime, which creates a self-fulfilling postulation of communal degradation) — strengthens the tendency to see *the insular, consuming individual* as the source of potential safety.

As Donzelot points out, however, this process requires an administrative structure capable of organizing “the prospective terror.” He calls this administrative structure “The State.” Foucault defines the figures of administrative agency more abstractly: “capital” is replaced by “power” (capital being a dominant form of power distribution) and “the State” is folded into the concept of “discourse” (all the various institutions, practices and situations of social organization of bodies and knowledges). An analysis of such an administration of “ambient” fear, Massumi comments,

highlight[s] the materiality of the body as the ultimate object of technologies of fear, understood as the apparatuses of power aimed at carving into the flesh habits, predispositions and associated emotions — in particular, hatred — conducive to the setting of social boundaries, to erecting and preserving hierarchies, to the perpetuation of domination. (viii)

And while a consumerist response is one way of fending off a socially produced and administered anxiety, as William Warner argues, populist narratives that conform in many ways to the narrative structure of paranoid delusion address “that aspect of modern world that Foucault’s work has exhaustively detailed” (676). These stories articulate “the struggle of every modern person who would remember their freedom” (676). They tell of “a contest between the system’s agenda for the self and the self’s attempt to manipulate the system to his own ends” and express the “legitimate

disenchantment” of individuals with “the bureaucracies and the discursive formations of modern systems for shaping power and knowledge” (676). In popular culture, consumption (or compliance) and resistance can be combined since narratives of resistance to “the system” by “individuals” are *mass consumed* by “individuals” that are in fact produced as consumers by the vastly expanded version of what Horkheimer and Adorno call “the culture industry.” Such narratives of individual resistance to a “system” distorts the experience of oppression, turning it into a consumable vicarious narrative experience of exhilarating agency, that, far from posing a threat to “the system’s” operation becomes a major part of its apparatus of self-perpetuation.¹⁷

Louis Sass examines this relation between a certain form of narrated self-understanding and this Foucauldian concept of discursive subjectivity in his return to the Memoirs of Dr. Schreber. For Sass, though Schreber was anything but a “typical” man of modern civilization, “there are certain respects in which he may be considered an *exemplary* one,” for he “does manifest, in a most exaggerated fashion, certain characteristics that are central to Foucault’s conception of the modern mind and self” (“Schreber’s” 102). Schreber’s “inner experience,” Sass argues, “conforms in the most literal way imaginable to the institutions and social practices Foucault describes in Discipline and Punish” (“Schreber’s” 104). Sass looks at the way in which Schreber’s father brought him up under an extremely rigid pedagogical regime that was designed to “oppress everything in the child”; little Daniel’s posture, speech, bathroom habits, sleep routines, physical and academic education were carefully controlled to produce a “properly civilized” youth. And this regime, by all accounts, succeeded, as Schreber became a highly respected, highly cultured member of the German judiciary.

Sass observes that “it is one of the ironies of modern thought that the madness of patients like Schreber is so often seen as a regression to wildness or innocence — even being viewed by some¹⁸ as an enviable way of escaping the ‘rationalist repression’ of the modern world” (146). But, as Sass writes,

What if madness were to involve not an escape from but an exacerbation of that

thoroughgoing illness that Dostoevsky imagined [the sickness of “too much consciousness” described in Notes from the Underground]? What if madness, at least in some of its forms were to derive from a heightening rather than a dimming of conscious awareness, and an alienation not from reason but from the emotions, instincts and the body? (Madness 4)

Instead, Sass argues, Schreber’s “madness” is only “mad” in that it literalized and gave narrative articulation to the *cultural* — not “natural” — conditions of his psyche. “Far from being what the early Foucault called a ‘sovereign enterprise of unreason’ or the source of ‘total contestation’ of modern Western civilization,” Sass writes, “madness, at least in Schreber’s case, turns out to be one of the most extreme and exemplary products of this civilization — one which installs the public world in the most private recesses of the soul” (“Schreber’s” 107). Though Sass does not want to assert “an etiological connection between madness and modernism” (Madness 9), he does make the observation that “as we approach modern times, we find more and more evidence of patients manifesting a symptomatic picture involving withdrawal, highly idiosyncratic and abstract patterns of thinking, and a preoccupation with hidden meanings” (Madness 9), concluding that examining schizophrenic thinking “can help to illuminate, if not the modern condition in general, then at least some of its more disturbing potentialities” (Madness 12). And though Sass’ methods are psychiatric and mine are primarily narratological, this conclusion, with reference to the paranoid rather than specifically schizophrenic thought-patterns), guides my own work in this project.

The problem in Foucault that Sass addresses in his re-reading of Schreber has to do with “the modern soul.” While Foucault may exhaustively detail the structures of “power” for administering docile bodies via “subjectivity,” he does not, Sass feels, account for how that subjectivity is *experienced*. For Sass, Schreber’s consciousness is “both rent and joined by an inner panopticism” (128). “Panopticism” is the condition explored by Foucault, of subjectivity within a prison Jeremy Bentham envisaged that would allow total surveillance with minimal presence. An opaque observation tower surrounded at a distance by a ring of transparent prison cells, it is, Foucault argues, “a machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad; in the peripheric ring, one is

totally seen, without ever seeing; in the central tower one sees everything without ever being seen"

(Discipline, 202). Interpreting Foucault, Sass explains the paradoxes of the panopticon:

...the prisoner in the Panopticon (or any similar panoptic structure) will end up internalizing within his own consciousness the asymmetrical social relations of this modern 'technology of the soul' (Discipline 30). The system will force him to experience himself *both* as the body that feels itself observed (without ever knowing for sure when this is the case) and also as the watcher who feels like a pure and omniscient consciousness. Paradoxically enough, however, it is also clear that, while the prisoner in one sense is *both* observer and observed, in another sense he cannot truly identify himself with either of these polarized roles (ie with either a bodily self-presence or with an observing consciousness). He cannot experience in his own *bodily* being from within but only from without, from the imaginary position of an observer in the tower. And insofar as the prisoner identifies himself with *consciousness*, he will be identifying with a being whose essence is to be elsewhere — that imagined consciousness watching from a distance and inevitably felt to be alien, remote, other. (Madness 127)

In addition to internalizing this sense of being continually watched and known, with its production of an essentially alien, instrumental body being fought over by the two watching consciousnesses, the subject of the panopticon is entirely constituted by this relation between watching and being watched. These two positions within his subjectivity, Sass writes, are "characterized by both an absolute separation and an absolute interdependence, and interdependence amounting to a kind of symbiosis. In this variant of the master-slave dialectic, each self-observer and observed — comes to be defined almost completely by its relationship with the other, a relationship whose essence is distance and difference" (128). The expression of this relationship is understood, Sass continues, in corporeal terms: "the prisoner's body would have to be experienced *by* the prisoner as a body-as-perceived, a body *for* the distant observer; and (also from the prisoner's point of view) the observer's being would be reduced to a single function, the being-who-observes-me-from-afar. (128).

Panopticism is literalized in certain institutional conditions, like Foucault's prisons, but is often used by Foucault to describe the latent structure of modern institutional operation. As such the prisoner is *aware* of his panoptical subjectivity, and develops an explicit sense of him or herself as a "body-as-perceived." This sense is part of the condition of subjectivity of the more general modern subject; where the prisoner can find a figure of *fear* in the prison that surrounds him, the

modern subject is left with an objectless sense of *anxiety*. The paranoid, like Schreber, *recognizes* his or her self in a panoptical situation and converts that anxiety back to fear by creating a figure of antagonism with which to understand his or her subjective agency. Where Foucault's reading of Bentham's Panopticon examines its possibilities of surveillance and control through its ability to break a community or population into isolated individuals — of looking *in* on the prisoner, as it were — the paranoid understands him or her self as the isolated individual *apprehended by* the Panopticon, and constructs his or her self in *response* to its power of surveillance and control, focussing on strategies of defensive *opacity* and the maintenance of some form of individual *autonomy*.

- **Narrative**

Paranoia is particularly *wordy*. As noted above paranoids tend to place a higher than normal emphasis on “verbal information processing” and express their self-understanding in what can roughly be called intellectual rather than emotive terms. The tremendous anxiety associated with paranoia is held in check by a tremendous amount of intellectual and hermeneutic energy devoted to the production of a story in which that anxiety is legitimate and potentially heroic. Verbal information processing deals with *putting into words* the relation of the perceived environment to the self and the capacities of that self to act or be acted upon; it deals with the question of autonomy in *narrative* terms, for it is in narrative that self, world and agency can be verbally processed. If I cannot go as far as Jameson in his consideration of narrative as “the central function or instance of the human mind” (Political 13), I think that a guiding assertion that it is the privileged instance of the *paranoid* mind is borne out in both the psychiatric and philosophical/theoretical usages of the term “paranoia,” considered above. The combination of the reliance on verbal information processing and the central preoccupation with autonomy characteristic of paranoia lends weight to the centrality of narrative in paranoid self-understanding. Paranoia, as Magaro's 1981 work suggests (in

conformity with a long psychiatric tradition), does not involve the degradation, fraying or fragmenting of the self-in-world narrative that is characteristic of other forms of (often schizophrenic) delusion. On the contrary, in narratological terms paranoia seems to involve an *intensification* of the pressures of narrative on self-understanding; character, world and the medium of their interaction (agency) become less flexible, more rigidly defined, more highly organized and consistently regulated. The ordering mechanisms of narrative formation become more powerful and more distinct, the story-form becomes increasingly less accommodating to the resistance, the nuance of the experience it articulates.

The paranoid plot-type, abstracted by Meissner and Swanson, is generally apocalyptic, positioning current events in terms of some determinate origin (before which things were completely different: "the memory of freedom," in Warner's terms) and some determinate end (after which things will be absolutely different: "You'll see!"). The events of the present are characterized by confusion and deceptive appearances. At some prior time things were as they seemed, before the intrusion of the general or specific malice, and at some time in the tenuous future things will regain their transparency, after they have been purged of the interpretive haze which disguises their true natures for evil purposes. The paranoid narrative features a protagonist who is central to this project of deception — subject to "delusions of reference"¹⁹ — and who is uniquely able to connect a general sense of deceptive appearances to the agency of a Deceiver, a singular but not individual entity manifest in a large number of individuals who are not what they seem. The protagonist is usually absolutely isolated; he or she may have a few confidantes, but they are not entirely trusted, while the "They" — inevitably a group with a single purpose — gathers its strength from its numbers and its ability to provide a consensus for the malignant version of reality it has created to mask its true intentions.

Paranoid delusion, especially in its schizophrenic manifestations, is also preoccupied with questions of sexuality along with its preoccupation with autonomy. Maintaining one's masculinity

either in a literal sense (as in Schreber) or in a more figural sense of trying to keep from always getting “screwed.”²⁰ As psychiatrist Marvin Goldwert suggests, in its most grandiose form paranoid delusion is often organized around a messianic narrative structure in which the struggle for autonomy is coincident with a “search for meaning”; the telos of these struggles is expressed in the transcendence of sexual division and the achievement of a “cosmic bisexuality” (326) characterized by a condition of complete autonomy and full access to universal meaning.

We are at a point where we must introduce some tools for considering this kind of narrative. Describing narrative is a vexed problem, because it forces the consideration of a *single* story in terms of a *group* of stories abstracted with regard to formal or thematic criteria (genre). These criteria are generated in relation to some larger conception of narrative that groups the genre according to period or systematically (recognizing its characteristics within a field of potential variation). However, as theorists of narrative usually end up admitting, even structural considerations of narrative tend to beg questions of a historical and cultural nature, just as historical distinctions tend to beg the question of relation to a field of possible variation.²¹

A key term in this essay will be “romance.” This term is neither critically or thematically alien to any of the work I will be considering, as it circulates prominently in each of the texts I will be considering. In Freud, of course, there is “The Family Romance,” the microcosmic drama of ego-formation, and in Freud too is the association of “romance” with Don Quixote and with narcissism: with the idea that this is how one understands one’s self if one is not properly made to recognize external authority and the presence of others and of “reality.” In the male to female transsexual autobiographies of Lili Elbe and Jan Morris there are several attempts to disavow the “romantic” conventions: “though the events of these pages seem fantastic, this is no romance” writes Neils Hoyer of Lili Elbe, and Jan Morris explains that though her story seems “mystical” — and is so in its fundamental reality — it is played out in the very real world of “daily life.” Similarly, in the detective fiction I consider, there is an almost conventional moment of disavowal of romance

on much the same grounds, in which a narrator such as Dr. Watson steps in and points out that even though the events of the story may seem “romantic” they are actually “real” (and “real” is usually then qualified to include the extraordinary powers of the detective). In Chandler’s hard-boiled detective story a similar pattern occurs, with an even more central disavowal of “romance.” “Romance” is directly invoked in its *alienness* to the world of the story (“there was no room for knights in this world,” remarks Marlowe in The Big Sleep), but it is the plane upon which the hero finds his preferred articulation, despite the limitations that disjunction imposes (“I’m a romantic,” Marlowe remarks in The Long Goodbye, to which tough cop Bernie Ohls replies “You think you’re cute but you’re just stupid... The wise guy never fools anybody but himself” [280-81]). With romance explicitly constructed as the mode of self-understanding amenable to the hero but alien to the world of the story there is an insistence on the disjunction between the two: the emphasis is on, if not the “realism” of the stories’ formal presentation, at least the gritty “reality” of what is being narrated; the “reality” (harshness) of the world allows the protagonist’s romanticism to be heroic. Therefore, since romance is such a key term in texts so historically and culturally removed from the period of European High Romanticism, I will work to elucidate it in terms of its formal attributes, and to investigate how this set of narrative configurations participates in the particular form of individual self-understanding characteristic of paranoia: the quest for individual autonomy.

“Romance” is one of the most central terms in Northrop Frye’s work. In its broadest sense he identifies romantic narrative as “the structural core of all fiction... it brings us closer than any other aspect of literature to the sense of fiction, considered as a whole, as the epic of the creature, man’s vision of his own life as a quest” (Secular 14). The basic story pattern of what Frye calls “the quest for identity” (“identity” being a postulated condition of full autonomy and self-knowledge), Frye feels, is the basic pattern of all narrative, in one form or another. “Identity” is what happens before the story begins (before the introduction of what rhetorician Kenneth Burke calls “the trouble”), and is where things are headed when the story ends and things have been somewhat

resolved. Looking at it another way, it is what is approached in stories that relate conditions of almost complete autonomy and unfettered individual agency, and it is what is most absolutely alien in stories that tell of world in which individual agency and self-knowledge are almost completely restrained or annihilated. But, of course, that narrated individual questing to attain some kind of identity who occupies the centre of this basic pattern of fiction can have many forms, differentiated by the nature of the protagonist's agency with relation to his environment. As it is manifest in what Frye calls its "mythic" mode the identity at the end of the heroic quest is understood as the recovery of the individual's place within an integral cosmos; it is a quest for a restoration of the nature of things and a comfortable recession of individual separateness within a "proper" place. "Romance" proper, most associated with medieval and early-Renaissance Europe, for Frye, scales down the cosmic nature of the place of identity, finding it instead in a paradisial community of direct, affective identification with God and with a very few others. The romance itself is primarily concerned with the story of one person, a hero on the quest, but that one person is rather empty of modern "individuality." Instead he (significantly, usually "he") is a *figure of one possibility of life*, if not an everyman, then an abstraction of that everyman's heroic potentiality in one or another of its abstractions, an allegorical representation of *collective* individual potential. As Frye writes in his Secular Scripture, "the message of all romance is *de te fabula*: the story is about you" (186), and it presents to "you" possible (though imaginatively displaced) ways of understanding your life as an individual, in a social world. This you/world opposition is central to literature, for Frye, but when romance is in its own "mode" the weight tends to be on the "you" side of things. It encourages direct identification, rather than identification with a character as a part of a cosmos or a society. As this basically romantic fictional pattern becomes more displaced, in what Frye calls the "high mimetic" mode (which is primarily concerned with social events and situations of great magnitude) individual identity is understood to be tied to the fate or nature of a given and quite human society, though the hero tends to be so central to his or her society that their fate and that of the society are

tightly enmeshed. Individual action profoundly influences the deep structure of society, and it is in that interaction that identity is understood. This interaction emerges again, in reverse, in what Frye calls the “ironic” mode, where individual agency is recognized to be an illusion, and the individual is understood to be determined by an at the mercy of a society that is beyond individual comprehension or control. Society individualizes the individual, but in a bad way; it shapes him or her through its powers of external definition, interrogation, coercion and manipulation. It is a society of Foucauldian panopticism, permeated by what Silverman (in the psychoanalytic, specifically Lacanian, tradition) calls “the gaze of the Other.”

As Frye argues in The Secular Scripture, within the apocalyptic narrative structure (in which there was a beginning and will be an end, rather than a continual cycle of sameness), external control is perceived as being a deep part of what it means to be a human. “Everything man has that seems most profoundly himself,” Frye writes,

is thought of as coming to him from outside, descending from the most ancient days in time... We belong to something before we are anything, and just as an infant's world has an order of parents already in it, so man's first impulse is to project figures of authority, or precedence... stretching in an iron chain of command back to God. (Secular 182)

Frye believes that myths “carry the primary authority of social concern, and play [a] large part in rationalizing our acceptance of such authority” (Secular 182-83). Romance represents that social concern in individual terms, placing the protagonist in a world structured by impediments to and possibilities of the individual rejoining the totality. As Frye writes, “At the bottom of the mythological universe [traversed, in its particular way, by romance] is a death and rebirth process which cares nothing for the individual; at the top is the individual's regained identity” (Secular 183).

Frye's tremendous synoptic scope gives him the power to make such sweeping statements, and his enormous erudition rhetorically infuses his work with an authority that legitimizes their occasionally overreaching breadth. History is represented as the raw material from which his abstractions are drawn; it is an imperfect methodology, admittedly, as difference and disjunction

tend to be elided. But, as critics as attentive to the disjunctive and particular as Jameson and Paul de Man have noted, in spite of his subordination of diachrony to synchrony, on his own terms Frye makes “fundamental contributions to narrative analysis” and on any terms he is remarkably “suggestive.”²² Therefore, a reproduction of a Frygean literary history is just that: a “suggestive” history that participates in Frye’s synchronic understanding of narrative form, but which does not make a primary claim to veracity as literary historiography. So, with eyes wide open, I relate Frye’s historical understanding of the way in which romantic convention participates in the broader literary patterns of the past few hundred years, and tie my usage of the term to this conceptualization. When I use the term “romance” in the following essay, I use it as it applies to my objects of critical interest; “romance,” in this paper, is shorthand for “the conventions of romance which, in Frye’s terms, characterize post-Romantic prose narrative.”

Frye’s very general observations about romance being a mode which articulates individual perspective is subject to historical modulation. At different points in literary history, for Frye, “the individual” as articulated by romance has been understood as part of the world into which he was born. Though superior to his fellow-folk, his quest was, in a sense, for *them* as well as for himself; it was tied up with the redemption of the social world. At different points in literary history, though, Frye argues, the romantic individual has been understood as a unit *prior* and even *opposed* to society existence: this hero’s quest is to recover the individual’s accord with the universe that had been obscured by cultural understanding and lost in social existence (*Anatomy* 96). It is this latter version of individuality that is essential to this project. In the historical period recognized as “Romanticism,” Frye remarks, the romance convention of the individual quest is assimilated to the mode of the “low mimetic” which aspires to represent the “the world as it is” from within a “subjective mental state” (*Anatomy* 60), with the result that the individual act of creation (rather than the search for the Creator) became the mark of the romance’s extraordinary protagonist. The mark of romantic protagonism was no longer an inherent nobility enabled (but not guaranteed) by

social standing, as in the case of the romantic knight. Rather, it was *genius*: individual intellect or spiritual purity allowed the Romantic hero, in Frye's view, to transcend the level of reality apparent to mere social individuals.

This postulation — that post-Romantic prose narrative works out of a general presumption that an individual subjective mental state and its experiences (rather than its social interactions) are the primary and most important plane of human existence — conforms to the conclusions of historians of ideas and literary form such as Michel Foucault and M.H. Abrams, among others. Foucault argues that in the post-Kantian²³ space of Romanticism, there was a new valuation placed upon the self, understood via Kant as an object whose essence was in an epistemological subject or site of consciousness. This new understanding of selfhood, however, introduced some rather vexing epistemological problems: by giving priority to a self that could not be sure of what it knows or how it knows, it undermined the confidence with which the individual could ascribe to those culturally accepted and promulgated truths that allowed him or her to see him or herself as an integral part of a “natural” social and cosmic order.

Instead of simply looking through consciousness at objects, Kant's transcendental forms of reflection turned the inquiring gaze of this subject back upon its own constitutive forms and attributes, shifting critical emphasis from the object of knowledge to the conditions of knowing. Since lived experience was knowable only within this phenomenal realm of what could be *known*, the subject could be seen, in its freedom from objective resistance, its self-creating nature, and its insularity with regard to truth as a kind of constitutor of the world. In a link to Freud that will be important for the discussion in the next chapter, Foucault labels this understanding of the subject “transcendental narcissism” (*Archaeology* 203). This caused some problem, however, for the *study* of subjectivity for if consciousness was transcendental — the thing to which and for which all entities must appear — its understanding as an empirical object of study would be rather clumsy. Thus the post-Kantian conception of consciousness was what Foucault calls “a strange empirico-

transcendental doublet” (Order 318); it is always an object of knowledge while always outside of and constituting knowledge.

As well, if the phenomenal world is constituted by and within consciousness, this means that there is an aspect of reality *out there* somewhere to which consciousness is *necessarily* blind. And, if the very recognition of the limitations of consciousness — Kant’s categories — are so difficult to perceive (requiring, in Kant’s case “Transcendental Analysis and Deduction”), then that means that *normal* consciousness is, in a sense, inherently deceived and self-deceiving, unaware of the conditions which constitute its own knowledge. As Louis Sass remarks, “in the modern era, consciousness, that seemingly self-aware foundation and transparent medium of representation, is also found to be surrounded by and imbued with a kind of obscurity” (Madness 329). Supreme within its own sphere, but acutely conscious of the limitations of that sphere, modern thought, in this view wavers between a narcissistic grandiosity and a paralysing anxiety, a condition we find most prominently in the narrative structure of paranoid delusion.

The post-Kantian Romantics, therefore, saw both the danger of an increasing solipsism and progressive self-referentiality in modern consciousness and a concomitant recognition of the sterile, alien quality of objectivity (corresponding to the first and second terms of Foucault’s modern doublet, respectively) and yearned for some kind of synthesis of subject and object that would not require the annihilation of one or the other but would facilitate some kind of integration of the two. The aesthetic realm was privileged in Romantic thought as the domain where such an integration might be possible.²⁴ For example, in his sixth letter on the aesthetic education of man, Friedrich von Schiller describes how the mental faculties became dissociated from the “heat and vigour” of the emotions, and how the now-detached “all-dividing intellect” tends to effect divisions of its own. Later, in his “Naive and Sentimental Poetry,” Schiller elaborates upon this subjectivist kind of consciousness, speaking of the “sentimental” kind of artist who no longer feels connected to an external world and who expresses his *reflections* of objects, rendering that object merely an *impression*,

an “object-in-the-subject.” Conversely, the sphere of the object, cut off in its reality from knowledge and human experience, is sensed as something forbiddingly alien. F.W.J. von Schelling lamented this growing tendency — primarily expressed in the detached vision of contemporary science — to apprehend externality as a dead, alien object, a vision that, if accepted, could reflect back and infect one’s own, bringing as Coleridge writes in his *Biographia*, “death into our souls” (see Abrams, 459). While the self, then, was understood as the primary source of autonomy and knowledge (including self-knowledge), it was also riven by an anxiety about its own potential to be deceived by potent aspects of reality that were constitutively outside of its parameters of understanding, and by the *alienness* suspected in the environment — especially the “chartr’d streets” of the social environment — that impinged upon the individual’s ability to achieve some kind of transcendent understanding.

As well, if *everybody* is at least potentially self-created and self-creating, the only way to express the traditionally romantic elevation of the protagonist (now that the easy invocation of social hierarchy has been undermined by this universal individual subjectivity) is to somehow claim that one is *more individual* than everybody else; that others have been somehow impeded in a way that the hero has overcome from the realization of their own true individuality. Obviously “society” or collective patterns of thought recognized as such (like “science” for Schelling or Coleridge above) are given that stunting function. Not only is culture oddly alien to the individual (as a diffuse realm of collective prejudice, folly and propaganda), it actively hinders the individual in his development of self-awareness. Narratively, this opens up a radical ambivalence in the representation of this new protagonist. Represented from within the subjective perspective of the genius or imaginative soul, the power of agency is romantic; he is extraordinary and his powers elevate him above the level of his society. However, if that “genius” is represented from outside of that perspective, if the “primacy of identification” is with “society” or “common sense,” this individual may appear less extraordinary than eccentric, or, later, paranoid.

Paranoia, with its combination of bizarre delusional and strange intensification of “rational” processes, contravened the post-Enlightenment tendency to associate the essence of humanity with the processes of rationality and to associate all mental illness with the “sleep of reason,” the degradation of rational function (dementia).²⁵ Paranoia was often associated with the “dryness” of the mind Cervantes attributes to Don Quixote, in which the rational faculties are allowed (through the intervention of too much book-reading and a tendency to vain presumption) to lose touch with “reality.” But, in the pattern best set out in Don Quixote, this form of “folly” is not univocally negative; there is a fundamental tension in this low mimetic appropriation of romance narrative between *genius* and *madness*, *inspiration* and *folly*, the *crusade* and the *rampage*. Frye notes that “an important theme in the more bourgeois novel [is] the parody of the romance and its ideals” (Anatomy 306), but as Quixote demonstrates, this parodic apprehension of romance convention is ambivalent. Certainly Quixote is constructed as an object of criticism through most of the first book, but in the second book, as he becomes what Bakhtin might call a “focal character” capable of dialogic interaction with the objectifying narrator, his ridiculously romantic figure begins to assume the shape of a genuinely sympathetic viewpoint, and, with his renunciation of his romantic vision and his death, he begins to assume a very different, but powerfully affective, kind of romance heroism that offers a perspective from which to mount a critique of the narrative’s parodic project.

There is not a comfortable fit then, for Frye, between the tendency in the low mimetic to represent the world “as it is” and the tendency in the romance to represent worlds as they may be feared or desired to be. Frye writes:

The novelist [the low-mimetic literary artist] deals with personality, with characters wearing their *personae* or social masks. He needs the framework of a stable society, and many of our best novelists have been conventional to the verge of fussiness. The romancer deals with individuality, with characters *in vecto* idealized by reverie, and, however conservative he may be, something nihilistic and untamable is likely to keep breaking out of his pages. (Anatomy 305)

In post-Romantic prose romance then, there is an uneasy suspension of governing logic. If this

“nihilistic, untarnable” tendency of the protagonist is subjectively endorsed it is seen as a mode of positive possibility in which the present society (which binds the individual) can be attacked in the name of a new *communitas* comprised of equally primary individuals, “Kant’s kingdom of ends where, as in fairy tales, we are all kings and princesses” (Anatomy 166); if what Frye calls “primary identification” is with “society, the way of the world” the act of romantic creativity is ironically understood — from a binding externality — as deluded solipsism (Anatomy59), paranoia or the dry, life-denying obsessiveness of a character like Causabon in Eliot’s Middlemarch.

Therefore the romantic protagonist is naturally suspicious of his society, and his society is suspicious of him, for people of his society are blinkered; they have no access to genius and may be actively deceived. For Frye, “[i]n romance it is usually an individual who has a vision of liberation and the society they are involved in wants to remain in darkness” (Anatomy 139). He or she walks alone, carrier of a simultaneously dark and enlightened vision; enlightened because the hero senses a better way, but dark because it recognizes the darkness all around and the pain the removal of that darkness would cause even if he could. That way in which society is *invested* in “darkness” leaves the hero the isolated carrier of his or her vision, the social unjustifiability of his or her actions the marker of the truth of his or her quest. There are two possible mode of existence for the romantic protagonist; both kinds of individuality, both therefore divergent functions of social “normality.” If the protagonist is constrained in his power to act by his environment, or in the Romantic sense, to (self)create, the primary identification elicited is of oppression and alienation. Like Joseph K, alone and exposed to the gaze of every member of the incomprehensible court, the individual becomes *more* individualized in a *bad* way because that individuation is a function of external definition of being *shaped* rather than self-creating. This almost Foucauldian subjectivity exists in what Frye describes as, “a place of growing isolation... in which, as Sartre says, hell is other people” (Secular 184): one is seen without being able to see, known without being able to know. As the protagonist gains an ability to act effectively there is a recovery of another, often called “Romantic,”

individualism: the power to define one's self as an individual, gaining the power to know while controlling others' knowledge of and power over one's self. This creative act is also "an individuizing act," as Frye notes, for there is "a process of renunciation in the ascent as well, a cutting off of everything from the liberated individual" (Secular 184). Restrictions fall away as the Romantic hero becomes more elevated, until his relation to his society is not one of constraint but one of paternalistic oversight.

This regained identity in romance is not equivalent to simply being in accord with the image of the self given to the individual from without by society. That mode of regained identity would be, in Frye's terms, a comic rather than a romantic solution. For Frye,

Comedy ends with a festive society: it is contained by social assumptions. Belief, I am saying, is essentially a form of attachment to a community: in other words, belief is also primarily social in reference, which is why the Christian myth is a comedy rather than a romance. (171)

Accordance with God in the romance, is not capable within the (fallen) image of man given by society; it requires that the hero leave the "world" and incarnate a pre-or post-lapsarian image. As Frye indicates, romance is more properly a *fraternity* than a *society*:

[It] has no continuing city as its final resting place. In folktales and fairy tales the chief characters live in a kind of atomized society: there is only the most shadowy sense of community, and [its] king and princesses are individuals with a maximum of leisure, privacy and freedom of action. (Secular 172-73)

"The closer romance comes to the world of original identity," Frye elaborates,

the more clearly something of the symbolism of the garden of Eden reappears, with the social setting reduced to the love of individual men and women within an order of nature which has been reconciled to humanity.... [Where] comedy seeks social integration, romance wants to get beyond society and search for the ideal garden. (Secular 149-50)

For Frye, then, the basic tendencies of romance narrative are centrifugal; they tend to pull the individual away from a social understanding of him or herself though within the figure of the fraternal garden this individuality is not a solipsism but a stat that allows the experience of a higher community, ie. communion with God. As Frye notes, this romantic individualism strips the *communal*

function from *belief* in a way suggestive of Lacan's *Unglauben*, arrogating it to the transcendent individual and his Truth. Belief no longer marks identification with a sublunar community, but with a transcendent fraternity in a direct relation with other individuals (the most individuated of which is, of course, God).

If the protagonist's belief that his or her own self is in accord with the universe in a way that society is not, is represented as a legitimate one, he or she may function as a prophet or charismatic leader. If this sense of individual superiority and exceptionality is *illegitimate* this character is, in narrative terms, an object of satire (a form of *alazon*) or in psychiatric terms, a megalomaniac. The megalomaniac feels an accord with what is beyond, below, above (choose your preposition) the present circumstances, but still has to deal with the obstacles presented by these superficial, transitory circumstances themselves. Antagonism in narratives articulating megalomania takes the form of intellectual resistance to identificatory knowledge; trickery, sophistry or political intrigue is used to undermine the protagonist's position which is based on an inherent and gut-sure sense of what is right. Some arcane knowledge is used to intervene in the fundamental relations of things (black magic must be offset by the goodness of the hero); some rules or artificial constraints are being deliberately invoked which misconstrue the situation (the lawyer who gets the crook off on a technicality, forcing the hero to go out and restore justice); or some smart-ass is constantly trying to tear down the natural center of the group by making maliciously-motivated rationalizations or obstructivist criticism.

If the self-seeking subject is superior to a hostile world but is able only to defend an individuality that has no (or rejects its) social dimension, the result can be heroic in a Romantic sense (Byron's *Manfred*). If the protagonist is inferior to a hostile world that annihilates his or her individuality the result is ironic (Kafka's *Josef K*). If however, the character postulates an internal superiority that is has reached an uneasy equilibrium with the hostile forces of the external world the result hovers between these two character types, the difference being a function of the *legitimacy* of

the external world's hostility. If the external world is truly pervasively hostile, it facilitates a romantic heroism like that of Chandler's hard-boiled detective Philip Marlowe, whose acuity and competence can, at best, protect his insular self. This heroism is oddly minimal and solipsistic, restricted to the ability to *negate* the anti-individuating effects of the hostile environment. If the postulated hostility of the external world is illegitimate, the character, like Faulkner's Jason Compson, who explains away his own weaknesses through the imputation of a false hostility to his external environment, is a parodic inversion of this hero: he is paranoid

In the hostile world of the paranoid and this Manfredesque solipsistic hero nothing is what it seems; extant knowledge deceives, and self-created knowledge must be constructed through negative inference and some version of Pynchon's "creative paranoia." This is the world of the crocodile tear, the fake smile, or, in a more Pynchonian language, the gingerbread house which shelters the witch. Only the gut feeling, the hair on the back of the neck, the peripheral vision, the sneaky suspicion and the improbable conclusion can be trusted. The felt, identificatory knowledge is given primacy and, in turn, mobilizes the constructing of complementary intellectual knowledge: the world is known to be arranged to deceive and this knowledge gives rise to a search for a non-given truth. The megalomaniac and the paranoid cosmoses are organized in exactly the same way except in the articulation and protagonistic self-understanding of agency; the paranoid's action is defensive and *compelled* by the almost animate hostility of the world, the megalomaniac's action is assertive but *compelled* by the almost inanimate inertia of the world and its people. In both cases protagonistic intervention is *needed* to save the self and the world and is drawn out not by protagonistic desire but by cosmic lack or antagonism.

- **the novel and possessive individual subjectivity**

We have moved from a consideration of the way in which paranoia is used in twentieth-

century, through a discussion of the historically variable social, economic and epistemological phenomena which contextualize those usages, to a discussion that attempts to cast the various understandings of paranoia in narrative terms, arriving at a generic correlate of the psychiatric paranoid: the hard-boiled detective. We can reverse our path now, and by placing this narrative figure within its literary-historical context we can touch again on a form of culturally “ambient” paranoia latent to modern Western culture.

The cosmos of the hard-boiled detective novel fits easily into the American tradition of romantic heroism, a heroism which requires an extra-social waste-land as the site of heroic accomplishment. As Tony Hilfer writes: “[the hard-boiled detective's] dissolution, alienation and despair can be components of the American dream about absolute integrity; [he is] a moral separatist that updates a Puritan origin of the American self into an odd sort of glory; the Solipsist justified” (31). This connection between a form of popular self-representation (what Cynthia Hamilton calls “the individualist ethic” of the Western and detective story) and the late capitalist economic organization is not coincidental, nor is its particularly American manifestation. It is in America that a Protestant heritage and a capitalist/colonialist economic organization meet with the least resistance from social institutions established under and conforming to alternate cosmological metanarratives and different economic modes of organization. In the new world of America, Hamilton argues, the Protestant God and the capitalist dollar were able to work out a form of social organization which accommodated both of their interests and could be articulated in terms amenable to both, terms which satisfied the Christians’ need for both self-sacrifice and expansion and the capitalists’ need for new resources to exploit. America — as a principle of a forever new land — was maintained as long as there was a viable frontier, and when that frontier closed in the late nineteenth-century the cultural heritage of America remained, although its narrative turned to the ironic. When that Protestant capitalist space of self-determination became unable to assimilate and displace contradictions to the frontier and the future time, the basic tenants of the individualist ethos were

not abandoned. Instead, they found an even more pervasive heroic modulation in the hard-boiled detective story: the temporal zone of narrative climax shifted, Hamilton argues, from High Noon (in the Western Romance) to Midnight.

For Ralph Schroder, it is Max Weber who articulates the connection between Protestantism and capitalism most succinctly. For Weber, Schroder explains,

ideas of predestination and election typically led the Protestant believer to focus completely on an other worldly salvation. At the same time, the belief that God's divine plan was completely unknowable resulted in a feeling of inner isolation, and in an unprecedented inner loneliness. Such a condition of intense psychological pressure, however forced the believer to turn to the methodical pursuit of worldly success to gain a visible sign of grace. Although in theory, in Weber's view, it was impossible for the Protestant to achieve certainty about his or her election since God's plan was unknowable and predetermined, in practice the emphasis came to be placed more and more on worldly deeds as signs of grace. In due course, the shift from the pursuit of religious goals to the pursuit of worldly goals was complete. With secularization and the waning of concern about salvation, only the methodical striving for worldly success in one's vocation remained of the Puritan's original religious impulse. (72-73)

The Protestant replacement of the Roman Catholic cosmological God who designates through an Earthly institution a proper mode of social existence, with a numinous God authentically accessible only through an individual mystical experience, it charged the individual with the gloriously endless and energetic task of (spiritually, in any case) overcoming all that stands between the self and knowledge of God's will on earth. There is, of course a dark side to that individual liberated from his or her subservience to secular (or corrupt Ecumenical) governance. As Schroder points out, having overcome the illusion of a legitimate social mediating institution he or she was left with an "inner isolation," a sense of being always and continually exposed to the judgement of God, unable to fall comfortably into a life of Church-prescribed routine that would enable him or her to live in comfortable ignorance of such disturbing existential considerations. The Protestant individual was always subject to judgement from an omnipotent and pervasive Other, even when his or her "individualism" progressed to a point where even the God of the Protestant textual institution (the Bible) could be seen as an impediment to self-articulation and understanding. The yoke of that

oppressive God could be overcome in a defiant secularism, but in the residue of guilt and anxiety borne of the perpetual struggle to prove one's self good enough, not left behind. Weber used the metaphor of "the iron cage" to describe this sensation; the "secular feeling that one's life is constantly subject to assessment... [E]ven in a secularized age there is still a feeling that one's 'total personality' is constantly being evaluated and that guilt must attach to the failure to live up to this assessment" (74). This sense of what Weber called "mundane determinism" survived in the narrative configuration of the protestant capitalist individual long after that Other had ceased to be exclusively and explicitly God.

The novel as a form best articulated this condition of secular individualist anxiety. In what Horkheimer and Adorno call the post-Enlightenment scientificist "disenchantment of the world" "Mystery" is moved onto a horizontal plane and articulated as something that progress will eventually eliminate. This movement toward the hegemonic acceptance of a largely "disenchanted" reality, Leo Braudy argues in his study of the novel, is manifest in the move toward the novel as the primary mode of representing selfhood. "As the order of God loses explanatory force, there arises a longing for other orders," Braudy writes.

Without providence, the longing for order can be satisfied either with progress or paranoia. Thus the main motive forces in the novel from the eighteenth-century on have been the individual's attitudes towards history, society and the outside world of others on the one hand and a sense of injured or unappreciated merit on the other. The way out of this bind, the third term, has been the creation of the work itself to stand between the isolated, unappreciated self and the distant, uncaring world. (625)

Prose narrative is the expressive medium of mundane determinism because while it retains the narrative causality of providential determinism, it translates it into an individual framework and makes that causality a function not of the cosmological Mystery, but of the mystery of the individual mind engaging its social environment from a prior and external position. The novel, with its claim to be able to articulate the individual in a way adequate to the time and expanse of his or her life, formally articulates the Protestant desire (and the capitalist need) to throw off the constraints upon

action imposed by an institutional image of social propriety while determining a proper way of living 'for one's self'. As Braudy explains, "The novel is a form without a past that tries to supplant the past, and its basic impulse has always been to replace a pattern received from authority with a pattern newly conceived by the novelist. The implied hostility to a religious framework that is contained in the early novel is thus a hostility less to God than to an imposed cosmological order that restricts individual nature" (632). The novel articulates the struggle between an individual bent on self-determination and a social milieu perceived to be determined to force that individual to articulate its self within the inherited terms of its society: *conspiracy* — hostile, secret social organization — replaces *fate* as the figure of external causality (Braudy 626).

In this the narrative mode of the novel needs only small modifications — a literalization of conspiracy, an intensification of the heroic isolation of the protagonist — to articulate paranoid self-understanding. Modern paranoid delusion, the explanatory narrative knitting together an oppressed self and a world that is no longer "distant and uncaring" but hostile, is a novelistic form, in this sense. Where the novelist creates a narcissistic vision of order centered around the individual self as a stand-in for some communally held sense of shared reality, a paranoid like Schreber takes the practice of "plotting" one step further, "re-enchanting" the disenchanted world by placing himself at the center of a cosmic "plot" and saturating his environment with a causality that is not providential but psychological. The paranoid's is an Apocalypse for one, his individuality defined by the isolation of his cosmos from that of the consensual reality of his community.

The view of the self as both commodity and owner of that commodity, charged with negotiating the value of that self-commodity within a society which is now indistinguishable from the marketplace is a realization of what C.B. Macpherson called the "possessive individualism" at the heart of liberal pluralism. For the possessive individual,

The human essence is freedom from dependence on the wills of others, and freedom is a function of possession. Society becomes a lot of free, equal individuals relating to each other as proprietors of their own capacities and of what they have acquired by their exercise.

Society consists of relations of exchange between proprietors. Political society becomes a calculated device for the protection of this property and for the maintenance of an orderly relation of exchange. (57)

Because the self-value of this commodified possessive individual (and with it the ability to evaluate objectivity) is so radically dynamic, it sets up in that individual, as the governing condition of his or her individuality, a condition of latent paranoid anxiety. That anxiety, Jameson argues, is often clumsily bound up in a self understanding founded on an explicit or implicit relation to a conspiracy that allows the emergence of figures of positive value (identity) through the provision of a ground of negative values and non-identity.

A conspiratorial narrative configuration differs from the truly paranoid configuration in that it presumes a viable collective mode of existence for the individual. It is structured around the possibility of identification with a legitimate social collectivity (radically opposed to the inevitably “corrupt” current social state) which encompasses the individual.²⁶ In the latently paranoid narrative configuration there is no such presumption of a mode of potentially uncorrupt collective existence. Conspiracy narrative draws upon the nationalist narratives which marked nineteenth and much of twentieth-century European collective identification. “Nation,” Steffan Hantke argues, was represented in Europe as a figure of collective self-identification through the creation of a collective “identity.” Nations were figured as super-individuals; they moved in the social arena of Europe and the world, they were capable of being threatened, being offended, and they possessed an inherent right to exercise power and exert authority based on their “morality” (ie. the “white man’s burden” of British imperialism).

This national individual was capable of being attacked “internally” by subversives who would weaken the integrity of the national body. This understanding of conspiracy posits a legitimate, natural, internally stratified organic collectivity (in this period of ascendent bourgeois hegemony this collectivity is usually defined on ethnic or linguistic rather than the earlier class lines) which is figured as prior to and ultimately the proper situation of the appropriate individual. However, so goes the

European nationalist conspiracy story, the organic group is imperfectly realized because of the operation of subversive aliens within the incipient state; alien elements are figured as particles of disease infecting a healthy body or bits that are inherently inassimilable to a naturally coherent collective. Most perfectly realized perhaps in the Nazi State which was constituted on the promise of isolating and purging alien elements from the natural grouping (and imitated in the post-War anti-Nazi reaction which saw, for example, the mass expulsion of German speakers from the Czech lands and Poland), this kind of narrative configuration subordinates the quest for any individual self-determination to the quest for the realization of the collective identity. Individual action that deviates from the collective quest is figured negatively, if not made a figure of antagonism: there is an opposition between a self-determining individualism and the legitimate claim of the organic collective individual.

The American model of conspiracy inverts this figural relation between the individual and the collective. As opposed to the “organic” individuality of European collective self-understanding that *incorporates* multiplicity, American self-understanding, Hantke argues, is based on a figure of monadic parts that come together to form a provisional, situational whole. Society is figurally an aggregate rather than a body. The threat to this “aggregate” individual which is presumed to be the composite of independent, prior parts is not, therefore, independent action toward individual self-determination, because individual self-determination and aggregate self-determination are equated. Problems arise when individuals — trade unionists, immigrants, communists, gangsters — are presumed to be acting in the interest of a collectivity rather than toward individual self-determination. Collectivities are figured as insidious invaders of the happy aggregation of healthy, autonomous individuals living together; the response to this collectivity (ie., the anti-trust movement or the anti-immigration laws defending against “the yellow peril” of the early twentieth-century) is figured as the defence of *everybody’s* right to *individual self-determination* in the Horatio Alger model.

The model of this defensive aggregation is the Revolutionary War militia unit; a group of

individuals recognizing a common threat from a powerful collectivity (England) who freely decide (under the rationale that one must “live free or die”) to form a provisional defensive counter-collectivity that would disperse when the enemy collectivity was banished. Because collective organizations, this story presumes, are inherently manipulative and undermine the legitimate interests of the individual, the proper social situation is the one which maximally preserves the individual's natural autonomy. The postulation of collective conspiracy helps legitimize the individual subject as a member of the “true” state, defining the subject as an individual *trying to live* in a certain way (individually) rather than simply *being* a part of a social totality. Action, what one does, is more important than existence, than who one is. Living is figured as an ideational process rather than participation in a cosmological unity. The primacy of the possessive individual is preserved and the ideal State is incorporated within that individual as a set of ideas as opposed to a series of particular relations or affiliations. The postulation of obstructionist conspiracy is structurally necessary to this definition of relation to “true” collective/State, because it allows the demonization of class-based identification which would subvert the operation of the State / marketplace. As Robert Levine argues (in Hantke, 23) collective identity is thus based on the continuing presence of a subversive threat, making American history (inasmuch as it narrates the temporal identity of a People), the story of a succession of moments of crisis.

To be American, under the crisis model, is to strip away any particularity — race, gender, ethnic or regional origin — except that of the commodified self (a self-possessing unit endowed with value (ie. marksmanship) capable of being exchanged), and join with other commodified selves within an enterprise in defence of common individuality. This collective enterprise is one strategy for imposing a certain uniformity upon a populace which is inherently heterogenous and culturally diverse; tolerating the maintenance of group identities could (and the Civil War is only the most well-defined cautionary example in this regard) lead to the destruction of the State/Market. But it also means that understanding oneself as part of a collectivity prior to the individual (ethnic

identification, for example) is the excluded initiative of Americanness under this model; allegiance to this understanding of “America” is not merely the exchange of one collective identification for another, it is the stripping away of collective identification for an identification which has, paradoxically, the individual at its centre. Collective identity and group identification becomes a sort of American uncanny, a repressed which is always threatening to return and subvert the aggregate individual self. This collectivity is figured as subversive inasmuch as it is comprised by those who ignore the rules of the free-exchange-between-individuals market (ie. criminals, organized labour, party machines, business cartels, “each a travesty of some aspect of American values [Hamilton, 26]), or by “un-Americans”: traitors, foreigners whose primary allegiance is to some group identity rather than to their American selves. In either case these people are not individuals but parts of a collectivity which is understood as having co-opted their individuality and stolen their freedom which, as a mark of their lack of virtue, was probably weakly held in the first place.

There is a contradiction in the American model of conspiracy due to the way in which it functioned alongside, but could not completely incorporate the Romantic/European model. Within the American individualist model — which, Cynthia Hamilton points out, though hegemonic at times and in certain places and social circles was, of course never the pervasive or exclusive model of self-understanding — the individual is presumed to be prior to all collective imbrication but, throughout American history, there were (and still are) many American individuals who were denied the rights of the possessive individual, people who were more possessed than self-possessing. It was not so much that there was a *right* image of social totality to which these not-quite-individuals had to defer, this logic went, it was just that some people — children, women, blacks, most native Americans, sometimes the poor — were inherently incapable of being truly *individual* in the American sense. They were not quite capable of possessive individual autonomy and therefore their interest had to be looked after, as if in trust, by those who *were* autonomous, just as a father and husband looks after his family. America was made up of free, autonomous individuals, but those

free autonomous individuals had social extension and incorporated those who were not autonomous. When problems of social stratification arose these problems were solved by subordinating the European "organic society" model to the American individualist model by *extending* the autonomous individual rather than shrinking the organic society; the head of the micro-units of American society could see themselves as organic, multi-segmented individuals much like European nations ("*l'état, c'est lui*"). The head of the American nuclear family thus became the basic figure of possessive individuality, and the primary constituent of the American aggregate model of community: people (children, slaves/coloured people, natives, the poor) subordinate to this familial head or his institutional representatives could understand themselves governed by the organic society model in which their allegiance to the whole was prior to their individual status, and their non-adherence to the model would cast them in the role of the "bad" individual, selfishly working for their own ends against the good of the collective.

This American basic or minimal individual is implicitly masculine, and, when the familial model was extended to justify the dispossession of other groups, implicitly heterosexual, white and propertied. But the attribution of this kind of individuality to only *some* of the people in the socius was inherently unstable, as the principle by which certain people are excluded or subordinated is the principle of legitimate social hierarchy, while the *principle* of possessive individualism in which individuals are inherently equal and self-possessing, does not recognize the legitimacy of social hierarchy over the individual. This contradiction was exacerbated as American production necessitated more widespread consumption and even the dispossessed were called upon to see themselves as consumers as well as workers in a productive organization. From this perspective of possessive individualism the familial model in which these marginal people had been seen as subordinated to the same kind of critique to which the possessive individualist model had subjected other models of organic social governance, using its own ready-made discourses of individual emancipation to cast it as an instance of corrupt collectivity interfering in exchange-defined

autonomy. As women and blacks, for example, began to participate in the exchange economy as consumers of commodities, they began to see themselves as proprietary individuals, no longer owned or incorporated by another, but as consumers and producers in their own right, able to participate in the aggregate as possessive individuals, making institutional reform — justified in the language of “human rights” — almost inevitable, if still tremendously painful.

The pressure of the commodity which legitimated the American individualist model of conspiratorial collective identification *de*-legitimated the uneasily subordinated European model, and exposed its own inherent contradiction. That is, while consumption prefers (interpellates) isolated, individualized subjects, but production requires conglomeration, hierarchy and subordination if capital is to emerge from the discrepancy between labour value and exchange value. As the consumerist logic of commodification began to predominate the model of social subordination which had provided the legitimate figure for the subordination necessary to capitalist production began to break down. This left the possessive individual in the uneasy situation of finding him or herself working in an organization which subordinates his or her self to the interests of production, but, without a legitimate image in the public sphere with which to rationalize that subordination, powerless *not* to accept a kind of participation in social mechanisms of production that could not be legitimated. Autonomous individuals in the consumer nexus, people were uncomfortable with the inequality they experienced as workers in their productive function. The alienation inherent to the possessive individual inherent in his or her existence as producer could no longer be contained in the familial model. With the increasing hegemony of the logic of the commodity came the collapse of the collective conspiratorial model (whether the organic or aggregate images of collectivity) into an individual conspiratorial model (in which the individual rejects all form of legitimate collective existence) and the emergence of what Jameson and Lacan, from within slightly different if overlapping theoretical frameworks, identify above as a situation of latent general paranoia.

For Jameson, after the Second World War, in America hegemonic possessive individualism

created a social organization of contiguous blocks organized around the individual or isolated family unit, suspended in an increasingly decaying and decentralized public sphere (Political 127). There was no sense of social totality except that provided by a communality of consumption. Only the market provides an image of totality, but that image is not capable of being understood as the expression of a single coherent personality or will; it has no figure of organic unity or stable value. Things which are very different find their translation only in terms of their status as a commodity, they are "transcoded" (Postmodern 195-212), articulated on a plane in which their differences are annihilated except as they can be expressed in terms of exchange value. Things have the odd ability to *mean*, without being able to *matter*. There is a sense (engendered both by the inherently mystified status of the commodity that Marx wrote of and of the commodity's provision of meaning without Mind) of a universal superficiality to the world, a sense that the *real* nature of things has been lost. Narratively then, this culture needs a figure who can move through this "structurally" causal world (where the reason for things having the values they do are determined as functions of complex systems rather than individual intentions) and provide some form of "expressively" (unitarily intentional) causal narrative order, even if it is in the radically shrunken form of the simple continuity of a character moving episodically through the landscape, narrative coherence provided simply by the investigative stance even if that stance does not generate the narrative closure it implies (Political 129).

The simple act of figuring the operation of conspiracy behind the superficial surface of commodified culture invokes a sort of heroic individuality and antagonist expressive causality which is enough to sustain a kind of coherent narrativity. As Patrick O'Donnell writes,

Within the realm of the obvious, saturated by information overload, the paranoid subject [of American commodity culture] is disempowered by virtue of the all-encompassing plots and systems that surround her but, paradoxically, she is empowered as one in a growing army capable of reading the signs of these plots and power relations, not to resist or escape them but to formulate an ironic, streetwise attitude towards them. One knows she is part of a series of orchestrated events over which she has no control, but knowing it confers a kind of legitimacy upon the knower. (191)

My consideration of the hard-boiled detective will examine him in this light; as a figure who seeks limited, defensive control through knowledge, and uses that almost powerless act of knowing as the basis of subjective self-integration, and the ground for a claim to a minimally “masculine” kind of romantic agency.

In the next chapter we will examine the ways in which this model of possessive, competitive individualism works its way through Schreber, who seeks to protect his masculinity (and with it his individual autonomy) from an emasculating and obscure God, and through Freud, in whose model of a psyche composed of warring individual forces Schreber’s paranoia is explained.

2) Freud and Schreber:

sexing paranoia.

“We will show that there is a genetic relation between [Schreber’s] transformation into a woman and his favoured relation to God.”

(Sigmund Freud 12: 44)

Foucault’s Madness and Civilization postulates that while there has always been madness — divergence from culturally legitimate ways of thinking and behaving — its cultural “meanings” and institutional response vary widely, and that the different understandings of madness index broad cultural shifts. Paranoia, as the previous section suggested, is associated with a way of understanding one’s relation to the world that is framed within the subjective possibilities of Western modernity, which is in turn imbricated in patterns of social and economic organization.²⁷ In this chapter I will narrow the focus to consider the way in which paranoia is theorized by and provides a platform for interrogating the work of one of the seminal thinkers of modernity: Sigmund Freud.

This study addresses Freud’s work at the level of metapsychology, that “Witch” (23: 225) to whom Freud feels he is forced to turn when he feels unable to confidently draw conclusions from observation and rigorous analysis. And like the witch to whom Freud alludes — the untrustworthy, treacherous power in Goethe’s Faust that offers the possibility of knowledge inaccessible to Faust’s rationality and scientific method — Freud recognizes, early and often, that metapsychology — the realm of abstracted explanations for psychoanalytical observations, the realm of the grand narratives which make psychoanalysis coherent — cannot be a realm of confident psychoanalytical assertion, but is a treacherous realm of “speculation” and “theorizing” (see “Analysis” 23: 225). Freud disclaims the philosophical implications of his work. “Even when I have moved away from observation,” he writes, “I have carefully avoided any contact with philosophy proper. This avoidance has been greatly facilitated by constitutional incapacity”

(“Autobiographical” 20: 59). For Freud psychoanalysis is not primarily a *theory* of the human psyche, but as a *method* of dealing with specific cases of human psychological disturbance. The abstract models of human psychology, the intricate systems of interlinked concepts: these are not the end of his thought or practice, but inevitable connecting tissue which facilitated his end of better understanding particular, case-derived instances of human psychic phenomena. The transition from observation to explanation, Freud understood, involved dallying with narrative and abstract thought; two pressures that Freud worried had the potential to imperceptibly shape (rather than take shape from) his observational data. However, as Simone de Beauvoir points out, these disclaimers do not negate the need to formulate Freud’s thought within a coherent, abstract “system” when using it to understand phenomena discrete from the cases which spawned his original observations. “Not being a philosopher, Freud has refused to justify his system philosophically,” Beauvoir writes, “and his disciples maintain that on this account he is exempt from all metaphysical attack. There are metaphysical assumptions behind all his dicta, however, and to use his language is to adopt a philosophy” (39).²⁸

This study will begin with the assumption that his worries were founded, but that his work’s relative fall from abstract descriptive verisimilitude is a fortunate one that allows a peek into the way in which the relation of gender to thought and action are organized both in Freud and the culture in which he was immersed. Freud’s develops a model of self-understanding which centrally addresses the problematic relation of sexuality to thought, behaviour and narrative self-conceptualization, a model which is both informed by and provides insight into the narratives of the culture shared by he and his analysands. After a broad discussion of the historical contexts of Freud’s thought with relation to the notion of paranoia, I look more closely at the narrative in which Freud found a correlate to his already-developed theory of the mechanism and psychogenesis of paranoia.²⁹ For Freud, paranoid delusion is part of an attempt to recover the integrity of an ego riven by the irruption of repressed homosexual libido. Paranoia, for Freud, is a psychic structure of homosexual

denial. In Schreber's delusion his characteristically paranoid hyper-suspicious response to a generalized anxiety was placed within a story of pervasive threat to a "masculine" self via an antagonistic campaign against the male body. To Schreber's sexualized figuration of paranoia Freud was able to affix a psychoanalytic metanarrative, expressing the events of Schreber's madness in terms taken from Freud's own story of the development of the individual psyche. The congruence of the relation between interpretive autism, highly rationalized delusion formation and sexual anxiety in both these stories, I argue in this chapter, has less to do with the truth of Freudian psychoanalysis than with the imbrication of the way these highly acculturated men (Freud and Schreber) understood themselves as "men" in the informing narratives of their culture. My argument then, will proceed by stepping back from Schreber to a broad consideration of the historical contexts of Freud's thought in their relation to paranoia, before moving back to a close examination of the terms of Freudian psychoanalysis that frame his understanding of Schreber's paranoia.

- **Modernity, paranoia and the phylogenic development of Freud's psyche.**

Freud's conception of paranoia can better be understood in context of the broader narratives underlying his thought. For Freud, self-understanding was not static or ahistorical, but a reflection of the cultural development of the individual's society. At the stage of cultural development associated by Freud with emergent modernity a subject that Freudian theorist Philip Rieff calls "psychological man" emerges. This subject is characterized by the increasing autonomy and self awareness of the *ego*, and it recognizes that its only available form of truth is the truth of its own nature, the truth of the shaping function of its unconscious and superconscious processes expressed as deformations in the narratives with which the ego understands its place in the world.

Though the "I" can never be where the "it" was, Freud offered psychoanalysis as a way of at least *manage* and neutralize the threat of what cannot be known.³⁰ Beginning with the certainty that the knowable experience of existence is necessarily deceptive, psychoanalysis offers a way of confronting the limitations of one's own knowledge, thereby reducing the anxiety associated with the individual's inevitable failure to meet the cultural expectation of rational, self-determining subjective autonomy. It thus sets up the conditions for individual intellectual *defence*, if not knowledge, and offers psychological man a kind of substitute for reliable objective knowledge in the form of self-awareness. One may not be able to know, but at least one is not deceived into the belief that one *can* know.

The emergence of the cultural prevalence of psychological man is an ambivalent phenomenon for Rieff. On the one hand, he writes, "I too aspire to think without assent ... I too share in the modern desire not to be deceived," but he recognizes that this aspiration is "the ultimate violence to which the modern intellectual is committed" (13). The desire not to be deceived is inherent to "psychological man," and it does unleash a form of *cultural* violence by undermining the faith that legitimates the hierarchical organization of social collectives. The cultural effect of this psychological man on the organization of society is therefore undetermined, and it is impossible to know, in Rieff's view, "whether our culture can be so reconstructed that faith — some compelling symbolic of self integrating communal purpose — need no longer superintend the organization of personality" (5).³¹

The recognition of the inescapable *deceptiveness* of knowledge informs Freud's notorious remark that there may be as much truth in Schreber's paranoid delusions as in his own theories. The "truth" of Schreber's delusions, like the truth of psychoanalysis, is a function of the ability to construct models of reality that allow the maintenance of a relatively functional subjectivity. Unlike Nietzsche or Marx's subject, the Freudian ego's zone of self-awareness and interpretation *protects* rather than restricts, oppresses or restrains the activity of the individual. The subject is not

something the theoretical apparatus of psychoanalysis positions itself as helping *overcome* like Nietzsche or Marx.³² On the contrary, psychoanalysis and its application — psychotherapeutics — sets itself up as a means for the subject to be reinforced, its "truth" in its health and functionality rather than in some accord with a transcendent *logos*. No such residue of the embattled "true" self trying to be free of its subjective shackles popularly associated with Romanticism remains in Freud, for whom the ego is an embattled, tenuous and fragile protective mechanism powered by forces it cannot understand, doomed to negotiate inevitably insufficient relations to a fundamentally hostile and profoundly alien, in assimilable world. Knowledge *is* shaped in accordance with this subject, but that represents less a fall into the prison of subjectivity, than the functional necessity of an ego which needs meaning to work in its world. The ego's conscious, narratively articulated integrity represents a victory over the always-present possibilities of subjective non-function and the psychotic loss of meaning-formation ability.

As Carl Freedman writes, Freud established that "Paranoia ... is no mere aberration but is structurally crucial to the way that we, as ordinary subjects of bourgeois hegemony, represent ourselves to ourselves and embark on the Cartesian project of acquiring empiricist knowledge" (17). Paranoia is a latent precondition of the Freudian ego, but that ego — the central character in the self-world narratives of the Freudian psyche — is itself a historical product; the Freudian ego and its paranoid substructure are mutually situated and essentially linked historically, as Freedman's invocation of post-Cartesian rationality suggests. John Farrell brings out this duality in his study of Freud. Freud, Farrell writes,

believed that the modern susceptibility to neurosis and paranoia could be explained as a side-effect of the process of secularization that began with the scientific discoveries of early modernity. Paranoia, in his view was a psychological substitute for religion. The energies that had once been directed into the great collective ideologies of the past, into traditional religious and political culture, had suffered in the Enlightenment and its aftermath the fate of a private immolation, leading to neurosis, or of a perverted comical expression in suspicious megalomania... [T]his was the price that some of the vulnerable natures among us had to pay for being modern. (3)

With the collapse of the legitimate public sphere governed by religion, the self, in a sense, fell in upon itself. In the "private immolation" of the social self, the individual emerged as the primary unit of cosmic orientation. That power to order which had formerly been postulated as the agency of an external, cosmic entity was made an attribute of the individual, and the social realm previously governed by that cosmic entity was effaced. The individual had a social dimension, but it was secondary to his existence as an individual. This primary individual needed to find a way to understand its relation to the universe without the taint of some "collective ideology" which insisted that both he and the perceived universe were secondary to another entity.

Science for Freud, offered such a way of understanding. It provided access to a reality in which this self-determining individual could orient him or herself inasmuch as it explicitly replaced myth ("collective ideology") with impersonal and inanimate "method." As Freud explains in his relatively early "Psychopathology of Everyday Life," the essential difference between the "superstitious" person and the "scientific" person (Freud himself) lays in the fact that he "believe[s] in external chance... but not in internal accidental events," while "[w]ith the superstitions person it is the other way round." The superstitious person "projects outwards a motivation which I look for within, [and] he interprets chance as due to an event, while I trace it back to a thought. But what is hidden from him corresponds to what is unconscious for me and the compulsion not to let chance count as chance but to interpret it is common to both of us" (6: 137). Freud expands this hypothesis: "In point of fact" he writes, "I believe that a large part of the mythological world view which extends a long way into the most modern religions, is nothing but psychology projected into the external world" (6: 137). Freud then connects this collective superstition (animism, "the mythological world view"), with paranoia, noting that just as the paranoid delusion is a displaced representation of psychic processes, so too is superstition, which is subject to the same kind of scientific correction. He writes:

The obscure recognition of psychical factors and relations in the unconscious is mirrored —

it is difficult to express it in other terms, and here the analogy with paranoia must come to our aid—in the construction of a supernatural reality, which is destined to be changed back once more by science into the psychology of the unconscious. One could venture to explain in this way the myths of paradise and the fall of man, of God, of good and evil, of immortality and so on and to transform metaphysics into metapsychology. The gap between the paranoiac's displacement and that of the superstitious person is less wide than it appears at first sight. (6: 138)

“It is well known,” Freud suggests, that primitive human beings anthropomorphized and rationalized external events within coherent narratives that organized their relation to their world. “They behaved, therefore,” Freud continues, “just like paranoiacs who draw conclusions from insignificant signs given them by other people, and just like all normal people who quite rightly base their estimate of their neighbours' characters on their chance and unintended actions. It is only in our modern, scientific by as yet by no means perfected *weltanschauung* that superstition seems so very much out of place; in the *weltanschauung* of prescientific peoples it was consistent and justified” (6: 259).

The scientific self, of which Freud sees himself the exemplar, drains the cosmos of unitary causality (chance is no longer externalized as Fate), replacing it with a heroic individualism which cannot understand itself as such, for understanding one's self within a narrative that has a “vertical” as well as a horizontal “dimension” has been rendered illegitimate, or at least “irrational.” In this scientificist view paranoia is merely the individual irruption of the same narcissistic need to externalize fear and desire through projection that generated the cultural forms of religion and superstition. But, like the paranoid's heroism which seeks protective knowledge in a hostile universe, the heroism of the post-superstitious man is understood in these Romantic terms of the isolated individual rising through individual ethical action above the environment; its protagonist must face the void of a Godless universe and, in so doing, to understand the dark nature of the self. With the decline of “superstition,” *neurosis* emerges a new way mode of existence for the vast bulk of people, particularly the emergent middle class, who tend to be neither superstitiously religious nor

heroically rationalist. Neurosis is a sort of inarticulate and individualized way of responding to the sense that even a Godless universe seems to retain a purposefulness, if only in the paradoxical combination of malignancy and incomprehensibility. Always able to find a dark side, Freud points out that neurosis rather than an increase in individual self-awareness — fear rather than freedom — was the legacy of the decline of superstition.

As we will explore in more detail below, for Freud, social history recapitulates the movement of individual psychological development, progressing from the pleasure principle and narcissism characteristic of cultural formations based on an animist understanding of the world to the reality principle and self-consciousness which characterize a culture that presumes the legitimacy of the scientific universe. Establishing a pattern that would be inscribed in a kind of "race memory" and would shape the development of each ensuing individual (as the Oedipus complex), Freud postulates that at some point in the distant past, social governance must have moved from that centered around a central, completely powerful individual to a form characterized by social power diffused among some governing collective. The event that facilitated this move, for Freud, was the collective murder of the Father by his "sons," after which they divided his power among themselves. After the primal patricide, however, the murdered father was reconstituted culturally as God, the mythic protagonist of a hegemonic social narrative. The agent of that reconstitution in the society descended from the patricidal fraternity was the epic poet who, in heroic myth, recovered and arrogated to himself some of the awe associated with the primal father by recording the father myth. Forming a story knitting together the individual to the social through the accepted representation of the absent Father who previously provided an organic link between selves, society and the world, became a mode of both satisfying individual Oedipal desire and attaining cultural power through the appropriation of the power to represent the forms of cultural legitimacy. For Freud, after religion has institutionalized and decayed, its epic poets superseded by priests and then despots, humanity moves toward a vision of the universe in which the deposed father is even more sublimated, less

able to humanize a frightening world and less able to support institutions capable of partially assuaging that anxiety by providing stories that can successfully appropriate his authority to knit together self, society and world.

For Freud, Farrell argues, the scientist is the epic poet of this new, harder, truer vision, and the scientific hero — the psychoanalyst — follows from the epic poet as the successor (and even more successful assimilator) of the primal father. But, for Farrell's Freud, unlike the epic poet who detached himself but reintegrated the society around a new myth of fatherdom, the scientist detaches but promotes that ascetic detachment as an ethical model based around individual self-awareness rather than social integration. He denies the reality of the Father image even while eliding his own assimilation of paternal legitimacy to back the authority of that denial. Having *internalized* the father, the scientist no longer recognizes an inherent kinship with either his world or his society. This is his burden and his truth; behind the apparent structure of the universe there is no underlying duality, no point of abstract convergence to fix and locate the singularity of the individual. There is only structure upon and within structure, a fact which is radically disturbing to the ego's attempts to maintain itself as a locus of unity, integrity and consistency. Within the narrative configuration of Freudian scientific truth the restitution of a figure of ultimate coherence is a regression, a mark of the incomplete renunciation of primal narcissism. And, because primal narcissism can never be perfectly renounced, the sublimated effect of that narcissism's uneasy Oedipalization is, for Freud, a culture of suspicion; even the epistemophilia of the scientist is inevitably accompanied by a fear of *not* knowing,³³ by the sneaky feeling that there is something dangerous behind the benign appearance of things. The scientist may have assimilated and repressed the archaic image of the Father, but the scientific universe is permeated with a sense of the uncanny, a sense that the universe is imbued with an unintelligible intelligence which is as yet inaccessible to the tools of science. The scientific *episteme* did not produce a culture of suspicion, but it provided the means to articulate cultural shifts in narrative legitimation, shifts which, in Farrell's probably overly positivist reading of Freud, indicate

the "maturing" of human society.³⁴

Freud's scientist, Farrell points out, is not paranoid; he does not project from his conflicted psyche an order onto the universe, but neither does he allow the disorder inherent in that universe to impose itself upon his ego and bring about subjective dissolution. Instead, he brackets his psychic projection (his narcissism), and, free from the image of his self distorting his perception of his surroundings, is able to venture out into his surroundings to see things as they "are," not with his eyes, but with things which are tainted neither with the narcissistic logic of the psyche or the unknown structure of the universe: method and *techné*. The scientist does not need to reinstitute in the universe a controlling figure to orient himself. He has the power to orient himself through his supremely controlled gaze which looks upon the world without presumption or projection, unafraid of the inanimacy of the object he perceives because it is that inanimacy which enables his romantic heroism. It is the object to his subject, his frontier, his wilderness, and he will venture into it alone and unafraid, armed with the powerful weapons of scientific method. And like the romantic hero, he will come and come back carrying truth and a somber wisdom that his community will never understand, a dark knowledge that will mark his exclusion from the world of men.

This exclusion from "normal" humanity enabled by the romantic articulation of the scientific narrative allowed the methodological basis for a generalized ambient paranoia because it took the social world as the same kind of object as the natural world: as a set of phenomena from which the scientist was distinct and toward which he could assume a relation of specular objectivity. And when the scientificist model was turned upon *human* and not just *physical* phenomena it found there something to legitimate a culture of suspicion. It found in the workings of collective organization a set of interests which did not coincide with the interests of the emergent primary individual. If science finds the physical universe godless, its application to human phenomena found the demon of what would come to be known as ideology.

Unlike the objective world, phenomena apprehended by the human sciences could not be

seen as inherently inanimate, but neither could they be seen entirely as the product of individual intention or conscious will (like that which motivated the analytical action of the scientist observing them). Though human collective phenomena could not be seen as entirely mechanical and was not *inanimate*, it was certainly *differently* animate. This form of causality external and fundamentally incomprehensible to the individual subject — whether figured as the product of our animal nature or of a collective mind — allowed the restitution of the external agency so necessary to paranoid thought within the narrative configuration of the scientific model. The world, within this narrative configuration, was a mechanical object to be seen and understood. God was dead. But *people* in their collective forms, were motivated in ways that were mysterious to the individual and were subject to imperceptible manipulation by those who understood the workings of the group mind. The scientific or philosophical task is to recolonise for individual knowledge the world which lies uncovered under the tatters of various fanciful cultural stories. It is anxious but exhilarating work, couched in a narrative of triumphant romanticism which figures the scientist as domesticator, making the strange and formerly hidden world safe for (and exploitable by) the rational mind. However, if rationality was itself imperceptibly colonized, if the vision of the scientist himself was idiosyncratic, this model collapses.

For Freud, it would seem, the Freudian psychoanalyst and the paranoid are two figures that squarely confront this unsettling fact, though the one does it heroically, while the other seeks refuge in a delusional image of heroism. The truly non-heroic figure in this arrangement is the Freudian subject, that troubled neurotic who, incapable of achieving true scientificist and virtually disembodied masculine identity (in the sense of being unable to successfully identify with the culturally hegemonic image of the deposed Father) while held back by his “sanity” from refuge within a psychotic, paranoid version of fully corporeal masculinity, wants only to construct a structure of illusion adequate to his or her social functionality and to the alleviation of the more troubling aspects of their neuroses.

If there is a hero at all in Freud's work, as John Farrell points out, it is the analyst, himself fallible but at least striving to help the individual evade the violence of the unknowable libidinal conflicts that rive his or her psyche.³⁵ There is a tendency in much of Freud's work to figure the analyst and his method — psycho-analysis — as defenders of the *ego*, his quest figured in terms quite understandable to a member of the European bourgeoisie: the therapist seeks to tame the dark realms of instinct to pave the way for its colonization by the ego (opening up there, in a version of the white man's burden, a realm of relative autonomy, rationality, and free choice), but also to fend off the rather aristocratic violence residing in the shadowy ether of conscience which is able to punish and wound deeply at its own capricious will. But as much of Freud's later work such as "Civilization and its Discontents" (1930) and "Why War?" (1933) illustrate, therapy in defence of the Oedipalized subject may simply have the result of displacing the aggressivity of the id or superego which oppresses the ego elsewhere, with unfortunate results. As well, in "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" (1937) and "Constructions in Analysis" (1937) Freud very clearly indicates the parameters, limits and fallibility of psycho-analytic therapy. For the later Freud, then, the idea of the cure could not be associated with facilitating the subject to live in the unalienated truth of the scientist or analyst (as was Lacan's existentialist-influenced therapeutic end). On the contrary, for Freud, the end of the therapist was to recognize the inevitability of ignorance, and to repair the integrity and functionality of the subject's enabling delusion. Unfortunately, this option was not open to the therapist him or herself. The analyst, in Farrell's reading of Freud, cannot believe that one delusion is more truthful than the other, even his own, though he may think of himself in the vanguard of historical progress toward a condition of relative scientific truth. Instead, he accepts the hollow satisfactions granted by a self-conscious structure of delusion (however, "scientific") passing for understanding which is *known* to be misrepresentative and which is *expected* to be regularly and unintelligibly torn by conflict and pain. A form of ethical truth is available to the analyst through suffering, renunciation of illusion and sheer persistence at his work in the world even after the final

end of that work is known to be illusory. The analyst works in the world in order to further the happiness of other individuals, but if he is to be able to achieve the insight necessary to the effectiveness of his work he must, in a sense renounce the illusion he seeks to shore up in others.

The paranoid is the *faux* heroic figure in this conception of reality: he faces the same spectre of a world clothed and obscured by its cultural representations, but instead of positing an inanimate objectivity underneath those representations, he or she posits an animate substrate which inheres in the very fabric of the world's social representation and which, in its antagonistic potential, reinforces the masculinity of his active self and its primary need to maintain control over his equally masculine body. The apparent world, for the paranoid, is a simulation. Though seemingly human and meaningful its true order is inaccessible to the individual for its logic is the product of collectivity: of "Them." This logic is at once influenced by a transcendent intelligence — "They" are exceedingly devious and subtle — but exceeding it, incorporating as well the incomprehensible and brutal "intelligence" of the mob — this "They," (often described using figures of the worst aspects of upper and lower classes to express the double nature of "their" alterity) have no respect for individual life or liberty.³⁶ "Their" logic cannot be conceptualized or narratively articulated simply by making it a function of a unitary hidden causer; it is *collective*, both more and less than "human"/individual, and this fundamental alterity is responsible for the persistent "They" structure of Norman Cameron's "paranoid pseudocommunity."³⁷ Armed with this outline of the relation between psychoanalysis, "the modern mind" and the structures of paranoiac thought, we turn now to a description of Schreber's narrative and consider the way in these basic patterns emerge as distinct and psychotic figures only to be recovered with their integration into the patterns of representation that underlie Freud's own thought.

- **Schreber's Memoirs of my Nervous Illness and the sex of Freudian paranoia.**

The memoirs of late-nineteenth-century Dresden judge Daniel Paul Schreber explain his belief that he was chosen by God to redeem the world, and that the process of redemption involves his physical transformation into a woman (see Schreber's Memoirs, and Freud's paraphrase of those memoirs in "Psychoanalytic Notes Upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (*Dementia Paranoides*)," ["The Schreber Case"] 22: 12-34). In 1911, with reference to these memoirs, Sigmund Freud wrote his most precise analysis of the mechanisms of paranoia. Long before he developed his delusional system, Freud notices, Schreber remarks that he once had the half-awake sense that the female part in heterosexual coitus must be extremely pleasurable, a feeling Schreber insists that he would have angrily rejected had he been fully awake. Later he began to have the sense that his body was subject to malignant forces; that it was dead and decomposing, or that it was being handled in obscure ways by unknown powers. These feelings were quite disturbing to Schreber, and interfered considerably in his social functioning. Gradually, Freud argues, an explanatory system developed in Schreber which was able to account for these feelings. This delusional structure — though incredibly complex and bizarre — had the effect of containing his anxiety about his body and his sexuality well enough that his social functioning was largely restored.

Schreber develops a story in which his anxiety could be understood as the result of a complex confrontation between himself and, at first, the "soul" of his physician Dr. Flechsig, which turns out to be part of or working with an odd, multi-faceted entity known as "God." This God wants both to use Schreber physically as His wife and to stand in the way of Schreber's redemption of the universe; He wants both to rape Schreber and to murder his soul. Schreber finds this situation extremely uncomfortable because God is such a powerful antagonist, but Schreber draws the strength to resist from his own greater cosmic centrality and fundamental accordance with the order of the universe. Unlike Schreber, God is simply not in line with the cosmic order (which includes living humans) and is really only "a God of corpses," a God who only knows things after

they die. This partial knowledge and correlate cosmic marginality on God's part leads Him to make rather silly misjudgments and mistakes in dealing with the wily Schreber. Schreber does not want to become a woman but it is inevitable that he should; not only can he not effectively resist the God-rays which are physically transforming him into a woman, he knows (and God does not) that the transformation will allow him to defeat God and allow him to act as the agent of human redemption. Schreber can feel the physical transformation of his body slowly taking place, and occasionally feels that he possesses manifest or incipient female genitalia. When he pictures himself mentally he sees female body parts and frequently just *knows* and *feels* that those parts are there. Schreber is ambivalent about this transformation; on the one hand it is an affront to his human dignity. It is, he feels, an indignity to give up his honourable, respected masculinity to be a woman (and some of the more mocking voices of God remind him of this constantly) but he accepts its inevitability as part of his super-human destiny, taking some solace in the great degree of voluptuousness and erotic sensation granted him by his developing female body.

With his developing femaleness his apprehension of his environment changes. He begins to feel an intense sympathy with the things of the universe; the souls of the rocks and trees can communicate with him, quite to the displeasure of his antagonist(s) the mocking (somehow unitary but internally heteroglotic, stratified and fractured) God of dead objects. God resents Schreber's developing power and interferes (clumsily, because He has no direct experience with bodies and only indirect experience even with corpses) with the functioning of Schreber's body. God enjoys subjecting Schreber to corporeal indignities such as preventing Schreber from defecating properly, "calling" him to defecate but then arranging that something goes wrong, that the lavatory is occupied, there is no fecal matter to expel, or that the faeces emerge in embarrassingly improper ways. This corporeal interference is understood as an attempt by God to demean Schreber, as part of the same campaign of humiliation as God's replacement of Schreber's self-possessed masculinity with an inherently submissive femininity. God's feminizing of Schreber is understood as an act

meant to signify personal and social degradation analogous to the degradingly childish inability to control one's bowel functions.

In Schreber's story then the masculine self understands its relation to the world in a primarily intellectual fashion and participates in the public sphere. His agency is outward directed, presumes a stable, instrumental body with which to apprehend the objective world. The feminine (or becoming-feminine) self, encountered by Schreber in moments of privacy (at home, in the bathroom, gazing at himself in front of the mirror), is primarily empathetic and emerges to full apprehension in moments of marginal or liminal consciousness, in moments of reverie, on the edge of sleep, in daydream. These are the moments, also, when Schreber is most prone to hear God's mocking voices, and fights these voices with an explicit invocation of rational faculties, what he calls "compulsive thinking." God works to feminize Schreber in his feminine moments: in his sleep and when he has his guard down. God confuses Schreber with powerful sensations of "voluptuousness," God attacks Schreber by blurring the lines between reality and desire and by secretly hermaphroditizing his body, undermining its ability to support Schreber's claims to true masculinity. Supported by the confidence given him by his knowledge of his own public status as a man who commands respect and veneration, Schreber resists God and defends his masculinity in his most "masculine" moments and with the tools of his "masculinity": his robust rationality analyzes God's motives, actions and probable strategies with relation to His grand plan and the inexorable progression of the temporal universe towards some kind of conclusion (all carefully articulated and expressed in detail within a complex narrative); his powerful intellect helps survey the terrain of battle, charting God's complex nature and mapping out the true contours of the cosmic battleground.

- **individual development and the Freudian psyche: narcissism.**

For Freud there is an integral relationship between Schreber's feeling of occupying a sexually unstable body and his paranoia, a relationship explained with reference to what Freud calls narcissism. While essential to his thought as a whole, few concepts in Freud's conceptual oeuvre are as suggestive and troubled as this one. For Freud, in a definition which was soon recognized to mask the complexities of the self-object relation, narcissism is the condition of "taking [one's] self, [one's] own body, as [one's] love object" ("Schreber," 12: 60),³⁸ or, more succinctly, of taking one's own body as an object of sexual satisfaction ("On Narcissism" 14: 69). Referring to adults, it designates the tendency to invest an abnormal amount of libidinal energy in their own selves, but it also refers to a childhood period of psychic development characterized by the primacy of this type of libidinal investment. In Freud's developmental scheme (paraphrased here from its articulation in "Schreber" [12: 59-60]), at first libidinal energy is "auto-erotic," it takes its own body as its object without having to recognize that body *as* an object. With the recognition of objects separate from itself, the psyche is forced to relegate libidinal flow between the newly understood object which is its own body, the slightly different thing which is its "self" (the site of recognition of objects and bodies: to take oneself as love object implies this difference) and the objects which are neither body nor self.

In his later work, Freud draws increasingly elaborate analogies between this individual original narcissism and the "omnipotence of thought" which characterizes primitive (animistic) human religious organization.³⁹ It is the stage, whether individually or socially, in which desires and fears shape perception and conceptualization of the external environment. The environment, in this stage, has a strange affinity to the human (proto)subject, pliable in strange and magical ways to human wishes and fears. At this stage objects are not understood in terms of their complex differentiation, but in their affective or imagistic relation to images of the self; their apprehension is shaped by the way that their encounter offers pleasure or displeasure and as such cathects desire or anxiety. Late in his career, Freud will elaborate on suggestions that narcissism channels an original

aggressivity, which, after the abandonment of the Oedipus complex, becomes manifest in a punishing aggressivity in the self or in others toward those attributes which do not correspond with the ego-ideal.

When the child goes through the Oedipus complex, in which he or she (and though Freud speaks of an Oedipal wound to female narcissism ["Anatomical Distinction," 19: 253], to the very end he expressed a lack of confidence in his articulation of the way in which femininity is produced in the process of Oedipalization) is forced to realize that they are subordinate latecomers to a world which is profoundly *not* like themselves in any intuitive way, but which they can feel a part of through participation in complex social/familial institutions. The individual's understanding of his or her self as a part of a group suppresses, or at least sublimates this primary aggressivity of narcissism.⁴⁰ Original narcissism does not disappear after Oedipalization, but is partially renounced, sublimated within other structures of self-object relations. The Oedipus complex grants the recognition that the ego is not perfect or omnipotent, but the narcissistic feeling does not disappear. Rather, it mutates, setting up a realm of desire and approbation, a set of ego-idealizations which is the "heir" to original narcissism. Paul Ornstein paraphrases Freud:

because of his own awakening critical judgement, the growing child can no longer retain the image of his actual ego as perfect. He seeks to recover this lost perfection in his ego ideal; this absorbs and binds a considerable amount of his narcissistic and homosexual libido -- which is thus turned back onto his ego, enriching it once more. Henceforth his satisfactions will come from living up to this ideal. The agency of "conscience" will measure the distance between the actual ego and the ego ideal and will see to it that living up to the ego ideal will afford the needed satisfaction... The satisfaction will come from heightened self regard... (177)⁴¹

But not all of the libidinal energy so rudely torn from its narcissistic tendency by the Oedipus complex goes into the socialization of the ego; a great deal of it is channeled into creative and intellectual activity because creativity and intellectual activity provide a way for the banished narcissism to make the world something the self can identify with and, through that identification, love as an extension of the self. The Oedipalized post-narcissist still seeks to love his self, but he is

forced to find that "self" to be loved *in the external world*, even if that means forging some form of personal relation with that world through the acceptance, mastery and internalization of its profoundly alien institutions, histories and logics (such as are provided by religion). Oedipalization changes narcissistic libido into the profound need to construct in the world a home for the self -- whether through actually physically intervening in the world or simply by building an "understanding" of the world -- by developing the intellectual structures necessary to alleviate the sense of alienation and make the world seem a place in which the self can recognize its appropriateness.⁴² Creativity, activity beyond what is justified in the provision of life's essentials for Freud, is, like thought itself, a neurotic symptom of a narcissistic libido banished by the Oedipus complex into a strange, hostile world. If that creativity is idiosyncratic, it can be understood as art;⁴³ if it is egoistic and morally masochistic, as religion; and if it is neurotic or collectively neurotic as either individual paranoia or as science, though the latter is a far more sublimated narcissistic form.⁴⁴ In either case, narcissism's neuroses tend to work toward (individual or collective) ego-centrality through the formation of intellectualized representations of the external environment.

For Freud original or unrenounced narcissism is profoundly *un*-creative, for if the proto-ego just *finds* an inherent identificatory relation between itself and his environment, if it just *accepts* that it and the world are basically the same stuff and have a basic accord which allows it to see versions of itself in everything, then it doesn't really have to *do* anything in that world. The world doesn't need changing, investigating or altering. The world is not really even an *it*; it is another part of the proto-ego's extended self, and as such, is not even distinct enough to be thought about as an object thrown across a transitive verb from its subject. With the intervention of an alien and prior third party (the Father, in a pattern that would find its story shape in "the Family Romance") the proto-ego is forced to realize that the truth of things lies outside of itself and the proto-objects it sensed. Like the third party, and knowable to and through the third party, those objects have natures in themselves resistant to its ability to identify with them. The newly Oedipalized ego is adrift in an

alien environment, its identificatory relations undermined. There are two mutually presumptive ways back "home." Though Freud never used this terminology, they are what might be called the way of *ethos* (identify with the Father and one gains access to the intellectual patterns which will allow knowledge of the world), and the way of *logos* and *praxis* (work to reconstruct for one's self relations like those the Father enjoys). These two ways which are present in varying degrees in the ego's self-understanding indicate the imbrication of identification with the intellectual re-appropriation of the Other's *cosmos*.

Original narcissism is thus mortally wounded with the inevitable realization that the world of its desire is illusory, but the anxiety engendered by that desire motivates the activity to recover or reconstruct as much as possible a world which can fill in for that illusion. Though Freud realizes that while morality is masochistic and that creativity is essentially the activity of forming and supporting delusions of one sort or another (either the result of individual or collective religious or scientific neurosis), he also realizes that this renounced narcissistic libido is the stuff from which human endeavour is formed, the limiting function of morality also the source of the will to participate in communal structures and the restless will to form delusions. As the source of our ability to recognize beauty and work toward a better world, it is not a large jump to recognize that the "delusions" in which these desires and their opposites find narrative figuration tend, in contemporary social organizations to be articulated in Romantic narrative forms which express antagonistic oscillation between worlds of desire and worlds of anxiety.

- **narcissism and the gender of paranoia.**

Paranoia, for Freud, is an ego-libidinal disorder caused, basically, by homosexual denial and

in which homosexuality is understood as the irruption and sexual manifestation of improperly or inadequately renounced original narcissism. In his most succinct statement on this topic Freud concludes that Schreber developed his paranoid delusions to patch over the rent opened by an irruption of homosexual (narcissistic) attraction to his physician. Though homosexuality becomes manifest as a result of a fixation at the narcissistic phase of development, Freud goes to great pains to avoid explicitly pathologizing homosexuality or "inversion" — he maintains the inherent bisexuality of the human organism and its universal tendency to "perversion"⁴⁵ — but he does characterize its manifestation as the result of a less than successful negotiation of the Oedipal phase. Oedipalization is painful, rather crude and uneven, but it seems for Freud to have been the psychic mechanism which evolved (or, in his more Lamarckian phylogenic formulation, was implanted in race memory by the dramatic overcoming and internalization of a primal father) in order to facilitate social stability and reproductive efficiency. Therefore, homosexuality, while not inherently a disease, is, from the perspective of normal Oedipalization, a wrong result.

Freud concludes, in his analysis of Schreber, that homosexuality is narcissist because the loved object's body form is "like" the lover's, and corresponds to the narcissist desire to love the self, or, at least, to love one who is as much like the self as possible. The rejection by the ego of these homosexual inclinations, to use Freud's hydraulic metaphor, is a violent damming up of the narcissistic flow, a strenuous renunciation which throws the narcissistic libido out into the world, where it behaves as it does in the Oedipus complex, creating and intellectualizing the self's relation to the world. But since this creation is not guided by the specter of paternal approbation, it creates a set of *direct*, idiosyncratic intellectual and identificatory relations with the world which supersede those formed under "the father's" intellectual or social structures, those discredited because they were unable to secure for the self a sense of being at home in the world. The paranoid delusion is a form of compulsive creation, but unlike Oedipalized creation, it is decidedly unhealthy for Freud not only because it is not reproductively efficient, but, also, to extrapolate from his later work, because it

assumes a radically different *form*. It rejects the Oedipal balance of instinct, ego and culturally received morality which facilitate social organization, at least of the less "primitive" sort, subordinating and reproducing these within a structure of knowledge governed by narcissistic identification, a structure which facilitates a solipsistic individualism rather than a socially integrable selfhood.

Shortly after the Schreber case (in "On Narcissism" [1914]) Freud changes his metapsychological conceptualization of narcissism significantly. In that essay, Freud notices two tendencies in love. The one is the tendency to become attracted to an object quite different from one's self, and this desire results in the valorization of that object and the concomitant abasement of the self. Freud calls the other tendency "narcissist," and if we were simply to invert the terms independently of the results we would have Schreber's homosexuality; attraction to an object recognized as significantly — sexually — 'like' one's self. But in this new formulation of narcissism Freud maintains the terms and presumes a strict — structural — heterosexuality, but inverts the results. The "narcissist" of "On Narcissism" is not homosexual, nor is she male. Instead she seeks out the heterosexual admiration of those sexually opposite to herself, in order to elicit a type of love in which she feels admired and valorized by a lover who makes relatively little demand for corresponding affection or attention. While Schreber's narcissism is responsible for his libidinal response to sexual likeness in others (homosexuality) this kind of narcissism ("female narcissism") is marked by a libidinal abhorrence of seemingly similarly sexed people (homophobia) in favour of people who are as markedly and structurally different as possible. This seeming contradiction in Freud's narcissism harbours what Freud increasingly saw as an ugly doubleness in it that allowed it to participate in the economies of what he would later call both the life instinct and the death instinct, Eros and Thanatos. Love of self can mean not only finding and loving the self in others, but also hating similar selves because they interfere with the integrity of one's own loved self.

For Freud, the heterosexual manifestation of narcissism resulted in a gendered duality of

possible narcissistic postures. The "feminine" attitude toward love (adopted most often, but not always by women) tends to indulge itself in a relatively unrenounced narcissism, seeking egocentricity and admiration, loving the self through another's admiration, while the "masculine" attitude in love tends to emerge within the economy of renounced narcissism which produces moral masochism; it idealizes its love object and abases its self and its role in the relationship.⁴⁶ While some commentators credit Freud with noticing these tendencies in love relations, they distance themselves from the gender-specific attribution of those tendencies:⁴⁷ as an observation, it certainly seems to say far more about turn of the century Viennese bourgeois society than about universal attributes of human psychology. But while tempting to dismiss these distinctions between masculine and feminine love on historical grounds, as the remnants of a chivalric culture rather than the products of human psychology (and Freud himself was willing to entertain that possibility⁴⁸) it is not so easy to keep the idea of narcissism while discarding its gendered theorization in Freud, for the gendering of narcissism is integral to the Freudian metapsychology of sexual behaviour and differentiation. Though Freud does not want to recognize a fixed neurological or physiological difference between men and women he recognizes the need to address the "problem" of femininity, even if, to the last, he admits that it may (along with the castration anxiety which he finds at the core of masculinity) be the neurotic "bedrock" which psychotherapeutic analysis is finally unable to penetrate ("Analysis Terminable," 23:252).

The question of how — or why — any given individual becomes a woman, remains rather enigmatic within Freudian thought. His explanation of female sexual development is tenuous and articulated over several works which consider problems of sexed social and erotic behaviour. In human behaviour, he notes, there is an undeniable and long-remarked tendency to passivity and submission, and a corresponding tendency to aggression and domination. The feminine sexual role seems to require the person to adopt the former tendency, to wait, to receive, to submit, while the masculine role seems to require the person adopt the opposite tendencies. But since libido is

inherently "masculine," that is, aggressive, dominating and active in *all* people, the question becomes: "Through what process of libidinal modification does the female human come to *seek* passivity and *aggressively* invoke domination?" Feminine passivity is a form of libidinal *activity* rather than its mere absence. If the Oedipus complex and its succeeding castration complex works out as it should, young men will want to *have* women rather than to *be* "women" and they will not want to assume the feminine position with regard to other men. There is in this proprietary attitude absolutely integral to "normal" masculinity, Freud notices, an aggressivity which, if not checked, becomes outright sadism.⁴⁹ The corresponding masochism (not the "civilizing" moral masochism which accompanies ego idealization, it is important to note, but explicitly sexual masochism) — necessary to naturalize the male sadistic tendency — is produced in women thorough "a fresh wave of repression" ("Three Essays" 7: 220) which follows her own much more ambiguous Oedipal experience. Femininity, as a working rule that became more tenuous as Freud's career went on, is the libidinally inverted tendency to passivity in sexual — and by extension, social — behaviour. As such, for Freud, it seems to be connected to a reduced renunciation of original narcissism. If the narcissistic libido is not fully Oedipalized, thrown out to conquer the world and make it its own, then it is more likely to be able to accept domination itself, if that domination is presented in a narcissistically acceptable form, as "admiration" or a properly configured "possession" like that implied in the idea of "to hold and to cherish." "Feminine" passivity then would be the female's narcissistic libido *actively* recruiting masculine renounced narcissism, misrecognizing its desire to assimilate and subdue in terms of its own desire to be admired and valorized.

But femininity and masculinity are not simply human tendencies for Freud. They correspond, clumsily, to a general human genital dimorphism, though that correspondence is not expressed in terms of the rather simplistic nature/culture opposition which underpins the contemporary distinction between sex and gender. The Freudian psyche is both natural *and* cultural and therefore sex cannot easily be decomposed into biological and cultural aspects.⁵⁰ The drama of

the acquisition of femininity is played out on the stage of female genitalia; the biological correlate to the becoming-feminine of the libido is the movement of primary erotogenicity from the clitoris to the vagina. The little girl, for Freud, is masculine in both her straightforwardly aggressive unmodified libido and in the sense that that libido has come to privilege her rudimentary penis — her clitoris — as the primary erotogenic zone, as it would be (in its 'adult', male form which the girl will never realize) the bodily instrument of sexual aggressivity and extension. The libido, still narcissistic at this stage, has already focused on a body part that will be used "properly" only after that narcissism is renounced, and is now used only in the interest of self-gratification. In order for the proto-masculine little girl to become a woman she must relegate her 'masculine' genitalia to a secondary status ("renounce[ing] the penis" in Freud's terms ["Dissolution" 19: 178]), and give primacy to the vagina, the part of her genitalia which is the very model of feminine passivity, stasis, receptivity and self enclosure, a bodily representation of libidinal narcissism, a zone of self enclosure which gives pleasure only as a side effect of its libidinal tendency to have pleasure come to it, as it were. In his later work Freud drew up a fairly stable story to explain why and how the primary feminine genital zone became the (reproductively more important) vagina and how females come to choose male sexual partners instead of the female partner implied in the Oedipus complex.⁵¹

It had, he argues in "Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes" (1925), to do with castration: boys fear it and work to keep it at bay, girls accept it and try to come to terms with it; a difference that pervasively shapes social behaviour. Recognizing her anatomical lack with regard to boys, the young girl feels the humiliation of her inferiority and assumes a sexually — and socially — passive role. In other words, the female *knows* that she is castrated and acts accordingly, while the boy does everything he can to deny his castration. Desperately, violently, anxiously, the young man asserts his virility and tries to assume the position of the Father, while the girl renounces the erotogenic primacy her inferior penis in exchange for her vagina which can offer her at least a substitute penis and Paternal legitimacy in the form of the "Father's" baby. Trying to be like the

Father means that the boy assumes personal responsibility for the social structure the Father legitimizes. Law, morality, responsibility, action, creativity and work in the world in general are his lot. The girl, for Freud, sees these things from a distance, and uses them when it suits her purpose, but she has no psychological *need* to identify with them. She knows she can never be even a substitute for the Father — and, Freud comments, feels contempt for her own inferiority, as a man does — so His rules are not necessarily hers, and she also knows that she does not have to acquire His systemic knowledge of objects necessary to work in the world, because she can work in her womb. This means that the only work she *needs* to do is work on her body to make it attractive enough that the Father will want to use it to create for her a *substitute* penis in the form of a baby.⁵² The feminine — the tendency to be passive with regard to the world, active with regard to the body, amoral or inconsistently moral, not attracted to systemic thought or intellectual appropriation — is, for Freud, the result of the incomplete renunciation of original narcissism. Femininity — in Freud's formulation the deflection of an outward directed and appropriative libidinal energy to the job of constructing of the self as an object — is not accidentally but *essentially* narcissistic and as such might as well be psychogenetically equated with narcissism.

However, the physiological story Freud tells of this transition from libidinal (masculine) girlhood to womanly femininity, the movement of primary erotogenicity from an active clitoris to the passive vagina is just that: a good story, with little physiological validity. At several points in his writing Freud points out that femininity is merely a guiding principle necessarily presumed but ontologically unposited by psychoanalysis;⁵³ it is something psychoanalysis has to account for as opposed to something with which psychoanalysis starts. Freud's connection of female physiology with female sexual behaviour and "femininity" is an excellent example of the way in which the principle of femininity — as a metapsychological construct tied up with his idea of narcissism — *produces* physiological correlation as opposed to being drawn from it, exemplifying the way in which the cultural and narrative structurations of Freudian metapsychology were not simply shaped by

Freud's observations, but influenced the very process of observation.

As Thomas Laqueur points out, the physiology of the vagina — known to but apparently ignored by Freud — is actually very active erotogenically therefore making it a rather poor candidate for the role of the passive reproductive genital. What Laqueur argues that Freud's work does demonstrate very clearly was that the vagina was culturally understood in the time preceding Freud's writing, as the exact, if inverse, correlate of the male penis *in tandem with* rather than opposed to the clitoris. The clitoris was presumed to be the correlate of the male glans, the vagina the hollowed out sheath of the masculine phallus, and the ovaries the correlate of the masculine testes (240).

Femininity, as figured by female genitalia, was presumed the physiologically determined opposite and correlate of masculinity. In arguing, as Freud does, that the child is originally libidinal in the masculine sense but becomes feminine through participation in a psychological drama during childhood, he must re-figure the culturally understood genital determination of masculinity and femininity. He breaks up the dimorphic opposition of masculine and feminine genitalia, makes the clitoris the seat of the masculine and the vagina (no longer the correlate of a masculine phallus) something unique to the female, the figure of her alterity, her femininity, her inward-turned narcissistic tendencies. Though the transfer of primary erotogenicity from clitoris to vagina in feminine development has little physiological validity, it is a narrative necessity in Freud's drama of feminine development, as it incorporates in a new image of the female body the image of the narcissistic "nature" of femininity.

It is the relationship between narcissism and verbal-intellectual pattern formation which indicates, for Freud, the 'gender' of paranoia: paranoia is a "masculine" disorder, in that, in response to powerfully disruptive libidinal currents, it manifests (in its complex delusional narratives of active protagonism seeking to counter the forces of antagonism by attempting to control the body and the environment) an intensification of "masculine" strategies of ego-integration.

Freud's construction of Schreber as the paradigmatic paranoid relies largely on the relation in

Schreber's narrative between anxiety about "masculinity" and his paranoid attempt at mastery through the interpretation and renarrativization of obscure signs in his body and his social and material worlds. Unlike hysteria, Freud feels, it is proper, even necessary to analyze paranoids though the stories they tell about themselves rather than attempting to interpret the various verbal phenomena they exhibit ("Schreber" 12: 9). Because besides the narrative self-possession of the paranoid, who carefully shapes and scrutinizes his or her every utterance before relating it to the analyst, paranoids "possess the peculiarity of betraying (in a distorted form, it is true) precisely those things which other neurotics keep hidden" ("Schreber" 12: 9). This peculiarity has to do with the epistemological difference between paranoia and other neurotic manifestations, such as hysteria. The function of narrative articulation is simply differently placed because, Freud writes, hysteria "condenses," while paranoia "decomposes"; paranoia "resolves once more into their elements the products of the condensations and identifications which are effected in the unconscious" ("Schreber" 12: 49). Unlike hysteria, which is mute and visceral, manifesting its neurosis in an overwhelming sensation of unintelligible panic and lack of bodily control, paranoia articulates the genesis of its anxiety in narrative form, displacing it but setting it out for the consciousness in the form of a story. Where the stories of self ("clearly conscious fantasies") constructed by "perverts" are available to be acted out ("transformed into clearly conscious fantasies"), the "delusional fears of paranoiacs" are narratively externalized ("projected in a hostile sense onto other people") and "the unconscious fantasies of hysterics (which psychoanalysis reveals behind their symptoms) is manifest in psycho-somatic symptoms, but, despite these different *manifestations* of psycho-sexual anxiety "all of these coincide with each other even down to their details" ("Three Essays," n.1, 7: 151). Perversion *acts out*, hysteria *symptomatizes*, paranoia *modifies* the self-in-world narrative. Paranoia, Freud comments in an early work, is fundamentally "an interpretive delusion" ("Neuro-Psychosis" 3: 184) but, because interpretation presupposes a subjective framework, it is a disorder played out in the construction and modification of stories about the self's relation to the world.

Masculinity is primarily shaped by the repressions of the Oedipal and castration complexes and its characteristic neurotic expression is the development of the superego, which is this neurosis manifest in a legislative figure of social authority. Femininity — lacking the overwhelming influence of the Oedipus complex and requiring secondary repressions to transform libidinal direction, primary sexual genital zone and erotic object choice — is far more prone to other neurotic complexes and symptoms. These, as Freud writes, "are the chief determinants of the greater proneness of women to neuroses and especially to hysteria. These determinants, therefore, are immediately related to the essence of femininity" ("Three Essays" 7: 221). Women are less likely to participate in the intellectual discourses (and their accompanying institutions) of civilized society because their lack of adequate Oedipalization is accompanied by their greater tendency to express their neuroses in less articulate forms less amenable to rational and moral evaluation.

"Masculine" libidinal repression, to put Freud's comments into the terms of our discussion, tends to privilege an intellectualized, articulate, abstract, aggressive and active (projectively identificatory) neurotic response, while that same libidinal repression in woman tends to privilege an individual, ineffable and primarily affective (introjectively identificatory⁵⁴) response. Returning to Freud's comparison of perversion (acting out of fantasies), hysteria (repression and symptomatic expression of fantasies), and paranoia (projection and narrative externalization of fantasies) we can trace a gendered opposition between hysteria and paranoia. Delusion formation is a highly complex and intellectualized symptom, but it tends toward the "masculine" in that while it captures a surge in narcissistic libido, it has to make do with the intellectualist, externalizing, "creative" machinery erected in the partial renunciation of that original narcissism. Of course, as Schreber's extraordinarily heterogenous narrative illustrates, this distinction is of more heuristic than descriptive value even in Freud, but it does indicate which tendency tends to *predominate*. It indicates which tends to be the *preferred* mode of neurotic self-apprehension. While perversion is essentially a degree of absence of neurosis, delusion is one *type* of neurotic symptom and it tends to be intellectually articulated even if

its motivations are not accessible to the consciousness. Hysteria is another type of neurotic symptom which tends to be less intellectually manifest and less accessible to the consciousness — at least to the consciousness of the hysteric. It is a relation between the unconscious and the body inaccessible to the ego's mediating structures, requiring the mediation of the (figuratively if not actually masculine) analyst (acting as an ego-surrogate) to restore hysteria its narrative articulation, and to translate it into an intellectually accessible form.

Therefore if intellectual systematization is a "masculine" neurotic symptom, then a disorder like paranoia (as Ruth Mack Berwick asserts in a study well known to Freud), "with its elaborate ideation, its excessive intellectuality, and its occurrence in individuals with a high power of sublimation, is essentially a highly organized and masculine psychosis." She goes on to indicate that the difference in paranoid forms has a lot to do with the femininity of the subject:

There are two type of true paranoia, the jealous and the persecutory. The latter, as we have seen, is an elaborate psychosis of an essentially masculine nature, and is the commonest form of paranoia in men. The jealous form, on the other hand, is par excellence the paranoia of women... In contradistinction to the philosophic systematizing persecutory paranoia, the delusion of jealousy is both feminine and rudimentary and, as it were, closer to the normal and the neurotic. (Berwick [1928] quoted in Schor 214).

In persecutory "masculine" paranoia, the world has been carefully arranged to reflect the subtle logic of a malevolent organizing antagonist, such as Schreber's God. A delusional world like Schreber's is accessible through an idiosyncratic but often formally rigorous form of the Oedipal neurosis called reason and systemic thought. The manifestations of original narcissism (such as the bipolar duality of good-and-evil, self-and-other characteristic of identificatory rather than intellectual object relations) are still very present and deform a paranoid like Schreber's cosmos in line with his excessive self-centrality (his "delusions of reference"), but the "masculine" paranoid delusion, like Schreber's but unlike Berwick's analysand, remains *primarily hermeneutic and intellectual*.⁵⁵ Identifications and abjections motivate the delusion, to be sure, but these in turn are legitimized in being expressed in the form of intellectual knowledge; the primacy of their direct affective claim on the ego is

subordinated to an intellectualized, instrumental subject-object hierarchy. The delusions of jealousy which characterize the "rudimentary" female forms of paranoia involve fewer agents and tend not to invoke highly complex cosmological speculation, so they do not require the machinery of the Oedipally sublimated narcissistic libido. In them the paranoid pseudo-community is more tightly related to the specific source of anxiety (sexual fidelity), they are less prone to assume a messianic form of protagonism and understand the structure of antagonism in cosmic and apocalyptic terms (or, as Berwick points out, they are "closer to the normal and the neurotic"). They function quite well with the rudimentary forms available to an incompletely Oedipalized psyche which still relates primarily in terms of identification, which sees the world not as a set of complex assemblages placed in a fundamentally alien relation to self, but which sees the world in terms of an innate commonality riven with direct relations of desire or aggression. Femininity is not intellectually equipped to fully develop the delusions associated with classical paranoia, but by the same token, women can become classically (persecutorily) paranoid if they have not become properly feminized.⁵⁶

- **narcissism, the bodily ego and narrative.**

As we have indicated, Freud's understanding of sexual difference and feminine sexuality in particular is highly indebted throughout his later career to his theory of narcissism. But after Freud explicitly theorized narcissism in 1914 the concept allowed him to so thoroughly reconsider his own early work that through the late teens and early 20's of this century he ended up fundamentally modifying that work, including, not incidentally, the very concept of narcissism itself (see Baranger). His problem with narcissism as he had posited it had to do with the nature of the relation of ego to object. As Freud explains in 1914, object libido (neurotically sublimated narcissistic libido) turns outwards into the world, implanting there an image of the self for the self to love. But this

formulation implies that originally narcissistic or ego-libido really is objectless, or at least apprehends only primal objects (the ego itself) which are qualitatively different from objects that are understood by the Oedipalized consciousness. And this makes sense, because as the agent of object apprehension it stands to reason that the ego would have to be a different *kind* of object and stand in a different relation to its own agency, and there certainly does seem to be ways in which one can apprehend without being 'conscious' and without that apprehension being intellectually accessible. It seems to make perfect sense that the ego has the capacity to extend its energy to the external world and take an interest in what it senses there, but it also seems that in certain states — sleep or suffering, to use Freud's 1914 examples — the external world is basically ignored and the psyche concentrates on its self.

But as Freud worked with this opposition it became apparent that the distinction was not viable. How could one take one's self as an object without there being a site of agency and an object to be taken? The problems of narcissism can be understood grammatically and narratively. The sentence "I love me," which has the self as both subject and object cannot really stand without commentary, but is not counterintuitive either; after all there is a separate word ("me") to express the self precisely *as* object. The difference between the two selves is explained figurally, by decomposing the "I" into different parts differentiated by their agentic function; one has the ability to *do*, the other is what is done *to*. Similarly, the story of that narcissistic sentence which posits the protagonist and the object of action as the same thing requires a great deal of dexterity in the construction of a viable narrative protagonist. The story becomes internal, or rather, the self which assumes the protagonistic function is given the place of interiority, while the self-as-object is banished into the 'world', though, as in all stories, as the "world" it provides the relations which allow the protagonistic function to come to know itself. Thus the romantic narrative of questing in the world to find "identity," to find one's true self.

For Freud it is the body itself which is the source of the original, narcissistic objects which

structured object relations but which are prior to 'external' objects. In "The Ego and the Id" (1923) Freud indicates that the ego, even in its most rudimentary forms, is the managed composite of identifications of various body parts and relations noticed during periods of acute sensation. The ego is not constituted by the *actual* sensation of course, but by the imaged, objectified representations ("projection") of those sensations. The ego has an "object" built right into it, so one cannot really think of narcissism as a turning away from objects but as the ego privileging one set of identificatory images over another, the set belonging to the body. As well, one cannot really say that "objects" are actually somehow accessed in a non-narcissistic way, if their very objectivity comes to the ego in the forms which it has been developed to manage. Objectivity is, again, always within and of the ego whether it is "external" to the ego or not.

This insight was made particularly clearly in Freud's 1917 "Mourning and Melancholia," in which the loss of a clearly external object such as a loved one was shown to be able to severely damage the ability of the ego to relate to the world (it "throws the shadow of the object across the ego" (14: 249), Freud writes). The magnitude of loss can provoke the external object to move from a critical or *intellectual* object of the ego, to an object with which the ego fundamentally *identifies*, an identification which converts the lostness of the object into a gap or wound in the ego's basically narcissistic (and primally somatic) structure of identifications. Given the bodily foundation of the basic structure of those objects that Freud was later to articulate, melancholia and other affective disorders involving the loss or absence of a loved object could be conceived as opening a wound in the narcissistic bodily ego (see "Some Neurotic Mechanisms in Jealousy, Paranoia and Homosexuality, 18: 223). In her consideration of Freudian melancholia in *Gender Trouble*, Judith Butler points out that Freud discards this understanding of the this dynamic between identification, (in which the object is incorporated into the structure of narcissistic relations, and which, when *lost* remains unknowable to the ego except as melancholia), and object-cathexis, in which the lost object can be mourned and the ego reintegrated in a process of "working-through." In Freud's "The Ego

and the Id," Butler explains, the workings of melancholia are normalized, making it *part* of the mourning process rather than its defining pathological other. This depathologized melancholia, with its dynamics of substituting an object cathexis for an identification is central to the formation of the ego, and the processes of melancholia should be thought of as part of the process of mourning. In fact, Freud writes, "it may be the sole condition under which the id can give up its objects" (14: 24).

In particular, the dynamics of substitution and incorporation which ply the self-object loop should be understood to produce normative — that is, non-pathological — gendering; they function to resolve the object-cathexes of the Oedipus complex and to consolidate gender positioning: "the little girl, after she has had to relinquish her father as a love object, will bring her masculinity into prominence and identify herself with her father (that is, with the object that has been lost), instead of with the mother" (14: 28). But this cross-gendered object cathexis replacing a narcissistic identification with a lost object (the father, in both cases) points out the difficulty femininity presents for the Freudian developmental narrative. Though the narcissistic structure of identifications is the structural basis of the bodily ego, it is a libidinal body rather than a sexed (libidinally differentiated and eventually differentiated on the basis of object-cathexes) body. Though the body provides the primary and privileged set of objects to the ego, the "body" seems to be able to extend to all that the ego *feels* particularly deeply. The "body" grows into the world along the paths of libidinal cathexis, and the relation of the world to the self can be understood in terms of bodily extension.⁵⁷ The body of narcissistic identification is libidinal in a sense that will become "masculine," paradoxically, after that narcissistic body-world has been "emasculated." Post-Oedipal masculinity and femininity then, are both melancholic, in a sense, in that they incorporate the lostness of the object (the libidinal directness of their narcissistic bodies) into their ego, but despite its constitutive melancholia (what Butler calls "heterosexual melancholia," referring to the lostness of the primal homosexual love object, the same-sexed parent), the ego is "normal." In Oedipalization, with the intrusion of an alien "body" (the objective shadow of the Father's "bodily" ego) into the

place of this narcissistic identification, the distinction between self and other, ego and object articulated in the form of identificatory relations is superseded and assimilated to the relations proper to that alien body: intellectual knowledge. Seemingly abstract intellectual knowledge has inscribed into its psychic form, for Freud, both a displaced narcissism, a melancholic dynamic (a desire to "work-through," to close the gap) and the imprint of the somatic form of the bodily ego.

Recognizing the mutual constitution of the ego and its objects by 1921, in "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" Freud largely abandons his distinction between object and ego libido, choosing instead to form a distinction around the two aspects of narcissistic apprehension. The tendency to use libidinal energy to link things or group things (whether through intellectualization or identification) was associated with "life" instincts or the principle of *Eros* while the opposite tendency of violently or anxiously concentrating on the alienness of things, maintaining difference or working toward disintegration or disaggregation; these were associated with the "death" instincts or the principle of *destructiveness* (*Thanatos*). Freud's consideration of narcissism showed that what cannot be assimilated to self under libidinal pressure in terms of identificatory relations or understood through the intellectual and ethical forms of the Oedipalized social self must be rejected. The capacity of objects — including, occasionally, bodily objects — to resist identificatory desire or intellectual assimilation brings out the basic aggressivity of narcissism. What cannot be seen or known in terms of one's self or culture can still be libidinally cathected, except that the desire it attracts tends to be manifest in hatred or fear and to produce images or ideas of dis-integrity, alienation and potential threat. After generating a fascinating re-evaluation of the nature of the ego's relation to objects, narcissism allows Freud to move from distinctions based on types of objects to a distinction based on tendencies of the very recognition and constitution of objects; those of integration and disintegration.

Stories do not and can not speak of a sexually neutral subject. The very stuff of stories—

protagonism and antagonism, agency, subject-object articulation — are "gendered"; they participate in the very economies of "sex" which they also explain and describe. And in the narrative foundations of Freud's work these basic narrative elements are markedly differentiated according to sex. Paranoia is partially manifest in a dysfunction in self-narrativization (delusion), a dysfunction, for Freud, charged with sexual tension. One cannot explain oneself properly because homosexual desire is culturally improper (and its manifestation in adults, for Freud, psychopathological) therefore, to compensate for this unspeakable condition, one inverts the terms of propriety and impropriety, inverting as well in that process the moral relation of individual to society, explaining oneself as not only proper but central and superior to one's society. But the stories the paranoid obsessively constructs and reconstructs are not merely, as Freud would have it, vehicles for sublimating his sexual confusion. They themselves help constitute the lived experiences of sexuality in the profoundest sense, and it is the *narrative* illegitimacy of the desired action (in Schreber's case the transformation of the sexual body, which Freud took as evidence of homosexual desire) with regard to hegemonic cultural narrative which may provoke the assumption of quite a differently but no less extremely situated narrative situation, that of the paranoid. For Freud, Schreber's autobiographical narrative is a psycho-analytical object but it can also be interpreted, on its own terms, as a negotiated narrative response to culturally legitimate conventions of sexual agency and self understanding. Sexual transformation is an illegitimate form of self-agency not only because it may be culturally taboo, as Freud would have it, but because using one's action against one's own body in that way is taboo at the level of narrative structure (within that culture) as well; it could not be expressed in terms the culture would understand as a legitimate form of action. As we saw in Schreber, the body was to be used in its masculine sense as an instrument in an instrumental world, a tool of rational agency. In its feminized sense the body could become an object of self-manipulation, but only inasmuch as that self-manipulation was other-directed (such as the application of makeup or girdles or footbinding), done to make the body a more pleasing object for another. This understanding of

the body as the object of another's agency is a narratively legitimate form from which to mobilize agency, but it is the form of "feminine" protagonism. The manipulation of Schreber's body by himself or by another could only be understood from within his "masculine" posture as a feminine or feminizing process, and was felt by Schreber to be a demeaning insult to his masculine right of subjective self-possession.

It is this sensed *narrative* illegitimacy which can prompt the individual's recourse to the romantic and melodramatic narrative patterns which characterize paranoid self-expression as these are the most powerful and (in Northrop Frye's terms) the most undisplaced structures of "legitimate" protagonistic agency available. Not able to narrativize the desire to intervene in his own conflicted body, that desire can be narrativized as a powerful desire to (intellectually) intervene in (or defend against) a postulated conflict-ridden external environment. The movement of a stable body through a clearly ordered external world displaces static, introverted, morally ambiguous (if not taboo) action upon one's own mutable body. It was Freud's appropriation of and participation in his culture's hegemonic narrative situation which led him to understand sexual transformation as a cultural taboo. Because he appropriated the presumption that agency itself is naturally sexed — finding masculinity and activity in an almost tautological (and for this reason a posited rather than determined) relationship — and has a fixed relation to the sexual body, he did not recognize that paranoia was not an inevitable response to homosexual denial, but that paranoid delusion is a culturally specific articulation of the relationship between sexuality, agency and narrative self-understanding.

After all this we can return to the question of the 'gender' of paranoia and its linkage to Schreber's anxiety about his physical change of sex, an anxiety that would, early in the next century be addressed as the phenomenon of transsexuality (considered in more detail in the final chapter). Persecutory paranoia is inherently masculine (but not confined to biological males, of course) because it forms the predominantly *intellectualized* response to anxiety, that anxiety enabling the

destructive aspect of narcissism to predominate. Paranoid delusion structures the world in both narrative and descriptive terms; the time, place and causal attributes as well as the objective nature of *everything* is sought. These structures crystallize the difference and absolute alien-ness of the world, giving the paranoid's sense of alienation an intellectual correlate in his delusion and legitimizing his projective drive to find something of his self by ascertaining some order, some reason or some cause there. The feminine — less Oedipalized — narcissistic response to anxiety tends toward the hysteric, and is manifest more in identification without intellectualized displacement.⁵⁸ The destructive aspect of narcissism again predominates in hysteria, but given the identificatory sense of the world as an extended body and the body as a foreign world, it tends to result in a sense of alienation with regard to (and lack of control over) one's body or a profound — hysterical — fear.

This opposition can be expressed as a narrative axis. At one, “hysteric” pole, despite the visceral drama of the body acting on its own, the story cannot emerge from a sort of blurry cognitive muddle; it is all identification without the narrative structure required to make it communicable by separating protagonist, antagonist, subject, object and agency. At the other, “paranoid” pole, story is so frantically sought and continuously and strenuously conjured that narrative structure protrudes from it like broken bones through the skin of a broken body, bare of the flesh in which its life pulsed, sometimes missing that layer of reference and common sense causality which clothes narrative with the culturally variable sheen of reality or plausibility. In hysteria the body itself seems to act by itself, as if by another agency; it becomes a zone of terrifyingly unintelligible autonomy quite inarticulable as an instrument of subjective protagonism. In paranoia, on the other hand, as David Shapiro points out, while “[t]he normal person, on the whole, feels his body to be 'him', [...] the paranoid person, regards his body as his instrument” (221). The paranoid's awkwardness is the result of his extremely conscious manipulation of his body as a thing slavishly subject to his will and control, it is, narratively articulated, an instrument of his agency within a rigidly Romantic story structure. In the paranoid narrative, agency apprehends externality

through a stable if limited body subordinate to conscious will, and, correspondingly, feels vulnerable to the exercise of external agency acting upon the body or bodily situation. The paranoid's is a constantly spun story which seems to have fairly little to do with what others recognize as reality and from which protrudes embarrassingly evident mythic structures, crudely drawn moral and metaphysical Manicheanism, and a frequently alarming apocalypticism. The story, in the paranoid's case, begins to seem merely the most cursory scaffolding for a reemergent narcissism, plot barely intruding on the cataloguing of pure identifications in the old terms of assimilation and rejection, me and not-me, love and hate. These poles — mute hysteria and ranting paranoid delusion — represent the two thresholds of narrative capability. On the one hand the self is not firmly oriented enough with regard to time and objects to even carry the narrative task of agency and protagonism, on the other hand the self drives to assimilate the whole world by making it inherently aligned with the protagonism and antagonism of its main characters: Self and Other.

In framing this distinction between paranoia and hysteria we must keep in mind that our chosen tools taken from Freud's own thought — his psycho-developmental theories, descriptions of neurotic and psychopathological behaviour and even his model of therapy and psycho-analysis whether expressed in topographical, economic or structural terms — are all deeply imbricated in variations of romance narrative. In Freud's work, though the psyche in the first topography is firmly situated in biology and in the second topology tends to be increasingly understood in terms of society,⁵⁹ the individual mind (the psyche) is the basic unit of address and collective structures and thoughts are understandable in terms of the individual, as products of individual dramas (instead of the other way around). This particular construction of the individual — as a locus of agency (libido) prior to and exceeding its apprehension by and imbrication in society — is, in Northrop Frye's contextualization, the attribute of a protagonist operating in a “romantically” structured story-type. And for Frye, like Freud, the broadly “romantic” narrative form (individual seeking identity / ego balanced somewhere between narcissism and “reality”) is that which most accords with the truth of

the human condition.

Late nineteenth-century psychology addresses the individual as a function of *consciousness*; it considers the ways in which these conscious individuals organize their existence within an ambivalent situation. As Frye notes,

Anyone reading William James' Varieties of Religious Experience must be impressed by the extraordinary skill with which many people arrange their lives in the form of romantic or dramatic ritual, in a way which is neither wholly conscious nor wholly unconscious, but a working alliance of the two. James takes us into psychology, and with Freud and Jung we move into an area where the analogy to quest romance is even more obvious. (Anatomy 57)

This "analogy to quest romance" that Frye notes in Freud is not simply that Freud finds that his analysands tend to understand themselves in terms of the conventions of romance. Instead, Freud himself, as we have touched on earlier, is himself implicated in the broader narrative patterns of romance and articulated both in form (prose narrative) and tendency in the low-mimetic modulation of romance.

Romance is the narrative mode of Freud's Oedipalized self, for romantic patterns articulate what Lacan would call — in its most general sense — desire, and desire is fundamentally narcissistic; in the object of desire the correlate of the self is sought. In his "Family Romances" Freud explicitly designates romance as the generic story-form in which the child (or the neurotic) articulates his Oedipal situation of feeling constrained or confined by his parents and imaginatively constructs a story using romance conventions to express the impropriety of that situation, his identity with a noble past, and his future emancipation from it. This "peculiarly marked imaginative quality of neurotics and also of all comparatively gifted people" (9: 236) is elaborated in "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming" written about the same time (1908-09). The resonance and power of popular romances is attributed to their thinly disguised appropriation of these basic romance structure with which the Oedipal ego understands itself; their heroes barely concealed versions of "His Majesty the ego, hero of all daydreams and all novels" (9: 149-50). "Gifted" or "imaginative" people such as the artist, the neurotic, the paranoid, and in a different way the scientist, all understand their selves in

basically romantic terms, though those terms are differently constructed in each case. The quest of the Oedipalized self seeks not only the approbation of the constitutively absent Father, but for His supersession or assimilation, at which time the world related in His alien terms would be understood intimately through its harmony with the Self; narcissism is recovered on the cosmic rather than the individual scale. Renouncing narcissism involves placing one's self in a story in which the self is split into an inchoate source of selfhood and a set of images of selfhood articulable with regard to referents which are recognizably external to the self. The self, then, is felt to be incomplete, but that sense is used to channel one's energy toward the ultimately futile attempt to recover a unified self. Even if the futility of the quest is recognized in some degree, there is a structural inevitability of the quest to the Freudian self, for stasis is hardly an option outside of the psychoses laying on the other side of megalomania (in which the self has reached the pinnacle of the romantic cosmos and has narcissistically absorbed the world)⁶⁰ or pure melancholia (in which the self rests in the nadir of the romantic world, and is an object of that world, unable to act for him or herself).

Just as Frye argues that the romantic core of literary self-understanding and expression is bounded by a sense that there must be the imaginative capacity to imagine oneself differently as well as by the sense that there is a reality out there which checks and resists purely projective, narcissistic representations of the self in the world,⁶¹ in either pure megalomania or pure melancholia the Freudian ego would cease to exist, and at either pole the capacity for narrative is annihilated. The two are coextensive, when the megalomaniacal ego narcissistically absorbs the world, it has gone off the top of Frye's romantic axis and has regressed from the subjectivity of the ego to an original narcissism; when the melancholic ego is crushed by the absence of its objects, when its psychic body is so torn apart (in what Frye would call a version of the narrative condition of *sparagmos*, characteristic of "ironic" literary representation) and loses the ability to find a sub-structure of somatic identifications in the world, things become incomprehensible, inexpressible and the power of self-understanding and narrative self-expression fade together. In a condition of complete stasis,

of either complete frustration or satisfaction of desire, the narrative functions of subject and object and with it the transitive function of agency, would simply cease to exist, agency annihilated as the one is absorbed by the other. The Freudian ego's self-understanding is narrative in that it understands its reality in terms of subject, object and agency, but more specifically it is romantic because it understands its existential condition as one of primal individual dislocation (due to its Oedipalization), a condition which sets up desire to return to a constitutively absent condition of individual, and by extension, cosmic, harmony.

The knowledge granted by Freud's concept of introjective identification (which structures but is sublimated within renounced narcissism) pervades narrative, as Frye points out, in the figure of fate or luck. What matters in this narrative trope is not one's skill or knowledge of the world, but whether one is fundamentally in accord or in discord with the order of the universe. The more "critical" or intellectual forms of knowledge (those based on projective identification) in narrative allow the instrumental mastery of the protagonist over objects but the agency engendered by these intellectual relations is usually (depending on the mode of narrative representation) counterbalanced by the prior and more powerful presence of identificatory knowledge. In most narratives one has to be lucky to be good at something, and even the most knowledgeable or competent protagonist is helpless if fundamentally out of accord with the world, if she is unlucky or ill-fated. The confluence of cosmic accord and protagonistic intellectuality in a character (sometimes called wisdom) gives the mastery which seems to lie at the end of a successful Romance, for that mastery marks the reincorporation of world into the self, subordinated to the self through properly exercised agency. As the narrative mode of representation tends toward the top end of the romantic axis knowledge and ability becomes less important: the hero knows the power of his or her accord with the cosmos or its governing forces and trusts that things will work out against all appearances and without the necessity of extraordinary skill or knowledge on his or her part. In paranoid delusion, which often shifts between a position of megalomania and one of paralyzing anxiety, the external world is

represented in both of these ways; as either something compellingly inanimate, an instrument of the individual's will and object of his or her desire; or as something frightfully animate, a locus of hidden yet powerful and threatening antagonism.

For Freud, both these narrative cosmoses are more associated with a poorly Oedipalized self in which narcissism has been minimally or incompletely renounced, or has irrupted to trouble the subject's comfort in the received world. Where the Oedipalized self, in exchange for narcissistic direct identification with the world, gives the ego a comfortable sphere of "human" meaning (in which the animate nature of the world is expressed in cultural convention and addressed through communal ritual ("superstition"/religion) rather than charged with individually-directed hostility or passivity demanding individual response), for the ego still structured by pre-Oedipal narcissism things are not as they seem to "everybody else." Knowledge as it is received or known from the perspective of everybody else is undermined by the strong feeling that the self's ability to *identify* can ground a more truthful knowledge of the world. Intuition trumps rationality and "common sense." In this narrative things are related in their ability to affect the subject, as things felt or sensed. The gender of this narrative is a function of the protagonistic response this inversion of truth and appearance. If there is a desire and a satisfaction found in according with and becoming more "in tune" with the world and what the world "wants," it is, in Freud's romantically informed terms, a "feminine" situation, a narrative of self grounded in the body as object of another's desire in accordance with what Freud would say was the incomplete Oedipalization and incomplete renunciation of original narcissism associated with female development. This is an inverted or perverted romantic quest in that in the terminal place of identity is found in annihilation of self through the perfect incorporation of the other's agency. It is the story of the subject which is subject-to-use, a subject become object.⁶² If the sense of the truth of things provokes a primarily intellectualized response that translates affective sense into counter-knowledge within a self which is superior to and stands in an agentic relation to the body, which seeks to out-know rather than be

better or more truly known by the world, this is a "masculine" response, in accordance, for Freud, with an irruption of original narcissism (manifest in homosexual or transsexual urges) that becomes manifest in persecutory paranoia, as Schreber's voluble, intricately narrated and densely conceptualized struggle to resist Divine emasculation attests.

- **narcissism, narrative and the body.**

That Freud's narcissistic conception of the self and his understanding of masculinity and femininity are almost inextricably tied up with the romantic structure of their metapsychological articulations is not a condemnation of Freud, nor, by any means a grounds for finally evaluating the relative "truth" of his arguments (though it may contribute). For Freud, truth is shaped by the forms of culturally available knowledge, and truths may have many different cultural articulations. For example, in his late commentary on the Greek philosopher Empedocles in "Analysis Terminable and Interminable," Freud explains that the Greek's principles of love and strife are essentially the same as those he too had developed (*Eros* and *Thanatos*). But, he remarks, the understanding of the universe that Empedocles had to work with was much different than his own; not only did Empedocles articulate his ideas of love and strife within the conceptual interaction of four primal elements, the change in cultural knowledge (implicitly a progressive change within Freud's larger narrative of scientificism) produced the effect of rearticulating those tendencies with regard to social behaviours manifest in individuals. However, almost as an afterthought Freud suggests that these basic conceptual structures may change again, writing, "[and] no one can foresee in what guise the nucleus of truth contained in the theory of Empedocles will present itself to later understanding" (23: 247). Narrative conceptual structuration is the residue, for Freud, of a vestigial narcissism and it pollutes the scientific rigour of an unalienated identity. But, he recognizes, it is also the "guise" of

cultural communication and shared understanding, and therefore is both the necessary medium of expressing scientific truth and the condition of its abstract impossibility.

However “accurate” the developmental narrative given it by Freud, his concept of narcissism is a powerful one. It allows all modes of apprehension to be understood on a continuum on which rudimentary narrative articulation marks the point at which narcissism is renounced enough to support what could be recognized as consciousness, only to be submerged beneath other articulatory structures as that renunciation increases. Inchoate identificatory experience becomes intelligible in time and space (the realm of what cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner will call “narrative” knowledge) only to have its temporal and spatial particularity submerged as it is articulated in more abstract epistemological structures (Bruner’s “paradigmatic” knowledge). In narrative, narcissism — the sense of the world’s relation to the self — is able to find an almost complete range of expression. Almost; because though one can feel *like* and *through* the characters they read, they can never actually, finally, get the sense presumed to inhere in a primary narcissism: the sense that one *is of* the narrated perspectives and shares an existential *reality* with those one reads about. Narcissism in narrative is always, inevitably alienated to some degree simply because narrative is fundamentally *representative* rather than *presentative*, but by the same token narrative is the form of representation which *most closely* allows the expression of primal identification. In a story one cannot actually sense the relation of a self to a world, but in a story (as opposed to, say, a statistical report) one is forced to know primarily through one’s ability to see and ‘feel’ a world by putting oneself in place of — by identifying with — a whole range of character functions which span the range of agency from the author/narrator figure to the protagonist to the various objects of protagonistic activity. But just as narrative is a powerful mechanism for articulating identificatory relations by placing characters in time and space, it is also flexible enough to disappear, or at least fade from view as a structure of organizing knowledge. Character functions and their temporal, spatial and agentic attributes can recede and become completely implied without losing their potency or necessity, even while they

orient and give access to ostensibly 'objective' discourse; these are the narratives which structure one's sense of *identity* and *reality*, beneath the threshold of conscious recognition that brackets the sense of *identification* and *possibility* proper to the reading of fictional narrative.

Because of its reliance on narrative form, self is epistemologically known through the types of extension, duration, action and opposition that can be represented in stories. Self is a narrative function, narrative is a function of renounced narcissism, and the renunciation of narcissism invokes a primarily romantic story form. Therefore the conceptual construct which is "self" incorporates the understanding of agency and progression native to that form. A self which is less based on renounced narcissism — Freud's "feminine" self — is not just a different kind of self, it is actually *less* of a social self: less able to partake in what is recognized as consciousness, less inclined to identify deeply with cultural conventions, less inclined to function, to be active, in ways that are recognized as activity.

The stories which come closest to articulating this almost originally narcissistic self in the first person are romances of the body, though the body is quite a different thing than that which is understood through a less narcissistic narrative organization. The self at the threshold of narcissistic renunciation, at the limits of narrative representation is the set of images generated in response to an amoebic, *animate* body; this kind of story is primarily descriptive, has very little internal articulation, taxonomy and narrative organization, and is organized around the elucidation of affective conditions of empathy and shared experience with the "object" described. As narcissism is renounced, as narrative gains in articulatory power and descriptive flexibility the body becomes less animate, more delimited, more instrumental, more distinct from the self. There is a splitting of the self involved in stories telling of maximally narcissistic selves, as there is in any first person narrative, but it is managed quite differently than in the stories which relate more socialized, more 'developed' characters. In less narcissistic stories the split is figured temporally and the romantic quest is one of identity. These more 'normal' stories tell of coming to find (or lose) oneself through one's

experiences or thoughts: the self either tells a story of past selves leading up to the present, or tells the story of the development into a new self. The body is always somehow connected to a self in narrative, and less narcissistic narrative organizations make the body a material instrument or obstacle meaningful in and through its participation in the quest. In romances in which the protagonist is a woman, as Frye explains, the body is likely to be primarily an instrument of *froda*, of deception or seduction as well as a prize or treasure to be guarded and given in exchange for appropriate types of masculine protagonism. In romances of male protagonism body is seen as instrument of *forza* (strength) or of physical vulnerability. In none of these less narcissistic stories is the body looked at *as the site of the project itself* but *as an object of use*. Occasionally in these 'normal' stories the split between autobiographical narrator and protagonist is figured in the present by the attribution of several selves or aspects of self within a single character. This psychomachiac story of identity then is implicitly the story of reconfiguration; the narrative relates the struggle between the various aspects of the self in romantic terms in which one of the aspects is granted protagonism, and tells the story of its attempts to gain primacy or impose a legislative unity. In this kind of narrative the body is usually made the attribute of one or another of the self's aspects. In the Judeo-Christian and Platonic tradition the flesh is usually associated with the antagonistic aspect of the self, used to figure the self's material, temporally limited aspect and identified as the self's seat of vice and pain. Often the flesh is associated with either femaleness or childishness; the renunciation of the flesh associated with the non-gendered but figurally masculine spiritual aspect of the self in a way that imitates the gender drama implicit in the Freudian narrative of Oedipal renunciation of original narcissism.

This analogy is structural rather than contingent in the narrative articulation of Freud's idea of narcissism; with "masculinity" and the renunciation of narcissism the body moves from being a source of meaning to an object of meaning. The renunciation of original narcissism marks the need for identificatory relations to be articulated *intellectually*; it marks the need for narrative itself.

Identificatory relations, as Freud observed, are based on a perceived continuity of ego into the object through the figure of the extensible body, the body being both the source of the images of self-knowledge and object knowledge. Therefore a renunciation of the animated body (as an animate set of images which implicate both world and self) in favour of an instrumental body, may be inherent in any narrative based on the "masculine" Oedipal paradigm. The animate body, the body which is both world and self, remains only at the thresholds of this narrative, providing the underpinnings of the figurality which informs all narratively articulate knowledge and providing the grandest shape of the figures of the mythic cosmos.⁶³

A cultural subject, an ego, may not even be able to tell stories of animate bodies as such; these bodies get lost in the transition between our sense of them and our narration of them. Attempts to tell these stories certainly would not be romantically legitimate for in romance narrative (in which one's *body* can not be the end of the quest, but the instrument of the quest toward *identity*) they would just appear to be stories with the wrong kind of object. As such the narcissistic narrative which attempts to take itself seriously by articulating itself in romance structures end up falling into the category of the grotesque. The inappropriateness of its object makes its native story form mock-romance rather than romance. "Narcissistic narrative" is oxymoronic, for it describes a closed loop, the closing of which marks one threshold of narrative representational capability. Telling of the animate body which is both world and self collapses the gap between character and object which narrative requires if its fundamental relation — agency — is to operate. The self acting on itself in the profoundest sense makes no sense in these terms, for narrative does not operate in cosmoses soluble to "the omnipotence of thought"; even myth, the least "displaced," most "projective" (most "narcissistic," in both Freud's individual and phylogenic configurations) requires, as Frye points out, some resistance from "reality," something that is alien for protagonistism to apprehend and work against. As the world becomes more and more incoherent and alien to the self, as the romance protagonistic quest for agency is futilely absorbed in the indifferent surroundings the

representational mode becomes more realist or naturalist. Unless the self being worked on is distinguished from a self doing the working, and broken down into discrete units of agency and objectivity, mind and body, stories of the self acting on itself are doomed to be ridiculous, for they are literally nonsensical in romantic terms.

In the first half of this project I have traced the way in which notions of narrative legitimacy (the "truth" of the self's reality), gender, individual agency and forms of understanding inform two figures on either side of the modern problematic of "paranoia" in early twentieth-century Western culture. In the second half of the study I will explore the way these terms are taken up in two first-person generic forms as part of the project of articulating images of legitimate sexed selfhood.

3) **Schreber's delusion and popular heroism:**

narrating masculinity in the hard-boiled detective story.

It is not a very fragrant world, but it is the world you live in, and certain writers with tough minds and a cool spirit of detachment can make very interesting and amusing patterns out of it. But this is not enough. In everything that can be called art there is a quality of redemption... down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid... He must be the best man in his world and a good enough man for any world... He has a range of awareness that startles you, but it belongs to him by right, because it belongs to the world he lives in.

Raymond Chandler, "The Simple Art of Murder"

Throughout most of the development of his [delusion of an antagonistic conspiracy] the paranoid engages in spectator behaviour, carefully noting much of what others miss and reaching conclusions that are likely to disagree seriously with the general consensus.... The end result finds the paranoid operating in a social field as a solitary individual with unshared beliefs and taking action which others cannot sympathize with or understand.

David Swanson, The Paranoid

We began by sketching the various ways in which the psychiatric term "paranoia" is used to describe a certain way of thinking and understanding that is associated with influential forms of twentieth-century understanding and social organization. Then, because it offers such a powerful vision of the relation of the individual psyche to social organization, we turned to Freudian psychoanalysis and explored the way in which Freud's notion of paranoia (and its associated concepts, such as narcissism) rested upon a thoroughly gendered informing narrative, a kind of basic story upon which Freud rests his notion of individual psychic development and psycho-sexual difference. Tracing paranoia back through Freud to the case study in which Freud found his exemplar of the condition, in the memoirs of Dr. Daniel Paul Schreber we find a narrative that is similarly configured

and which similarly values conventionally masculine attributes and attitudes: in it a radically individual protagonist strives, through the development of a guarded, suspicious persona and a primarily intellectualized and hermeneutic interaction with the world, to protect his autonomy — often explicitly figured as masculinity — from a powerful, if undeterminable, matrix of antagonistic forces which desires his subordination. In the present chapter I consider how this narrative configuration is narratively legitimized and culturally circulated; how the protagonist of this narrative moves from madman or freak to hero. The three central concerns of the Schreberian paranoid narrative — individuality, masculinity and reality — will be considered through an overview of the literary history of the hard-boiled detective genre and a close examination of the way in which they operate in Raymond Chandler's The Long Goodbye.

- **Paranoia, romance and the conventions of the detective story.**

Just as the narrative configuration of paranoid delusion does not emerge as the inevitable correlate of a particular state of anxiety but is patched together from available conventions of heroic defence, so too is the hard-boiled detective story no mere effusion of the mean streets of the early twentieth-century, but is a literary articulation of a particular kind of anxiety associated with American urban- (and suburban-)ization. Recognizing that genre is a socio-historical as well as formal category and that transformations in genre must be considered in relation to social change, this chapter will, however, approach this genre as a set of formal conventions and deviations which set up an image of moral action in “America,” an image intelligible (with certain significant modifications) within the broadly paranoid pattern that informs Schreber, Freud, Elbe and Morris. What there is in American society that responds to this image will have to be left at the margins of this study, drawn in where appropriate rather than examined exhaustively in its own right. The

hard-boiled detective story is a generic variation on at least two literary traditions; the first affirmed, the other disavowed. Its favoured affiliation, and that most beloved of critics is, of course, the American Western Romance, which holds that after the cowboy hero “rides off into the sunset” so to speak, he “ends up in L.A. or Chicago, buys a fedora and a trench coat, and imports the anti-Christian, anti-family, anti-feminine morality of the Old West into the big city” (Irons xiii). But though it *seems* like the hard-boiled detective should be a descendant of the cowboy because the latter is associated in the popular imagination with the late nineteenth-century and the private eye with the mid-Twentieth, as work by Dove, Hamilton, Glover and others illustrates, in fact the generic forms in which they star emerged, developed, flourished and waned in roughly the same period and in response to roughly the same social phenomena. Tough urban operatives and heroic cowboys that emerged in the cheap serials produced for Civil War soldiers remained a staple of American working class male entertainment through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, going through different modes of distribution (such as dime novel and pulp magazine formats) but not sedimenting into recognizably different genres until the 1930's.⁶⁴ They offered different and contemporaneous (rather than successive) ways in which the problems of individualism, masculinity and autonomy could be narratively worked through.

Neither should these two ways of working through the relation of a particularly gendered protagonist to the environment be seen in narrowly American terms. The American stories conform to (and interact with) a much larger body of literature which articulated a more broadly colonialist vision. David Glover argues that in the “pulp” that emerged as the dominant medium of popular literature in the early twentieth-century, the “masculinity” characteristic of both the cowboy and the hard-boiled detective

figured in a blur of genres and locales, often with a solid imperialist pedigree. The self-styled “King of Thrillers,” Edgar Wallace, is a case in point. Many of his prewar books were tales of the ‘brave’ men who ran the British Empire in Africa like *Sanders of the River* (1911), and appropriately enough, one of his later successes was the film script for *King Kong*. ... Seen from this perspective, the rise of the hard-boiled detective was a refurbishing of already

existing masculine forms, drawing imperialist credentials from the North American prairies rather than from Africa (73-4).

Appropriating cultural conventions of masculinity to colonialist narratives allowed the marginalization of femininity as part of a larger pattern of ethnic marginalization and an implicitly class-based form of morality. The “code” of the cowboy and the hard-boiled detective — so reliant on notions of chivalry, gentility and nobility claimed by colonialist aristocracy — reinsinuates class consciousness and colonialist perspective into proudly “classless” characters. The detective’s weary struggle to tame his small corner of the urban jungle has more than a whiff of the white-man’s burden to it.

The main formal differences between the private-eye and the colonialist adventure stories (including the Western) was the urbanization of this “jungle” or frontier and a greater emphasis on a hermeneutic plot, and in both of these differences the hard-boiled detective genre touches upon the larger tradition of detective fiction. Moving the action from long ago and far away to here and now gave the private-eye stories a different kind of appeal; no longer was the dangerous world of the adventure “out there,” but it was potentially just around the corner. Setting the stories in a contemporary American urban location allowed the conventions of the adventure story to disappear within an overriding sense of “gritty realism,” their fantastic quality neutered by an overriding “truth is stranger/more sordid than fiction” convention. The urbanization of the hostile environment also significantly located the most general level of threat in *social organization* rather than in wild nature. Where in the colonialist stories antagonism is usually the result of an infernal pact between an individual within the colonialist’s party (a corrupt sheriff or a greedy company man) and some force allied with the chaotic natural environment (either desperados or savages of some lurid red or black hue), leaving the colonialist hero to defend the pocket of civilization in a wild land, in the hard-boiled detective story (or at least Chandler’s version of it) the sole pocket of civilization is the detective’s own rational, morally autonomous self and the infernal pact he has to thwart is the one

social/collective organizations in all or almost all of their forms (business, family, romance, organized crime) attempt to make with his own body. It is the city, present as a figure of the evil posed by social organization as such to the autonomous individual's moral self-governance, that defines the hard-boiled detective.

The urban setting also defines his most effective kind of action: investigation. Given that the detective is largely alone within a hostile social environment, he does not have the technological superiority to annihilate the collective threat as the African adventurer routs entire tribes of pygmies and as the cowboy does whole Apache war-parties, nor does he have the option of then turning to face an individual antagonist in a narrowly conscribed showdown that he will win because of the moral superiority bestowed upon him by his greater masculine individualism. Instead, in the detective's city, the most effective kind of action is that geared to *meaning*. The detective tries to control his antagonists' knowledge of him, while attempting to gather enough information about them to make an effective — and defensible — intervention.

This struggle for knowledge as the precursor to effective self-defence or intervention, is of course, an attribute of paranoid self-understanding, and like the paranoid's, the detective's narrative progression is broken into two movements: an investigative phase, and a phase of resolution. In Swanson's summary of clinical descriptions of paranoia, he writes that

Potentially paranoid thinking is initiated in the homeostatic individual when he perceives a pronounced change in his internal environment which is inexplicable or unacceptable.... Because of its vagueness there is less tendency to react motrically, rather, the individual utilizes his unique method of diminishing a sense of threat, namely, that of altering his conceptualization of the world. Prior to reaching the paranoid conclusion the patient often engages in a scanning maneuver (obsessive ruminations) before hitting upon the effective presumption of external fault. A new generalization incorporating an explanation for the perceived threat provides the patient with a sense of closure and therefore security. (275-76)

However, for Swanson, if the "new generalization" cannot provide closure, cannot restore homeostasis to the individual and reduce his sense of threat, the patient moves from spectator to "participant" behaviour that

usually brings the patient into conflict with his environment, which then isolates him in some way because of his unwarranted suspiciousness, hostility or grandiosity in reference to persons real or imagined. The end result finds the paranoid patient operating in a social field as a solitary individual with unshared beliefs and taking action which others cannot sympathize with or understand. (272)

Similarly, when the detective is confronted by a situation of trauma and an obscure and incomprehensible narrative account (or series of accounts) of that trauma. Relying on his ability to synthesize a "true" narrative from the mishmash of stories, he insists first on gathering all the details. Then the detective applies his or her methods, both rational and intuitive, in order to produce the true narrative, a production which not only articulates the truth, but also, frequently precipitates justice as the criminal recognizes his or her exposure. Through the process of investigation the detective will likely meet some kind of resistance, threat or ridicule, and even in his or her actions designed to reveal the criminal may face serious disbelief, opposition and ostracization. But, unlike the paranoid, who is recognized as such when his or her narrative is renarrativized in a more legitimate, medical/scientific narrative of his or her insanity (as Freud's analysis renarrativized Schreber's memoirs), the detective presents the final, authoritative, and, as it usually turns out, true version of events. The authority of the detective's narrative does not rely on some external value structure, or if it does, that authority is secondary to the confirmation of the truth of his narrative. In the hard-boiled detective story the solipsism of this moral authority is magnified to the extent that external validation and social recognition are contrary to the narrative's *true* (or valid, at any rate) sense of justice. With this solipsism the scale of resolution shrinks as well, from a society-wide resolution (crime is banished) to a far more provisional, individual resolution (my moral authority, such as it is, is intact, but crime is as pervasive as ever).

As in a paranoid's fondest dream, the hidden truth of events, having been narratively revealed by the detective, emerge in reality in response to the power of that revelation (in the form of the production of some irrefutable evidence or confession from the criminal or accomplices), and

then justifies a return of the proper order of things (the criminal is apprehended or otherwise vanquished). It is a tricky situation; if the detective is wrong, he or she is just another quasi-paranoid, mildly pompous would-be sleuth like those shown up by Christie's Miss Marple⁶⁵ or called "romantic busy-bodies" by Poe's Auguste Dupin.⁶⁶ But though the detective walks this line, he or she is narratively validated; it is his or her story, after all. That mysterious level of events presumed by the paranoid turns out to be the truth of the world of the detective, and his or her penetration of that level indicates his or her extraordinary nature. The detective, in general, is the figure of the paranoid seen from the inside of his or her own delusion, within the terms of romantic heroism.

This connection between literary detection and the management of anxiety about the individual's relation to the world is a common explanation for the genre's popularity. W.H. Auden, noting the addictive, compulsive nature of reading ("Golden Age") detective stories, suggests that the hermeneutic specialization of the detective plot re-enacts a version of Freud's grandson's "*fort-da*" game (14). It provides a transitory, recreational, intellectually satisfying puzzle in which a tiny crisis is enacted and satisfactorily resolved. More important, it provides a narrative configuration which reaffirms the validity of society as a mediate cosmic structure. Auden attributes its appeal to "a generalized sense of sin" in its readership, a latent guilt which is temporarily contained and banished in the plot of the detective story which, Robin Winks notes, effects the "catharsis of placing guilt *just there*" (9). Like other formula fiction, detective stories, for Auden, effect a *reassuring* identification. Character and setting are stable. Any glimpse of disorder is viewed in the knowledge that there will be an agent known to be able to reintroduce order. A threat to the claim of society to orient the individual in the cosmos is introduced, then banished: *fort, da*.

For this reason, because it reassures rather than disturbs, Auden and others (including Sayers) relegate detective fiction to the realm of escapist or formula literature, which is opposed to "serious" literature. The identification effected by serious literature, as John Cawalti argues, is "at once detached and disturbingly sympathetic" (19) in that it provokes self-reflection and reassessment

at some level. It forces the reader to place him or herself in a narrative cosmos of flux and uncertainty experienced vicariously through a character who is profoundly affected by his or her experiences. Plot closure is reduced and sequence and suspense fade in importance while consideration of the character and his or her experienced world are foregrounded. The narrative configuration of the "Golden Age" detective story — the kind associated with Agatha Christie and Ellery Queen, for example, against which Chandler takes such umbrage — on the other hand, affirms that even if the ordinary social individual is morally and intellectually imperfect, he or she is neither culpable for nor required to address the violence and disorder perceived to threaten the social organism, for society has recourse to an extra-social mechanism of neutralizing that chaos: the detective.

As well, in this configuration crime is figured as an individually motivated and temporally isolated event which can be neutralized by a certain *method* of address. As Sweeney observes, the detective, and along with him the reader, act in the investigation as temporally tardy doppelgängers, retracing (sometimes literally) the footsteps of the criminal in order to undo mentally what the criminal did physically before mastering that act and articulating it for judicial consumption by expressing the story of its causes. As the reader gets better at playing along at home, as it were, the sense of omnipresent threat which crime presents in other narrative configurations is neutralized. Murder, as was long ago noted, becomes an occasion for pleasure, guilt and anxiety are addressed only to be assuaged, and the latent sense of sin is made manageable through its distinction from the guilty *act* which is, finally, an act of individualism in contravention of social integrity that is neutralized by another, equally extra-social act of individualism in the service of social integrity.

What is established in this kind of Golden Age detective story, Frank Kermode argues, is the image of a stable, inclusive cosmos peopled with fundamentally knowable characters in a fundamentally knowable world that does not itself require the hermeneutic anxiety that comes with the need to interpret. He writes, "the hermeneutic specializations of the detective story [are]

transformed in the interests of *truth*, in the cause of enabling us to live in the world as it is, as it simply *is*, lacking all meaning but that signified in our texts" (188). This universe and these characters may not be benign, but the malignancy of individual characters is individually motivated and thus subject to the constraints of their place within a social totality; normality is meaningless, deviation is significant but isolated and readable by those of extraordinary perspicuity. Frye elaborates: The detective story, he writes,

is, in a comic context, an epiphany of law, a balancing and neutralizing activity in society, the murderer discovered at the end balancing the corpse that we normally find at the beginning. Though this brings the law down on the murderer, it is unsatisfying, as law is not justice, though at its best it may point in the direction of justice. In literature as in life, the only real justice is poetic justice and the story of the triumph of law does not quite achieve this. (Anatomy 137)

Just as the identification of the criminal at the end balances and cancels out the corpse at the beginning, the criminal, in effect, is balanced by and cancels out the detective, leaving an image of society too static to harbour the potentially radical social dynamism necessary to give an act of determining justice the sense of making or breaking a society's fortunes. Justice is unsatisfying because it lacks this sense of social *meaningfulness*: crime and its detection are individual acts and the focus of identification is with the society as a whole. The act of crime in this genre indicates a basic antisociality, a radical individualism which rejects the civilizing identity granted by society, and effects an exile — first in act, later in fact — from the individual's proper home, among other people in an ordered collectivity. The narrative structure of the Golden-Age detective story minimizes that aspect of literature deemed its essence by Roland Barthes; its "cacographic" function (S/Z 151) that enables it to communicate what William Paulson calls "the noise of culture" — the plurality, inconsistency and affective intensity of visions of order and truth within a community. Just as one of its constitutive conventions places the central action in some form of locked room, the Golden-Age detective story sets up a carefully sealed — almost noiseless — reading environment which filters out cosmic flux and character dynamism.

- **Murder in the first person: paranoia and the private eye.**

The Long Goodbye is not a typical hard-boiled detective novel. It is much longer, more loosely plotted, more digressive and more discursive, but these intrageneric variations allow it to more fully and self-consciously engage its conventions. In it the attributes of the hard-boiled detective are more fully explored than in any novel of the genre to that point. Published in 1953, in a period in which Chandler's articulation of the convention had already become something of a cliché, it offered the opportunity to self-consciously consider the implications and manifestations of the hard-boiled convention. This generic self-consciousness is very present in Robert Altman's 1972 cinematic version of the novel. It is impossible in a study of this length to adequately represent the narrative diversity of a subgenre which includes literally thousands of stories and novels, not to mention those which appropriate or modify its convention to some extent. Therefore my use of The Long Goodbye is more demonstrative than representative of the convention while recognizing that it does itself diverge significantly. The Long Goodbye is perhaps a kind of limit case, for it extends the genre's eponymous protagonist toward one of the bleaker limits of his character, bringing out the profoundly, if justifiably, paranoid substructure of his world and his way of dealing with it. Its protagonist is the most tortured, self-doubting and troubled of Chandler's several incarnations of Philip Marlowe, an influential variation that will lend an *ethos* to later incarnations of the hard-boiled detective, but because of its extremity, one not widely appropriated and elaborated, with some notable exceptions, such as the work of Ross MacDonal, John MacDonal and Robert B. Parker, for example. What representative validity The Long Goodbye may claim is a function of its being the most narratively self-aware and discursive of the works of the most influential articulator of the convention. It is the book which bears witness, in a sense, to the convention in the moment of its popular ossification and cultural diffusion.

In The Long Goodbye we find world-weary fortysomething private investigator Philip Marlowe living in a temporary, rented house in an inner suburb of early 1950's Los Angeles. Passing a fancy nightclub one night he witnesses a rather distinguished looking young man he will come to know as Terry Lennox drunk to the point of passing out, being abandoned by a woman and about to be thrown onto the street by a bouncer. Picking the man up, Marlowe takes him home, cleans him up and sends him on his way. They become friends, of a sort, sharing drinks and carefully guarded conversation in which Lennox alludes to a tragic past involving Nazi atrocities, present complications involving his re-marriage to a society heiress of questionable reputation, her powerful father, billionaire newspaper magnate Harlan Potter, and some kind of bond with "friends" that include local gangster Mendy Menendez and Vegas "businessman" Randy Starr. When Terry shows up in a panic at Marlowe's early one morning after his wife has been murdered, Marlowe agrees to help him "escape" to Mexico, though, of course, we know that if Marlowe had any doubt about Terry's innocence he would have done no such thing. Marlowe is harassed by Potter's and Menendez's people who want Marlowe to keep silent about his role in the affair, and interrogated, beaten and jailed by the police who want him to speak out. When Lennox is found dead beside a hand-written suicide note in a Mexican hotel room, the case seems to be closed, though Marlowe retains a bad feeling about the whole thing.

Marlowe is then contacted by the publisher of a once prolific writer of trashy historical novels whose powers of pulp production have mysteriously subsided. The writer — Roger Wade — has been having trouble with alcohol of late, and, as his wife Eileen Wade reports, has been growing increasingly violent when drunk. Marlowe declines the case, arguing that Wade needs a babysitter and a shrink rather than a P.I., but when Wade falls off the wagon and disappears Marlowe agrees to find him and bring him home. Rescuing Wade from a doctor bent on extortion at a shady drying-out clinic, Marlowe finds himself drawn into the affairs of the Wades and their community, the wealthy Orange County enclave of Idle Valley, where, it turns out, Terry Lennox had also lived and

Sylvia Lennox (née Potter) had died.

Things begin to get complicated. Finding Terry's name emerging repeatedly in his encounters with the Idle Valleyites, Marlowe is approached by Potter's other daughter — Linda Loring — and brought to Potter himself to be warned to let the Lennox/Potter affair alone, for, it turns out, Terry was the respectable front masking Sylvia's nymphomaniacal habits and Mr. Potter is keen to avoid scandal. Similar warnings come from Menendez who seems to have an interest in letting the memory of Terry Lennox die in Mexico with its object. The "dreamlike" Eileen Wade begins to make sexual advances on Marlowe, Roger becomes increasingly violent and unpredictable (because, as a lover of Sylvia Lennox — driven to her by the frigidity of his wife, of course — he fears that in a black-out state of drunkenness, he became her killer), before himself apparently committing suicide. Once again Marlowe is unpleasantly involved and treated badly by the authorities for his refusal to speak. Pursing the sordid web of relations between the inhabitants of Idle Valley, Marlowe finds time to have an extremely brief and rather wooden sexual interlude with Linda Loring, and comes to realize that Eileen Wade was formerly the wife of Terry Lennox (under another name, before he was presumed lost in the war), and that she was the killer of both Sylvia and Roger Wade. Knowing he could not gather enough evidence to ensure a conviction, Marlowe confronts her with her guilt, lets her believe she will be convicted, and waits until she, in turn, kills herself. Pulling a few strings to have her confession published in the newspaper, suddenly Terry's suicide begins to look improbable, and despite the efforts of Menendez — who owes Terry a favour for saving him in the war — and the police — who want to keep the Lennox file closed — Marlowe draws Terry out of hiding in Mexico to gain the opportunity to denounce him to his face for "moral defeatism" and to disavow their friendship forever, leaving our hero Marlowe as lonely and cynical as before.

- **Legitimacy: reality vs conventionality**

By the time Chandler started writing The Long Goodbye, largely because of its cinematic success in the preceding decade (to which Chandler contributed significantly) the hard-boiled detective had become a character-type, a recognizably conventionalized figure. In that transformation the hard-boiled detective lost some of his gritty "realism" but had gained the iconic ability to conjure up an entire mood, world and way of being with a few simple gestures or phrases. Subordinating conventionality to a sense of realism is essential to the prevention of as serious a character as the hard-boiled detective from sliding into parody and self-parody. The narrative voice must seem to originate from a "normal" individual who happens to be a P.I. rather than a literary P.I. trying to seem normal, a subordination of literary conventionality to the authenticity of the voice of "the normal individual" that is characteristic, Frye argues, of low-mimetic (novelistic / "realist") prose (Anatomy 226). However, in the case of Chandler's hard-boiled detective this presents a bit of a problem, for not only is Marlowe a "normal individual," he is also the *only* truly moral individual in his story. As Chandler writes in "The Simple Art of Murder" (1950), his detective occupies the real world, "the world you live in," but is "the best man in his world" ("Simple" 189), morally superior to that world (which is also "our" world). Though Marlowe sets himself up as a figure of broad identification in his narration, he also paints himself as standing sharply apart from the others. This seemingly untenable duality converges again with the problem of the paranoid. How can one be both idiosyncratic and normal?

Marlowe's narration addresses this problem at the level of discourse, exploiting the sense of "objectivity" given by the broadly realist voice. As Terry Eagleton points out,

Realist literature tends to conceal the socially relative or constructed nature of language: it helps to confirm the prejudice that there is a form of 'ordinary' language which is somehow natural. This natural language gives us reality 'as it is': it does not... distort it into subjective shapes, but represents the world to us as God himself might know it. (Literary 18)

Calling this appropriation of realist discourse central to the “hard-boiled ideology,” Bethany Ogdon explains further:

The supposedly realist character of the genre implies that the hard-boiled writer (and his detective) are ideologically detached from those they describe. The actual identities of the people who populate the hard-boiled social environment are subsumed into the blank category, ‘reality’. As readers we are supposed already to recognize this environment and corroborate its veracity; hard boiled language becomes a transparent transmitter of documentary evidence. (74)

Other positions are represented in the novel as somehow excessive, an excessiveness that is figured as corporeal incontinence. For Ogdon

Those who both populate and pollute the universe of the hard-boiled universe are described in terms of excess: excess of smell (stink), excess body fluids (sweat, urine, tears, vomit), and/or excess desire (sexual proclivity, sexual perversion, greed, cunning and so forth). The hard-boiled detective describes a world in which he is the sole ‘normal’ person; he describes a world in which he is constantly under siege. (76)

The objective reality of the hard-boiled detective is thus anchored to his “normal” body, a body that is, while unruly and subject to the desires and problems of other bodies, under control or subject to his will. Lennox is scarred and frail, Wade is bulky and sanguine, with problems holding his drink. Menendez is slick and Latino, Potter is huge and ascetic, Petersen is tanned and plasticized, Eileen Wade is inhumanly beautiful. This list could continue; others are described in terms of their odd external attributes while Marlowe’s external body is described only as an instrument mediating between Marlowe and his world. We find virtually no description of Marlowe’s own body, except for the relation of instances in which he is forced to confront its limitations (pain, desire) or in which women comment on his attractiveness. He anchors his claim to the normative perspective of common sense reality, by representing others in their corporeal divergence from the instrumental relation he has toward his own body.

Despite his use of colloquial language and the frequent relation of mundane details, one thing that undermines Marlowe’s attempt to set up a realist perspective in his narration, is the

apparent similarity of his subject matter (violence and emotional extremity of all sorts including, always, murder) to that characteristic of conventionally romantic or Gothic fiction. Marlowe's solution, like Schreber's, is to dispute the reality or moral validity of the apparent world, while describing his encounters with the true "real." For Marlowe in The Long Goodbye the "ordinary" world is a tissue of structures erected to satisfy the romantic yearnings of people who desire anything *but* reality. For example, after being exposed to the depravity and brutality of life in the luxurious Wade mansion, Marlowe remarks: "'What I like about Idle Valley' [...] is that everybody is living just a comfortable normal life'" (244). "Idle Valley" he comments "was having a perfect summer. Somebody had planned it that way. Paradise Incorporated, and also Highly Restricted" (248). Idle Valley is "real," as are its beauty and ostensible civility, but that "reality" is enabled by a set of founding exclusions — superficially based on class or race but practically manifest as the exclusion (through the mechanism of "taste" or "manners") of most (for Chandler) "normal" human forms of interaction. Its "realer" reality, accessible to Marlowe but denied or willfully ignored by its inhabitants, is the pattern of latent violence crystallized in this unstable structure. Marlowe's scorn is not reserved for the obviously constructed "normality" of life in a rich enclave, but includes middle-American "normality" as well. As for a life which includes "an eight-room house, two cars in the garage, chicken every Sunday and the Reader's Digest on the living room table, the wife with a cast-iron permanent and me with a brain like a sack of Portland cement," he remarks, "You take it friend" (249).

In contrast to the smothering and unreal stasis of his portrait of middle-American family life, Chandler plunges Marlowe into a world of murder and emotional extremity, not because he has a romantic taste for the grotesque but because it conforms to the Hobbesian truth of the human condition that his work allows to penetrate the screen of social nicety. Murder is an act of the kind of savagery that lay barely concealed and barely contained in all human relations, an act which could be countered only by refusing to harbour illusions about the civilized nature of people in social

relations. This equation of reality with brutal sex and violence may not be true, and may be, as Jacques Barzun argues, a particularly American, particularly modern presumption (158),⁶⁷ but Chandler's postulation of a Hobbesian reality is *generically* necessary. If not a verisimilar representation of "reality" as Chandler suggests, it is at least one of the governing presumptions of hard-boiled detective fiction, deeply imbricated in the way that genre sets up and morally charges the relation between the individual and society. By casting "our" reality as fictional, then, Chandler could thus claim for his fiction a representative relation to a kind of deeper reality ("Simple" 188), based on its attention to the truth of our fundamentally unsafe and amoral cosmic environment in which brutality is the norm. Hard-boiled detective stories, Chandler explains, "were about men who ... made it [their] business to see that justice was done. ... It was work they could always get. There was plenty of it lying around. There still is. Undoubtedly the stories about them had a fantastic element. Such things happened, but not so rapidly, nor to so close-knit a group of people, nor within so narrow a frame of logic" ("Simple" 8). The fictionality of the genre, for Chandler, does not distort what it represents; it brings it into focus and gives it intelligibility and coherence.

Like the narrators of the transsexual autobiographies we will consider, Marlowe frequently has to explicitly address, confront and refute the sense that romantic narrative convention shapes his ostensibly realist narrative. For example, when Marlowe, heartsick at the violence and incomprehensibility of his world, comes home and turns on his TV set he finds "a crime show." "The dick," he comments, "had a colored houseboy for comic relief. He didn't need it, he was plenty comical all by himself. And the commercials would have sickened a goat raised on barbed wire and beer bottles" (99). Marlowe, serious, disillusioned, shabby, alone, confronts representations of his life and work on TV and in pulp fiction magazines which are caricatured in the banal terms of consumer entertainment. At this moment when the character of the hard boiled detective is both widely recognizable *as* a character — thus prone to parody — and still capable of communicating a profound way of being in the world a novel like The Long Goodbye works to

recover the ethos of the hard-boiled detective from his evisceration at the hands of the consumer-driven entertainment industry. Though offhand examples of this kind are scattered through the novel, Chandler's devotion of an entire chapter⁶⁸ of The Long Goodbye to a description of the banality and triviality of a "normal" day in Marlowe's professional life is an even more sustained attempt to reinforce these denials of the romanticism of Marlowe's existence and his non-identity with the popular caricatures and clichés of his profession.

One of the more powerful romantic structures that this realist discourse has to obscure in the hard-boiled detective novel is the centrality of the protagonist and his experience. Frye observes that:

the central form of the romance is dialectical; everything is focused on the conflict between the hero and his enemy, and all of the reader's values are bound up with the hero.... The conflict, however, takes place in, or at any rate primarily concerns, *our* world, which is in the middle... (Anatomy, 187).

Like the paranoid, who in his delusions exhibits "centrality" and "grandiosity," Chandler insists that in hard-boiled detective fiction the detective "is the hero, he is everything" ("Simple" 188). Though other forms of detective fiction focus almost exclusively on the detective, unlike the classical and English conventions of detective fiction the first person narration of hard-boiled fiction presents investigation *phenomenally* rather than as a *spectacle*. This reinforces the attempt to yoke the detective's claim to normality to his simultaneous claim to extraordinary individuality. Sherlock Holmes faces no such problem; his work may be apprehended with uncomprehending awe, fascination and sometimes derision or moral discomfort, but it is always looked *at*. Holmes is, and constructs himself as,⁶⁹ an extraordinary *character* separate from the reality of the normal world. For Marlowe, however, who relies upon the reader's eventual moral sanction to justify his execution of vigilante justice, presents his experience in the highly sympathetic terms of an intelligent, witty, sensitive, caring and competent individual, making the morally elevated separateness of his perspective a positive basis for identification.⁷⁰

Where the individualism of a Sherlock Holmes, for example, is used, in Watson's narration, to establish his quality of *otherness*, the individualism of Philip Marlowe is the basis of his *us-ness*, it is the site of identification. The corollary of this is the refiguration of society. No longer is it the Watsonian island of civility threatened on all sides by the encroach of chaos and criminality, it is the crystallization of that principle of criminality itself. Like a perverse fable of the bees in which private vice, ungoverned at the level of the individual, produces structures of legitimated and accepted public vice (or moral weakness) which presents itself as public virtue, the society which Marlowe apprehends is a machinery of mutual illusion and collusion in vice that indeed produces the objects and structures of happiness, but cannot provide moral fulfilment because it necessarily curtails the personal autonomy that underlies Marlowe's morality.

The opposition between this undetermined, self-determining individuality and a mode of existence "corrupted" by collectivity can be understood in terms of psychologist John Nyes' axiom that "the paranoid renounces love and the masochist renounces power"; in narrative terms, that is, the "paranoid" position is defined by its apprehension of others as objects through instrumental (often hermeneutic or instrumental) relations that facilitate control and self-determination, while the "masochist" position apprehends others by identifying them with its self, a position that allows agency to fluctuate between the self and those it encounters. Marlowe's world conforms to that postulated by the subjectivity Silverman associates with "masculine masochism," in which one's identity is based on the experience of social relationships as painful impingements, and in which "love" is a mode of oppression of individuality and thus a source of moral weakness and a channel of corruption. Marlowe's refusal to "disavow the conditions of cultural subjectivity" (to accept, in this genre's terms, the claims made by society upon the individual) opens himself up to suffering and vulnerability, but living in this state of *Unglauben* (Lacan's lack of belief) offers a particular kind of pleasure in pain. Because he suffers and remains pure he has recourse to an alternate source of agency (his individuality and masculinity), and can (again, within the terms of this narrative structure)

legitimately and morally exercise that agency as the story moves from crisis to climax with a sadism or aggressive agency that balances his suffering.

However, unlike the male masochistic narrative appropriated by the romance structures of stories more in line with a simple conspiracy structure, Marlowe's suffering is never completely balanced by his righteous wrath. A detective like Spillane's Mike Hammer or an adventure hero like Rambo moves through an apocalyptic narrative that is exaggerated, literalized and closed: he moves through the complete axis of romance, in Frye's terms, from absolute objectivity to omnipotent subjectivity, an oscillation, William Warner notes in Rambo's case, "from a passive 'feminine', masochistic position to an active, 'masculine', sadistic one" (680). Warner encapsulates the narrative movement of this form: finding himself "almost entirely cut off from others, [the protagonist] endures the most insidious forms of manipulation and pain, [but then] reaches into primordial levels of the self, and emerges a hero with powers sufficient to fight the System to the point of its catastrophe" (675). The literalization of this narrative is revealed in a complete and coherent undoing of deception, a melodramatic separation of the good from the evil. As Ryan and Kellner point out, with reference to Norman Jewison's Rollerball, "no middle ground is allowed" in this dichotomized narrative, "anything that departs from the ideal of pure individual freedom (corporations, but also socialism) is by implication lumped under domination" (256).

According to Peter Brooks, the melodramatic mode which informs this self vs. System opposition is central to the modern sensibility. Insisting, for Brooks, "that behind reality, hidden by it and yet indicated within it, there is a realm where large moral forces are operative, where large choices of ways of being must be made" (21), "the melodramatic imagination" Toril Moi summarizes, "seeks transcendence, significance and meaning in the apparently ordinary details of everyday life" (Beauvoir 98). In so far, Brooks argues, as it takes every sign to refer to some other transcendent truth hidden behind the veneer of contingent phenomena, melodrama turns everything into a potential metaphor (20-21). In this sense melodrama has what Moi calls "a distinctly

epistemological aspect... it is about the need for insight or clarification, the need to spell out the opposing factions engaged in moral or ethical battle” (1994, 99). The confused events of apparent reality must be properly “read,” and the results of that reading must be used to justify heroic action. For Cawalti, the emphasis on the two movements within the melodramatic structure (which are fused in true melodrama) indicate the generic opposition between mystery and adventure stories: the former plays out a fantasy of the assertion of rational order over secrecy, chaos, and irrationality, while the latter realizes a “fantasy of heroic triumph over insuperable obstacles” (45). The melodrama proper, for Cawalti, shows “how the complex ambiguities and tragedies of the world ultimately reveal operation of a benevolent, humanly oriented moral order.” “Within certain basic limits of plausibility and audience acceptance,” Cawalti observes, “the more realistic, tragic and overpowering the evil plots, the more satisfying the ultimate triumph of the good” (45). This understanding of melodrama certainly casts light on the hard-boiled detective story (which Cawalti places firmly in the realm of true melodrama), for it accounts both for its hermeneutic emphasis and its incorporation of the logic of male masochism for narrative motivation.

These observations about melodrama illuminate the narrative nature of paranoia. The two phases of paranoia, as Swanson explains, roughly correspond to the division within melodrama between mystery and adventure narratives: there is a “high scanning phase” in which information is processed and a delusional narrative formed (this paranoid is “a driven man in search of a good hypothesis”), and then, if the pressure of the situation increases, the paranoid may move into an active phase: having discovered his “good hypothesis” he “uses it from there on to explain and justify his responses to the world” (269). However, where in either mystery or adventure narratives the mode of response (hermeneusis or physical action) is sufficient to “purge the social order” (Moi 1994, 98) and to make complexity and ambiguity melt away to reveal a benevolent human order, in neither paranoia nor the hard-boiled detective story is this kind of melodramatic *telos* achieved. In paranoia there is a continuity between active and scanning behaviour; because the paranoid is

fundamentally convinced of his *powerlessness* his primary course of action is necessarily hermeneutic, for that is the mode of activity in which he can act without being perceived and without provoking an overwhelming antagonistic response. What action he or she takes is always rather desperate, undertaken rather reluctantly and is often fatalistic or coloured by self-conscious sense of doom, for it necessitates the abandonment of the relatively safe isolation of the scanning phase. The paranoid may *fantasize* him or herself in a melodramatic adventure narrative, and may act *as if* the mystery-type melodrama were viable, but neither provides him or her with the final resolution he or she seeks: thus the paranoid's hypothesis or delusion does not assuage his or her anxiety, but merely *manages* it.

Similarly, the hard-boiled detective story *postulates* a melodramatic schism between the world he encounters and the world he desires; but this governing schism is never fully realized in his experience. Unlike the hero of an adventure or mystery story, Marlowe is never able to "spell out the opposing factions engaged in moral or ethical battle" with any determinacy and can thus never achieve or bring about "transcendence." Everything is certainly potential metaphor, but it remains vehicle without tenor. Because the enemy cannot be identified, because the antagonist's power is so diffuse there is a narratological *asymmetry* between individual and system not present in either the mystery or the adventure forms of conspiracy narrative. Marlowe can have a gut feeling of the moral value of autonomy, but the threats to that autonomy *are not located at the level of another individual*. Thus, like the paranoid, his mode must primarily be *defensive*, his action deferred and displaced into knowledge gathering that will facilitate not precisely the mobilization of his own strength, but the method of intervention that will force the antagonist, by its own logic, to turn against itself.

Like the high-scanning paranoid, Marlowe knows that insight and observation are the modes of agency available to the unaffiliated individual. And, in Marlowe's world at least, these faculties have some power to undo individual instances of the corruption of various collectivities. Marlowe's largely observant presence and circumstantial interventions are resisted in various ways: he is implicitly threatened with the loss of his licence by Harlan Potter, beaten and threatened by Mendy

Menendez's gang and on more than one occasion beaten or incarcerated by the police. Though Marlowe can intervene in personal situations, he cannot alter the situational determinants like the police or Potter or Menendez can. He is limited in his ability to buy off, threaten or intimidate anybody, except by using the knowledge his autonomy has allowed him to play off one nodule of corruption off against another, threatening to mobilize their respective power against each other. For example, he pries information from Menendez's associate, Vegas "businessman" Randy Starr, by mobilizing the latent conflict of interest between Starr's activity (which involves Lennox's disappearance and change of identity) and the wishes of Harlan Potter, who certainly would prefer that Lennox be and remain dead and gone: "I know someone who could blow you out of Vegas without taking a long breath. Believe me, Mr. Starr" (355), he tells him. Unlike the other characters in the novel, Marlowe is not a subject of any particular social organization, either as its presumed "master" or its object. Instead, he moves in the interstices between various organizations and collective structures, negotiating with them on their own terms and playing them off against one another without ever being imbricated in their operations and obligations. He can play the lover with women but will never commit to any formal relationship or be completely seduced sexually; he can play the law officer with cops, but takes justice into his own hands; he knows the ways of the organized crime syndicates but refuses to be bought off by them; he knows how to gain access to the information gathering resources of corporations and bureaucracies like "The Carne Organization" (137-40) without leaving a record of his presence by making alliances with dissatisfied employees who recognize in him an outsider and an opportunity to operate in an "individual" way, contrary to company or bureaucratic policy.

To that end Marlowe occupies a rather indeterminate social position. Marlowe is a voluntary member of the lower-middle class, and this suits the narrative fairly well, for it positions him just outside social norms without isolating him from those norms altogether; he is not poor enough to need to work all the time, by choice not comfortable enough to become trapped in a cycle of

consumption, and certainly not wealthy enough to need to protect his wealth. His interaction with others indicates a desire to exclude himself from all class identification. He can snub the well-off by demonstrating an obvious familiarity with high culture and high society. For example, in The Long Goodbye when Roger Wade attempts to intimidate him with literary references, Marlowe is able to outflank him with an offhand comment about Flaubert which simultaneously demonstrates his competence in the field and its irrelevance (173). And when Marlowe attends an Idle Valley cocktail party at the Wades' he notes its banality ("Life was one big Vaudeville act to them" [179]). After watching a couple of drunken fights, remarks: "Every cocktail party is the same, even the dialogue" (180). Though familiar with all social strata, he sees through the various class pretensions and identifies with none, preferring an often shabby exterior and an affectedly streetwise facade. A detective like Marlowe is no working class hero either; his detachedness borne of cynicism and general misanthropy modulates into petty snobbery with regard to the working classes. Marlowe's treatment of "Candy" (his own derogatory nickname), the Wades' Hispanic houseboy, and Amos, their black chauffeur, is patronizing when not dismissive or threatening. With no particular social markings the detective is able to inhabit the paranoid's ideal subject position, becoming an almost unseen seer, an almost unknown knower, until the end of the story when the detective's work attracts attention of those (generally alienated from the law) who love his kind of justice and of those on both sides of the law who despise his activity. Just as paranoid bias finds its complement in the suggestibility of others, Marlowe's self-exclusion appeals to that aspect of American subjectivity which, ironically, conforms in its valuation of moral non-conformity. The first person voice of his narration effectively brings the reader in to his individualism, allowing him to carry off his trick of positioning himself as an outsider and yet commanding an identification based on moral normativity.

In addition to the narrative's construction of a realist normativity above a melodramatic substructure in an effort to cultivate a *sympathy* for this character that might make us *accept* his

vigilante justice, we realize that Marlowe's *insight* confers upon him moral superiority that *obliges* him to execute justice for the simple reason that he is the only one aware enough to know the truth and morally strong enough to do what that knowledge requires. Just as delusional bias is rationalized as the product of the paranoid's superior hermeneutic ability, awareness or attention to 'the truth', Marlowe's moral superiority is accompanied by an ability to penetrate the deceptiveness of his double-layered world: "He has a range of awareness that startles you," Chandler writes, "but it belongs to him by right, because it belongs to the world he lives in" ("Simple" 189-90). In order to be good in "our" evil world, one needs to have a startling range of awareness, one needs to be hyper-alert and eternally suspicious. Our world, then, is split, sundered by a schism between truth and appearance that most of us, we who are not detectives (or paranoid enough), do not realize or react to. There are ethical implications to the divided nature of our reality: "normal" understanding, not able to delve deeply into our world's darkness, cannot know the truth of good and evil, nor can the mechanism for determining justice on the level of corrupt superficiality. Marlowe's narration bridges this schism for the reader: although we may have no experience of Marlowe's dark reality, his moral elevation and hermeneutic vigilance can show us what we have been missing and indicate to us how it can be properly managed.

The struggle to retain the illusion of realism boils down, then, on two levels to the struggle to maintain the integrity of Marlowe's individuality, an individuality that would be undermined if he were to be seen as a general character type. His individuality makes him a sympathetically normal character compared to all those he encounters who are enmeshed in relationships that bind and oppress them, and it also makes Marlowe a morally responsible character, as it allows him to be accountable only to himself, uncompromised by responsibility, obligation or demand. Reading Marlowe stereotypically or as an example of the hard-boiled detective convention is an interpretive transgression. But it is a delicate balance: the narrative has to parade out the conventions to make sure that the reader is aware of what is expected of Marlowe, but then it warns the reader away from

reducing Marlowe to those conventions by staging a series of little dramas in which Marlowe's antagonists size him up and dismiss him, only to have Marlowe exceed their expectations and thwart their plans.

- **urbanity, conspiracy and individualism.**

If the detective story deviates from the colonialist adventure in its choice of an urban setting that privileges hermeneutic over physical prowess, the hard-boiled detective parts company from its English counterparts in its different representation of the urban environment, a difference that introduces a tremendous amount of "noise" into the reading experience and shifts the emphasis back from plot to character. No longer does crime provoke the question "Whodunit?" but demands "How can it best be dealt with?" For G.K. Chesterton, the classic detective story is set in a modern, urban version of an essentially romantic cosmos in which romantic action is measured in terms of antagonistic deception and protagonistic deduction. The city is a world in which criminality can *hide*, and the detective's power is the power to know its possibilities of deception. Detective fiction, he writes, is

the only form of popular literature which expresses some of the poetry of modern life. ... Of this realization of a great city itself as something wild and obvious the detective story is certainly the "Iliad." No one can have failed to notice that in these stories the hero crosses London with something of the loneliness and liberty of a prince in a tale of elfland, that in the course of that incalculable journey, the casual omnibus assumes the primary colours of a fairy ship. The lights of the city begin to glow like innumerable goblin eyes, since they are the guardians of some secret... Every twist of the road is like a finger pointing to it; every fantastic skyline of chimney-pots seems wildly and derisively signaling the meaning of the mystery. (in Haycraft, 4)

The city in the nineteenth-century detective stories Chesterton admires is a place in which the "natural" relation between crime and justice no longer applies. It is a world which, as the product of men's work, is alien to the "natural" order inherent in the pastoral image of rusticity, and yet, figured

as a chaotic mass of undifferentiated, heterogenous humanity, is not a place of civility or civilization either. It does not inherently conform to the moral order of nature or "man," and therefore offers both the possibility of separating an immoral deed from its recognition and the possibility of recovering that true relation on a plane superior to its immanent logic. It can easily be figured as a version of the romantic waste-forest, except that the heroic response it demands is primarily interpretive. Crime, in this environment, is something that has to be "fought" and acts of criminality are now representable as things that have to be "solved."

However, as Chandler points out with regard to the hard-boiled detective story "it does not believe that murder will out and justice will be done — unless some very determined individual makes it his business to see that justice *is* done" ("Simple" 8). This more romantic configuration — a degenerate society confronted by a superior individual — informs the stories of Poe and Doyle, but largely fades in the stories of the "Golden Age," against which Chandler positions the hard-boiled detective story. The "Golden Age" detective tends to minimize the urbanity of the setting, preferring to work within small, insular groupings. In this controlled or intellectually controllable environment the hermeneutic plot could emerge largely unencumbered by the need to address romantic conventions of character or setting. This hermeneutic plot is not independent of setting, however, for its progress from uncertainty back to certainty serves, *qua* Auden, as an indicator of a fundamentally *safe* cosmic environment. The fundamental *hostility* of the hard-boiled city, on the other hand, makes the detective's intervention less a function of the *ennui* that prodded Poe's or Doyle's detectives' interest in crime. Rather, the pervasiveness of amorality *compels* moral action in the individual capable of executing such action. In one of his more discouraged moments Marlowe characterizes his agonistic relation to his environment in an appropriately bruised prose:

Out there in the night of a thousand crimes people were dying, being maimed, cut by flying glass, crushed by steering wheels or under heavy tires. People were being beaten, robbed, strangled, raped and murdered. People were hungry, sick, bored, desperate with loneliness or remorse or fear, angry, cruel, feverish, shaken by sobs. A city no worse than others, a city rich and vigorous and full of pride, a city lost and beaten and full of emptiness.

It all depends on where you sit and what your own private score is. I didn't have one. I didn't care. (274)

Of course, Marlowe does care. He cares, in the estimation of many of those he encounters, far too much and for that reason is badly affected by the human misery generated by the city. In his description of that human misery the agency of that misery is strangely passive; people, by being in the city expose themselves to an external misery that existed on a continuum that includes the purely accidental (car accidents), through the systemic (hunger, sickness, boredom), to the more overtly antagonistic (rape, robbery, murder). Misery is not something that happens to the happy individual through the action of an other single individual (though it could, presumably). Rather, it is the condition of *being a part of the hard-boiled city*, it is the city's ambient reality for the individuals who inhabit it, the base condition of living in this urban society. Marlowe is not an adventure-story character, an extraordinary figure triumphing against a colourful or exotic but basically neutral world equally full of danger and the potential for domination. He is figured as an "ordinary" individual who is superior simply because he is not as degenerate as his *milen*, and that disjunction, that *relative* superiority borne of *minimal* morality generates his narrative action. Marlowe does not go looking for trouble; trouble finds him, because, as Chandler puts it (and has Marlowe repeat), trouble is his business. Simply by refusing to partake in the illusion of urban integrity he attracts "trouble," he disrupts the nature of his world. His character, like the hero of the paranoid delusion, is distinguished by his willingness to live in the "real" world (that only he can see, because he has the courage to look at it *alone*) instead of in what appears to him an illusory image of the world. For that reason he is exposed to a pervasive corruption that justifies and morally necessitates his action.

As the organizational form of his world in which Marlowe can find no hope of real community, the nature of Marlowe's "city" should be more carefully considered. Though Marlowe soliloquizes about "the city," he actually has little contact with the kind of urbanity associated with European *noir* cinema, with its hints of decadence, decay and moral entropy. Rather, American

hard-boiled urbanity tends to be located in places like San Francisco or Chicago; places that are not so much decadent as they are turbulent, seething, irruptive zones of social fluidity in which social organization does not mimic the forms of a dead past, but are shaped in accordance with the way in which society collectively appropriates and exploits individual desire. Where there is aristocratic decadence it is frequently encountered, again, on the outskirts of town, in the mansions of people like Colonel Sherwood in The Big Sleep. Hard-boiled detective novels tend to take place at the “outskirts” of town, on waterfronts, in industrial zones, gangsters’ enclaves and gambling dens.

The Long Goodbye relocates the liminal or frontier urbanity of the genre in the emerging sprawl of suburbia, the urban form most persistently represented in contemporary cultural studies as conforming to the logics and pressures of commodity culture.⁷¹ Marlowe, now well into his 40's, is still essentially alone and homeless though not without a place to live, renting a small suburban bungalow “in the Laurel Canyon district” (6). The house is serviceable; it is furnished, it has a coffee-maker and television, for example, but the pointedness of Marlowe’s description seems subtly to ironize it, to set him apart from it and make it, like other consumer objects described in too-close detail, something slightly strange, belonging to an order slightly other than his own. It had, for example (Marlowe’s narration adopting the language of the real estate salesman), “a breakfast nook”: “The house belonged to that period that always had one,” he explains (13). An object produced in accordance with market fashion, it is decorated (and desecrated) as an object for and by its community. It has, Marlowe remarks, a woodpecker on top of its large red and white birdhouse mailbox, but the beak of the woodpecker has been recently broken off. “Some smart kid shooting off his atom gun,” Marlowe comments (83). Marlowe’s office is still downtown, but he spends very little time there, and it is as impersonal as his dwelling. Most of his time in the novel seems to be spent in his car, moving around the seedy strips and shabby outgrowths of Los Angeles. The mean streets, in this novel more than any other of Chandler’s, should not be equated with the image of urbanity so powerfully created in the *noir* tradition and some of Chandler’s own earlier work; the

image of dirty, rain slicked alleys between huge monolithic buildings. There is little vertical extension to these mean streets; their menace is in their horizontal extension through an urban sprawl which has no center, in which each contiguous, isolated chunk of human habitation is essentially unknown to the others. And, as the broken-beaked woodpecker indicates, they provide no refuge from the evil and violence associated with the urban core, for violence and destruction, in these most petty and banal but, in this novel, most characteristic forms, are endemic to human society itself.

Gone, in this novel, is the clean opposition between big dark city and small clean town, or between pure nature and corrupt culture so central to the Western. The suburbs are a zone of transition, and since the second world war the ethical representation of suburbia has been a contentious issue in American literature. Chandler's use of suburbia in The Long Goodbye is both essential to this realization of the hard-boiled detective and contributes to the debate. One way of representing suburbia largely imports the terms of the old "good small town / bad big city" opposition, but colonizes suburbia in a (significantly modified) image of the small town. Now seen as a caricature in 50's sitcoms such as Ozzie and Harriet, in this representation suburbia "contains" the spread of urban corruption in a zone in which the agrarian ideal of small town values are preserved without explicit "old-fashioned" small town morality. Profound morality is replaced with a devotion to the future and to an embrace of "all the conveniences of modern living." The second trend effectively colonizes suburbia under a modification of the image of the big, bad city. Drawing on the American modernist tradition of articulating, in places such as Yoknapawatha county or Winesburg, Ohio, the profound heterogeneity and evil that underlies the apparent harmony and homogeneity of small town life. But this representation is itself informed by a tradition in which the small town is figured as the manifestation of the human condition in all of its complexity and reality, and is therefore informed by small towns like Mark Twain's Hannibal, Mo. and Thornton Wilder's Grover's Corners. This opposition, informed by what George Grella calls "the agrarian bias" that underlay many of the early gangster pulp fictions, figured the big city as the place of dreams and

nightmares in which the “small town boy/girl goes to big town and A) succeeds (in reality, or in some simulation, like Jay Gatsby), or B) is abused and corrupted (as in Dreiser’s Sister Carrie).”

The suburbia of The Long Goodbye houses neither the organic complexity of the “small town,” in this tradition, but neither is it the festering cesspool of urban corruption (like that in the Personville (“Poisonville” of Hammett’s Red Harvest). It is, rather, a place of supreme *unreality*, where the action of evil is preconditioned by a geographical structure that enables individual *self-alienation*. It is a place which offers neither the community of the small town “real,” nor its melodramatically alternative urbanity (as figured in Jason Compson’s paranoid rants about “those rich New York Jews” (Faulkner, 240) that control the stock market and exploit innocent, trusting small-townners like himself). Instead, suburbia in The Long Goodbye is presented as a structure of *false communality*, in which communality is provided by institutional structures of debt, obligation and secrecy that appropriate truer forms of communal interaction. This suburban form effectively detaches the sense of organic communality from the individual’s existence. But, where Faulkner’s Yoknapawatha, for example, figures the evil of the Snopeses or Jason Compson as profoundly rooted in a place as a local, organic, inherent kind of corruption, counterbalanced by the dignity and humanity of characters like Sam Fathers or Ike Compson, the suburbs of The Long Goodbye are deceptive without depth; nothing is concealed, for there is no form of authentic communality (not even the demonic communality of the big city). It is an empty, incoherent, fragmented existence, made cognizable to Marlowe by his movement through it and his narrative reconstruction of his activity. But, as Jameson points out, that makes the very structure of the narrative in Chandler recapitulate the form of its represented object; where the suburbs represent community without a real referent, so too does Marlowe’s narration bestow a narrative coherence on an object that has no inherent coherence (that cannot, in Jameson’s later terms be “mapped” cognitively in terms of an organic totality) except that bestowed by his own protagonistic activity. Chandler’s narration thus flirts with the central object of paranoid anxiety: that the story that gives the self meaning might not

represent the truth but might itself create truth in its representation, making the lived self itself “unreal.”

This is Marlowe's world, and the world of the constitutively transient characters like Terry Lennox, or the equally (if more abstractly) homeless Roger Wade. Marlowe lives here, but it is not his home. Marlowe has *no* place, *no* home, but suburbia is his native habitat because it is the communal form which best supports his self-enclosed, self-determining individual. It is a zone in which one — the strong, the self-determining — is maximally able to resist imbrication in social corruption, because the legitimating influence of social institutions is least. However, in the perpetual vacuum cleared by consumerism (where, as this strongly conservative genre implies, social morality used to be) it is the realm in which the weak — those who need others, and need communal approbation and participation to live — are most likely (like Wade and Lennox) to become corrupt and self-alienated.

The venues through which Marlowe moves in much of this novel are communal enclaves defined by an originary rejection of the larger community, by an attempt to establish themselves around some kind of paradoxical principle of communal individualism. In each case, the communities are corrupt, of course, because the founding rejections did not discriminate radically enough, and in the survival of community, as such, corruption bred. Marlowe's attempt to find Roger Wade, a rich, drunk, missing writer takes him into Idle Valley, a gated community surrounding a completely private lake separated from the highway by a long stretch of dirt road. Unlike the suburbs proper, the zone of culturally normalized and therefore imperceptible corruption, Idle Valley is a self-governing collectivity with its own logic. Its mode of existence is different from the cultural default offered by middle-class consumerism. It has its own secrets and a form of latent corruption distinct to wealth, its own governing principle. Idle Valley is not even understandable as a fragment broken off the social whole of Los Angeles for it lacks the primary defining memory of a past unity which gives a fragment its fragmentary quality; it is founded on the rejection of rather than

a relation to a larger community.

Similarly, Marlowe's investigation takes him into the compound of Dr. Verringer, a former artist's colony, now a sanatorium (of questionable method) for drying out drunks on the verge of dissolution. However, the sanatorium is virtually dead; even its defiant self-exclusion from the larger community has proven unable to generate a stable communal form capable of integrating the volatile homosexual relationship between Verringer and a thoroughly corrupt younger man. Like Idle Valley, Verringer's compound is a part of the vast urban sprawl of Orange County, but is similarly a place which is constituted through a rejection of the larger community and which offers in that rejection the possibility of escaping the polluting influences of that community: once it offered a space of aesthetic purity, now it offers a reprieve, of sorts, from the pressures of corporeal pollution. Its principle of purity enables its own complex form of corruption — this time sexuality is primary and money is secondary — but it remains, like Idle Valley, corrupt in its own way despite its attempts to elude corruptive influences.

Past the mind-numbing conformity of the inner suburb in which Marlowe lives, having left the inner city to the lower-class kind of explicit criminality of ethnic gangs, the satellite collectives around Los Angeles are in a sense like Marlowe himself; rejections of a heterogenous social collectivity with an originary intention of isolating and constructing a self-conscious mode of social existence. Guided by a tradition ensconced in America's founding romance, the founders of these satellite communities left the corruption of the city and went into "the wilderness" to make a new and purer life. But, ironically, rather than finding purity beyond the frontier their journey itself polluted the wilderness by infiltrating it. They were not changed by the frontier; they changed *it*. As is pointed out so often in The Long Goodbye, the West is now as (or more) dirty, smoky, crowded and polluted as the East (63, 227, 274): "What are they doing — burning old truck tires?" (296), one newly arrived Easterner asks, in a pointed reversal of the traditional Easterner's first response to the West.

In the case of Idle Valley the “community’s” principle of exclusion is wealth, in the case of Verringer’s compound the case once was some notion of aesthetic purity but has become the rather more negative principle of protecting a forbidden (homosexual) relationship (drawing on another well established bourgeois tradition of figuring any form of aesthetic idealism as a manifestation of buried homosexuality). Like Marlowe these edge communities are based on principled attempts to establish an individual identity based on isolation and exclusion, but unlike Marlowe they all turn out to be inherently corrupt simply because they are not individual *enough*. The corruption inherent to their constitutive collectivity — inherent to that uncontrollable zone *between* people that money or sex or some other weakness of the individual leads to the formation of treacherous networks of relationships — has poisoned the purity of their attempt to forge a self-determined existence.

In medieval cosmology the state of alienation from God and the condition of fallen humanity and imperfect community were represented by the individual lost in what Dante calls a “dark forest... so harsh, bleak and wild... death was scarce bitterer” (3). The narrative movement of medieval romance was the quest, the attempt to move from the wasteland to its angelic alternate, the space of true human communality unalienated from God: the garden. The tradition of figuring America as the “New World,” the space of human potentiality and true communality allows the understanding of the space beyond one’s own manifestly fallen human communities as a site of potentiality.⁷² The American frontier thus reverses the figural associations of European romance: it is the human community that is represented as the site of the wasteland, and “nature,” the zone unspoiled by human (or at least European, which was the same thing) contact, as the site of potential realization of true, unalienated community, Frye’s fraternal community in the Garden. While the Western Romance preserved the frontier as a space of perpetual possibility for individual unalienation (the hero typically comes into the small town, rids it of its crime, and returns to the frontier), in the hard-boiled detective story there is no frontier to return to; everywhere, as we have seen, is polluted. The only zone even potentially free of social contamination is the interiority of the

individual, and this is Marlowe's closely guarded preserve. Marlowe removes himself not by journeying, cum Thoreau, to a space of natural solitude physically removed from people, but into his self. The individual is not just the repository of a kind of agency and the site of autonomy, it is a kind of *setting*, the opposite *space* of the narrative's social geography (in this case, suburbia). It is what the frontier was in earlier version of American romance: the space of potentiality that must be kept perpetually undetermined, the site of the potential realization of the Garden and the place common to the fraternity of the good that is, for Frye, the *telos* of the romance *mythos*.

We arrive at a similar understanding of individuality if we abstract the hard-boiled city to its antagonistic principle: conspiracy. For Stefan Hantke, this general dichotomy between individuation and collectivized existence is operative in conspiracy fiction as a whole:

As one of the two constitutive agents of conspiracy fiction, the detective functions as the figure of individuality. He is [defined] by the fact that he is the one to investigate, to analyze, to construct comprehensive theses, and to expose the conspiracy responsible for what he has witnessed... While conspiracy stands for collectivity in its most negative connotations (anonymity, ruthlessness, impersonality, etc.), the group of "sneakers" represents the opposite of its opponent; shelter, privacy, friendship, etc. In the language of stark contrasts that rules conspiracy fiction, non-conspiracy is synonymous with being fully individualized. (7-8)

The opposition between the inherently corrupting tendencies of collectivity and the possibility of moral existence involved in individuality frequently breaks down, as the detective often has helpers and the conspiracy often turns out to have a single controlling individual behind it. But, as Hantke argues, "individuality and collectivity are qualities that can very well be represented by signifiers that do not literally correspond to their signifieds." Even if the opposition breaks down, that is, the forces of good are *led* by the most highly individuated individual who figurally incorporates or represents the others, and the individual conspiratorial mastermind is revealed to have been internally alienated from true individuation by the adoption of the values of some collective organization (love of money, desire for power etc). "Dichotomy," Hantke concludes, "asserts itself as the generative principle for maintaining the opposition between individual and collective" (8).

Hantke's general opposition superficially applies to The Long Goodbye, but it breaks down as the narrative approaches the point of resolution in which the opposition should become most apparent, for collectivity never really resolves into true conspiracy and things never settle out into a set of good "sneakers" and bad conspirators. Certainly it seems, within the world of this novel, that whenever people gather together to do things — whether in the form of government bureaucracy, corporate structures, criminal organizations, groups like the family or the romantic couple or even the small, provisional alliances the detective forms in his investigation — that another domain, slightly alien to that of the individual pursuing his own ends, opens up. There is an uncomfortable oscillation in this novel between two modes of existence roughly conforming to Hantke's dichotomy: between Marlowe's barren individualism, and the superficially happier, but more *self*-alienated condition of social participation, in which only the very superficial are happy and those who are not superficial, who have a moral depth profoundly alienated in their social situation (like Terry Lennox or both the Wades), are tortured and anxious within their ostensible happiness.

Rather than driving toward a revelation of the identities of the criminals (conspiracy), evaluation of the relative merits of these alternatives — the *ethical* natures of individuality and collectivity — shape the novel, more persistently and ruminatively than in Chandler's other work. On its last page, as Marlowe confronts Lennox and himself with Lennox's "betrayal," Marlowe strives to articulate what it is that Lennox has actually betrayed. Finally, he comes up with "You were a nice guy because you had a nice nature. But you were as happy with mugs and hoodlums as with honest men... You're a moral defeatist" (377). In other words, Lennox did not live his morality by choosing, as Marlowe does, between isolation and (an echo of Frye's contention that the end of the romance narrative is in the fraternal society in the garden) the company of "honest men" (what company?: Marlowe is always alone and friendless). Instead he kept his standards "personal" (377), and did not allow them to interfere with his joining of any kind of community, whether that community was overtly corrupt, like that of the "hoodlums," ambiently corrupt, like that of Idle

Valley, or sexually and personally corrupt, like that he shared with his "wife" Sylvia. Individuality, for Marlowe and for this novel, is the source of moral strength and the only available conduit to truth, even if that truth is only ever negatively manifest.

The agglomeration of individuals in this novel is inevitably revealed to be motivated by need or want, weakness or desire: the act of joining up with someone or something carries with it the possibility of dependence and the correlate inevitability of abuse. In that the individual in the agglomerate has access to some benefit as a result of his or her coupling (power, money, sex, or what a misplaced idealism might have called friendship) he or she is also faced with the possibility of using his position in the agglomeration to maximize his own access to that benefit while forcibly stripping others of their own access to that which the collectivity offers. In short, joining up, ceding a part of one's self and one's power of self-determination to another or to others offers the possibility of being deceived and abused or becoming abusive and corrupt, possibilities which are never far from the hero's mind, and possibilities he always finds, in some degree, realized.

At first it looks like The Long Goodbye will have our hero reveal the action of a conspiracy: Sylvia Lennox dies, Terry Lennox is framed and the rich and the powerful try to bury Marlowe's investigation. Surely some great, unifying secret will be revealed at the heart of their conspiracy. But as the narrative progresses, one of Hantke's "the two constitutive agents of conspiracy fiction," the conspiracy, breaks down as a figure of antagonistic agency. There is no single unifying secret, but rather a whole web of small, contingent, overlapping, complex secrets that combine in the death and disappearance of the Lennoxes: these secrets are inevitably the result of somebody getting caught up in a relationship or a group that robs from them something of their individuality (a marriage, a business contract, a wartime oath), and when they attempt to act for themselves while maintaining the relationship which that action implicitly violates (as Eileen Wade acts out of love for Terry's past self while married to Roger) they enter the world of the secret. Conspiracy in The Long Goodbye is not merely the logic of a subversive group, a "Them," an infernal underground organization run by a

criminal mastermind which threatens "Us" and our basically good society. It is far more diffuse than that just as the misery connected with the city was diffuse and made up of equal parts accident, hostile environment, personal alienation, random interpersonal violation and motivated antagonism. Certainly there are criminal masterminds, of a sort, but they are strangely undistinguished from business leaders, politicians and other figural "leaders" of organizations (all of whom tend to be revealed as a product of their organization rather than its producer). In this novel there is an odd kind of conspiracy without conspirators (or at least none worthy of claiming to *originate* the evil the novel recounts). Everybody has secrets, everybody's secrets are tied up with other people, and the protection of those secrets and the social structures they maintain — that web of mutual obligation, indebtedness, desire and fear, like that which is said (in a related genre) to be at the base of the Mafia code of *omerta* — are the source of corruption and the object of investigation. Conspiracy, in this novel is not a form of organization sharply differentiated from some non-conspiratorial normality. On the contrary, normality is pervaded with ambient conspiracy differentiated only by the moral weight of *the secret*.

In this kind of arrangement, with conspiracy without final conspirators, the nature of the protagonist changes. Unlike the active formal story detective, the hard-boiled detective is oddly passive and reactive, counting on the antagonists to seek him out, to show themselves to him in their attempts to stop him from finding them: as Marlowe points out sardonically, after becoming frustrated and disillusioned with the Lennox case in The Long Goodbye, he returns to his office "to sit there waiting for someone to scream for help" (72). The detective and the criminal are not so much dueling opponents as the detective's investigation — with its possibility of bringing to light what was hidden, of making visible what was taken for granted — adds pressure to an unstable situation which disintegrates as a function of its internal instability and along its own fault lines. The hard-boiled detective is able to catalyze this situation so effectively because his individuality is manifest in his resistance to complicity, a resistance which undermines the criminal logic of the

situation. Criminality, in the hard-boiled detective story, gathers complexity around itself as it attempts to hide its traces, set up alibis, enlist willing or unwilling or ignorant co-conspirators, and bury itself in half-truths and false probabilities. Just as in The Long Goodbye Marlowe allows Eileen Wade to kill herself, uses Starr and the police to dispatch Menendez, uses Harlan Potter against Starr, and uses Potter's own newspaper to summon Lennox out of hiding (thereby thwarting Potter's desire for privacy), the detective is not so much the opponent of any given criminal as he is the catalyst⁷³ which unleashes the latent violence within this inherently unstable situation and acts as the agent of its dissolution. His triumph is not the solving of the crime but the survival of the violent disintegration of a criminally constituted node of complexity and deception under the weight of its own inherent contradiction. In The Long Goodbye, of course, Marlowe does not so much *solve* the crime as he exploits its power to *traumatize*, to disrupt various sets of relationships (Idle Valley society, the Wades, the police, the Potters, Menendez and Starr), most tellingly and finally, of course, his own relationships. He survives by *using* the crime to uncover the instability and corruption inherent in the relationships he encounters; it is the tool he uses to justify his return to the moral solipsism of his narcissistic identity.

After the mystery has been solved and the bad guy served justice there remains the sense that *nothing has changed*, that the reality of the crime, of the conspiracy's evil, remains untouched by the detective's investigative machinations. As Cynthia Hamilton observes about the narrative pattern of Dashiell Hammett's detective stories, "the penetration of conspiracy doesn't reveal reality, all it does is discredit the coherence the conspiracy provided" (96). The story is troubled and refuses to cohere because at the end of it comes the realization that while collectivity is indeed the agency of corruption, it is, in its "reality" unnarrativizable. "Conspiracy" is a figure, imposed by the requirements of narrative itself *by the story's agent of narrative production* — the detective himself — in his self-defining act of investigation, that *misrepresents* the diffuse reality of corruption. A good story is revealed to have been an alibi, or, in our terms, an allegory, which concealed in its

representation, the “truth” of the crime. However, if the truth of the crime were symmetrically opposed to the agency of investigation, it would reside in a knowable agent of conspiracy. That does not happen in Hammett or Chandler, and it certainly does not happen in The Long Goodbye. Instead we are left with the sense that while a particular crime has been solved and a particular individual has been brought to justice, the agency of the detective has somehow missed the mark; the criminal was him (or in this case, her) -self a victim of some other, unknowable, uninvestigatable and certainly unnarrativizable agency. The story leaves us with the sense that what coherence was found was the product of the detective’s own narrative action, and the real truth, the reality of corruption and collectivity, remain as dangerously potent and present as ever, with the idea of “conspiracy” functioning only as a category which gives the detective the *illusion* of agency.

The detective of the classical detective story occupies what Slavoj Žižek, in Lacan’s terms calls “the subject supposed to know”: “*his presence guarantees that all these details will retroactively acquire meaning*” (58). In narrative terms (which Žižek uses, though subordinates to psychoanalytic discourse), the detective assumes the narrative function of presumed final coherence which will address “the *unnarrated*” (59) of the crime. The hard-boiled detective, on the other hand is, for Žižek,

caught in a nightmarish game whose real stakes escape him.... it is the detective himself, not the “group of suspects” who undergoes a kind of ‘loss of reality’, who finds himself in a dreamlike world where it is never quite clear who is playing what game... The truth at which he attempts to arrive is not just a challenge to his reason but challenges him painfully and ethically. (63)

Where first person narration is structurally impossible for the classical detective (because, as the subject *supposed* to know, he or she cannot reveal his or her knowledge directly through the narrative), it complements the hard-boiled detective’s own narrative of loss and recovery of reality and moral distinction. For Martin Priestman the act of investigation is correlate both with the act of living and the act of narration for the hard-boiled detective (170-71), but this detective is conscious of the inadequacy of life and investigation to the demands of narrative. He knows what makes a

good story, and he knows how to tell a good story, he just has trouble reconciling his own sense of the inherent incoherence of his material and the lack of closure he feels at the end of his investigation with the narrative need for coherence and closure. It is not crime then, which motivates the narration of a hard-boiled detective story, but the sense of personal threat from extra-individual organizations which are figuratively co-extant with crime in this genre. Crime in this genre is not the inherently anti-social event which focuses the scapegoat narrative of the formal detective story. Rather, it is the hard-boiled detective's *fascination* with crime as an ethical ratchet point between collectivity and individuality which motivates narration in this subgenre.

If we read "conspiracy" as a comforting but illusory figure of coherence in a reality that is unintelligible to the self, we bump into, among others, Freud — for this is the nature of knowable reality as it is understood by the ego — and Jameson, for whom (in a late-modernist economic and cultural environment) conspiracy grants a comforting if illusory sense of coherence in a reality governed by the structural logic of the commodity. So too in this novel do we find Marlowe in a state of perpetual alienation in the realm of meaning; he knows what he sees is a sham, and he can even, often, construct the logic of its deception, but he remains unable to find a "truth" in things to counter their deceptive, corrupt appearances. A solipsistic retreat to a kind of tautological individual autonomy functions as the only realm of truth, even though it is a self-consciously inadequate substitute for a real life in among real objects.

Marlowe's relationship with Terry Lennox best exemplifies this figuration of the meaning/reality asymmetry. As Marlowe says to Terry Lennox after the latter alludes to his mysterious past; "You're a problem I don't have to solve. But the problem is there" (13). There is a deceptive surface of Lennox and a hidden reality (which will come to be associated with his "real" identity, Paul Marsden); this is a problem though at this stage it is only formally so; it is not yet relevant. The relation between his surface and his depth — his appearance as a wealthy dilettante and the reality of his sham marriage and tragic past — is figured in terms of economic exchange:

"There's always a price tag, chum" (19), he remarks, indicating that he understands his self in terms of a commodity. The terms of exchange dictate his superficial identity and arbitrary value distinct from his "real" identity.

When his situation breaks down after his wife's murder he becomes a problem that Marlowe needs to solve, for personal more than professional reasons. Marlowe had believed he had a relationship with the "real" Lennox, of a sort. If his relationship — based on ethical identification — was valid it would not tolerate Lennox's being a murderer, and someone else must have been the murderer. Lennox then, would be an innocent needing protection, and on that basis Marlowe helped him escape to Mexico. If Lennox *was* a murderer, then his relationship with Marlowe was deeply threatening, for it would mark Marlowe's vulnerability; either Lennox simply tricked Marlowe or Marlowe simply misread him. Either way this disjunction would indicate to Marlowe the danger of forming relationships, and would point out the power of emotion and identification to obscure reason and intellectual objectivity.

As it turns out Lennox was neither the murderer nor was he innocent; he was simply not who he seemed, because there was no reality behind the seeming. Marlowe frames Lennox's "betrayal" in Lennox's own "price-tag" terms: "You bought a lot of me, Terry" (377), he accuses, before accusing Lennox of being "just a fifty-dollar whore" (377). Lennox concurs, and elaborates, moving the figure into the terms of those who simulate identity for money: "It's an act... An act is all there is. There isn't anything else' — he tapped his chest with his lighter — 'in here'" (378). Lennox, invoking Eliot's High Modernist figure of "the hollow man," figures his "self" as pure commodity form: surface value without deep meaning, an act unsupported by core identity. Conspiracy, in The Long Goodbye, is a low-grade, mundane, inevitable and perhaps essential thing; it is the logic of group action itself which is in essence subversive, and what it subverts is the strength and moral certitude (in this genre, the masculine principle) of the individual. This diffuse conspiracy logic is easily and frequently troped in the novel in terms of commodity value; because

commodity value is *essentially* transindividual, a negotiated value determined by a social and collective structure of exchange, it necessarily misrepresents the presumed immanent value of the object.

As Cynthia Hamilton writes: "The hard-boiled detective novel tackled the problem of collective action by placing the conflict between an individual and a conspiracy at the center of its plot. Collective action is discredited at the outset; group action is defined as criminal. The hero's demonstrable ability to deal with a collective adversary despite the unequal nature of the contest defends the efficacy and desirability of the individualistic ethic" (31). The Chandlerian hard-boiled detective novel maintains the moral eccentricity of the classical detective *vis-à-vis* his or her society, but reverses the moral valence. Society is now figurally the seat of corruption and the detective, inasmuch as he can remain free of social imbrication, is the figure of moral purity. The individual in Chandler is the site of morality, and the pursuit and protection of autonomous individuality is the essential moral valence which orients social engagement. What was understood as individual excess in Sherlock Holmes or Auguste Dupin is morally excused if not celebrated in Philip Marlowe, who is presumed, at base like all other individuals to be basically greedy, violent and lustful, except that he consciously exercises moral self-governance. Where the excessiveness of Holmes or Dupin was in line with their generally extraordinary character, the potential for excess in Marlowe helps reinforce his claim to a realist kind of "normality," against which his extraordinary self-control emerges in very human terms. The aggregation of individuals not self-governed by a moral agency leads to the formation of collectivities which facilitate immoral ends. Therefore the narration is not object-justified; its claim cannot be to tell the truth about a certain crime as a manifestation of an isolable evil intention or action. That sort of expressive causality (in which events are an expression of a unitary intention) is alien to the world of the hard-boiled detective novel. Instead the narrative of this kind of story is subject-justified; its real story the story of *making* the story, of the struggle to form a narrative order and negotiate the collision between the narrative need to establish causality, define character, morally align a cosmos and isolate beginnings, middles and ends with the nature of

events which do not seem to have definitive characters, inherent moral alignments and true beginnings, middles or ends. Only the continuity of the detective him or herself lends narrative cohesion to the events related and only the solipsistic postulation of a subjective moral universe can fill the narrative need. The narrative does not relate a crime, it relates the detective's encounter with the crime, which is quite different. As Glen Most points out, unlike the formal detective story which is relatively atemporal — the detective comes in after the fact, investigates and pronounces guilt — the hard-boiled detective novel's time is chronological and irreversible; things happen and change and ultimately nothing is resolved. The hard-boiled detective story tells of the painful attempt to live in a disconsolate world of flux and change, the formal story tells of the joy of reintegrating a functional, timeless world through the determination of a discrete event (314-15).

Failing to find order in the world, however dark that order may be, the hard-boiled detective story is ultimately a narrative legitimation of the isolated individual self. At the end of *The Long Goodbye* Marlowe notes: "I never saw any of them again — except the cops. No way has yet been invented to say goodbye to them" (379). The whole cast of characters is left behind, the narrative is complete: Marlowe entered the story without affective relationships and leaves it the same way, his solitude conscribed only by non-volitional claims upon him made by oppressive bureaucracies, like the police. This is the paranoid condition of the hard-boiled protagonist; without discernible past or future, his life as an investigator taking him from one unstable node of corruption to another he remains alone but perpetually constituted by the oppressive claims of his society. While the private investigator tends to hold his solitude prior to social determination, for Frederic Jameson this solitude is a *function* of his serial encounters with a particularly American form of social organization. For Chandler "[t]he [hard-boiled] detective's journey is episodic because of the fragmentary, atomistic nature of the society he moves through" ("Chandler" 131). This American society, organized around a denial of historical continuity and hierarchy, is contrasted by Jameson to European society in which individual self-understanding is more likely to be constituted with relation

to a *mitsein* or sense of self as being-together-with-others given by a historical understanding of class and history that also shapes social institutions and cultural practices ("Chandler" 131). The disjunctive social setting does more than make plot episodic and discontinuous; it also contributes to the character's solipsistic morality. Without a viable *social* image of ethical existence that is able to rationalize guilt and "sin" at the level of culture, Chandler's detective cannot fold himself into a comfortable *habitus* which would shield him from the pain of his environment and the judgement of his moral sense. Instead he confronts and rationalizes evil at the level of the autonomous individual.

- **paranoia and hard-boiled masculinity.**

As in Schreber's Memoirs, Freud's story of the psyche and the early transsexual autobiographies, masculinity is the final axis of determination in The Long Goodbye, for it is the level at which the affective sense of the self finds its articulation in a pattern of ethical response. If this novel explores the opposition between individuality and collectivity, the dominant figure for true individuality is that of the real "man," while that of the threat to the real man is always female and the figures of false masculinity can be finally figured, in some sense, as emasculated. This pattern, work by psychiatric researchers Mirowsky and Ross suggests, is reproduced in the narrative structure of paranoid delusion: individuality is experienced by the paranoid, they suggest, as the locus of both heroism *and* sanity if not normality, while collectivity is felt to be the breeding ground of conspiracy and threat. The kind of protagonism available within this situation of "agency under siege" is, as we argued earlier, figurally "masculine" within this narrative pattern. Given that direct resistance to this kind of antagonism is futile from within this circumscribed individuality, successful agency must take the form of provisional, local action enabled by successful hermeneutic/narrativizing (investigative) activity, from within an opaque, guarded, defensively isolated position. Morality and masculinity are

thus conflated within the notion of successful “resistance”; and options such as flagrantly unsuccessful resistance (the option of “male masochism” that will be associated with Roger Wade) or complicity (associated with Terry Lennox) are overcoded as flaws in both morality and masculinity.

Lennox intrigues Marlowe because he is so clearly a broken man, the sign of his brokenness being his willingness to exchange his power of self-determination and ethical responsibility for the pampered life of “a kept poodle” (22). The ultimate sign of his brokenness as a man is, of course, his willingness to take money to remain *inactive* in order to facilitate his wife's own hedonistic sexual activity. Roger Wade is, similarly, a broken and figuratively emasculated man. When Marlowe is hired to rescue him from Verringer's compound the associations are quite clear; Wade is not in control of his own self, he loses control and becomes, in his wife's words “psychopathic” when he drinks. He regrets his inability to control himself and is, in a sense, seduced by Dr. Verringer's ability to minister to his body. Marlowe finds Wade through a cryptic note the latter wrote and discarded: “I do not like you, Dr. V. But right now you're the man for me” (107). Wade disliked Verringer's power over him, but felt he needed him, a relation, which, in this novel, figures a loss of masculinity. Because of that loss of control, Marlowe finds Wade sedated and helpless, in the clutches of the homosexual Dr. Verringer while the doctor is figuratively trying to “screw” him, to keep him under sedation until he agrees to pay an exorbitant amount of money for his services. Verringer justifies his request for money in two ways. First, he acted in the way Wade asked: “I fed and washed you... I came in the night. I protected you, I cured you — for the time being at least” (147). And second, it is not that he is a bad person, but he is “a mixed character, like most people” (143) and his relationship with his young friend Earl required a lot of money. When Earl becomes violent to the doctor and threatens violence to the helpless Wade Marlowe (having already outwitted Verringer) moves in. He fends off an attack from the psychotic and ridiculously narcissistic Earl (who dresses only in the costumes of cinematic heroes like Roy Rogers) before rescuing Wade and

returning him to his beautiful wife. Eileen Wade, it turns out, is completely uninterested in Roger sexually, and Roger has responded by allowing himself to become one of the late Sylvia Lennox's conquests. Eileen Wade is not simply frigid, as Roger suggests, but a woman who uses her considerable sexual appeal to further her own ends, expressing a rather pointed strategic sexual interest in Marlowe. Wade's figural emasculation is not simply a function of his loss of control of his drinking and his wife; his intellectual faculty which was previously prostituted, has, in a manner of speaking, gone limp. As a writer, he was already a sellout; he wrote bodice-ripping fantasies of masculine dominance and feminine submission in which "[his] heroes are all eight feet tall and [his] heroines all have callouses on their bottoms from lying in bed with their knees up" (250). Of course, he realizes that his stories are "lies" (250), but he writes them because he likes having money, he likes not living "in a five-room house in Compton" (251). But something happened; he lost his "belief in [him]self" (243), and with it his ability to create even his sordid specialty. He admires Marlowe, in a sense, calling him a "ruthless son of a bitch" who would "do anything to find what [he] wants" (247). Wade's wife's affections, it turns out, belong to Terry Lennox, or a prior form of Lennox whom Eileen Wade loved before his capture in the war, his torture at the hands of the Gestapo and the confirmation of his emasculation through his marriage to Sylvia Potter.

Masculinity is figurally reproduced, as was individuality, in images of corporeal control or mastery, while its lack is represented in either the female body that conforms to the expectations of a male gaze, or in any kind of body that may have had false pretensions to masculinity (either that of the transgressive woman or the emasculated man) but has been rendered incontinent. "Hard boiled narratives," Bethany Ogdon explains,

essentially revolve around demeaning descriptions of other people, their perverse psychologies and diseased physiognomies, and later their destroyed bodies. The perversion, disease and amorality are relayed in descriptive passages often focusing with great relish on body fluids (tears, sweat, vomit, saliva, urine, etc.) These descriptions are then duplicated in further descriptions of the viscera and goo these bodies emit when violently destroyed. The people being described are usually non-white men (either actual immigrants or perceived as immigrants), women, and homosexual or impotent white men... These descriptions of others

serve to construct a mirror against which a hyper-masculine identity appears. (76)

The Chandlerian detective's is the isolation of *shorn vulnerability*, he having chosen or been put through a process of having to shed all emotive or affective relations with other people because those relations were or could have been exploited to compromise the detective's integrity. As consolation for his isolation the detective gains the privilege of looking at others as objects, and, as Ogdon notes, representing them in terms of their deviance and in their corporeal disintegration. Other bodies, for the hard-boiled detective, seem grotesque, and his representation of them as such, Elizabeth Grosz suggests with regard to the social meaning of "freaks" in general, shores up his own fragile sense of autonomy and integrity, reinforcing at the level of the image to his odd sense of simultaneous normality and uniqueness. "The freak," Grosz writes,

confirms the viewer as bounded, belonging to the proper social category. The viewer's horror lies in the recognition that this monstrous being is at the heart of his or her own identity, for it is all that must be ejected or abjected from self-image to make the bounded, category-obeying self possible. (65)

Marlowe's habit of demeaning description, then, is not merely the expression of his misanthropy, though it probably is that too. It is another way in which his character establishes his seemingly paradoxical claim to simultaneous moral normativity and moral exceptionality.

The Long Goodbye revolves around three murders, each an act in a drama of the gendered nature of "true" or moral individualism, affectively charged by this genre's understanding of masculinity and its violation. First Sylvia Lennox is murdered. Her voracious sexual appetite is associated in the novel with a degenerate form of self-determination. It is "masculine" in its aggressivity (which turns the once proud Terry into a "poodle") but like other dominant "masculine" characters like Potter, Menendez or Petersen, it is alienated in an object-directed relation — in this case lust, in the others, greed, or the desire for political or corporate power — a

relation which makes the primary mode of existence that of consumption and subordination, a mode which is immoral only in that it presupposes a lack of a will to *true* individuation, one not utterly reliant on those others that must be consumed and subordinated. And while her father's acts of consumption and domination provoke respect and fear, Sylvia's must be explained as an aberration to her sex: "Some women are like that. They can't help it" (163), her sister offers. Her murder is understood as an act of what might be called "masculation," the violent reversal of her prior act of emasculation. Certainly that is how it is interpreted when Terry is presumed to have been the murderer: "He had a rich wife who gave him all the luxuries, and all she wanted in return was to be left alone," Linda Loring protests. "If he had to get proud, the door was open. He didn't have to kill her" (162-63). But the violence of the crime ("beating his wife's face to a bloody sponge" [163], as Marlowe puts it) suggests that Terry got more than "proud"; he took his manhood back by annihilating the object in which it had been annihilated. In the words of the cop who tells Marlowe about the murder: "A guy takes it and takes it. Then he don't. He probably don't know himself why at that particular moment he goes berserk. Only he does, and someone's dead" (40). It is that logic that robs Roger Wade of his ability to write: he fears that while blackout drunk, frustrated by Eileen's icy sexual aloofness and, as Sylvia Lennox's "conquest," perceiving himself emasculated once again as sexual object rather than subject, playing the "feminine" sexual role, he went "berserk." Therefore, on this basis Wade is partially redeemed when his murder is understood as an implicit suicide, in which he "had stood still and let her put it over. He must have known how it would end. So he had written himself off and didn't care" (328). Wade is eulogized as a lost man, a stolen man who allows himself to be murdered because he realizes that he had allowed himself to be emasculated; the murder is merely the manifestation of the Eileen's prior murder of his masculine autonomy. That Wade allowed his own murder redeems his death (in a Hemingwayesque kind of logic) by making it an autonomous, self-determined act.

The progression of the narrative *through* these three murders, past the point of justice to a

point of final isolation indicates the paranoid configuration of the author: the paranoid *hates* his Enemy, but *mistrusts* his friends and accomplices. Because they are so much like him he fears that they may be the instrument of his betrayal. Therefore in The Long Goodbye we find an obvious misogyny that is logically consistent with the moral axis of the novel, framed within a larger concern with *masculine* definition. Though he chastises Lennox for the latter's supposed idealization of women ("So they're human, they sweat, they get dirty, they have to go to the bathroom. What did you expect — golden butterflies hovering in a rosy mist?" [24]) women who interest him sexually tend to disgust him precisely when they move from the realm of sexual object or feminine ideality into the more human realm he describes. For example, while sitting in a bar he sees

[a] girl in a white sharkskin suit and a luscious figure [...] climbing the ladder to the high board. I watched the band of white that showed between the tan of her thighs and the suit. I watched it carnally... [after diving] she came up the ladder ... and shook her bleach job loose. She wobbled her bottom over to a small white table and sat down beside a lumberjack ... [who] couldn't have been anything but the hired man around the pool. ... She opened a mouth like a firebucket and laughed. That terminated my interest in her. I couldn't hear the laugh but the hole in her face when she unzipped her teeth was all I needed (87).

The shift in rhetoric is astounding. While on the board he watches her "luscious" body "carnally," but when he perceives that her hair is bleached, his description constructs her as an object of ridicule: her formerly luscious body is now a "bottom" that "wobbles." And when she expresses pleasure in the company of what Marlowe considers to be her toy boy, a man Marlowe describes in terms of narcissistic masculinity (a tanned "lumberjack") of social status inferior to her own (she is a patron of the pool, he is presumed to be the help), that rhetoric changes to one of overt disgust. She becomes monstrous, inhuman: her mouth is "like a firebucket," a "hole in her face" between "unzipped" teeth. Later, Marlowe leaves when he notices that "The bar was filling up. A couple of streamlined demi-virgins went by carolling and waving... The air began to be spattered with darlings and crimson fingernails" (97). It seems that when Marlowe noted that women sweat and go to the bathroom he forgot to mention that they also can have sex. Or rather, he didn't forget,

because while sweat is the attribute of another individual, sexuality is the attribute of a relation between two (at least temporarily) non-individuals. As such, it is the figure of corruption for Marlowe. Sexually available women, as the condensed symbols of the emasculation of the incipiently masculine individual, need to be removed from the realm of the basic 'human' individual. Women can be understood as human individuals as long as they are not perceived (and do not act) sexually. But should they act sexually or elicit sexual inclinations, they are figurally placed in the realm of objectivity (as carnal object or demonic object), or in the realm of ideality.

At the end of the case Marlowe does end up sleeping with a woman (Sylvia's sister, Linda Loring) who is supposedly attracted to the individualist virility Marlowe exudes which contrasts favourably with the pretentious effeminacy and moral corruption of her own rich, educated, socially respected husband. After showing up at Marlowe's place with an overnight bag Linda tries to play coy: "I like you very much. But it doesn't follow that I want to go to bed with you. Aren't you jumping to conclusions — just because I happen to bring an overnight bag with me?" (358). Marlowe tolerates this sort of behaviour for a little while, but then takes command: "'That's just another gambit', I snarled. 'I know fifty of them and they're all phony and they all have a sort of leer at the edges.'" Linda crumples. "I'm sorry. I'm a tired and disappointed woman. Please be kind to me. I'm no bargain to anyone" (359). "Then very quietly and without a trace of acting or affectation she came into my arms and pressed her mouth against mine... She was starry-eyed" (360). There is some witty banter, and then: "An hour later she stretched out a bare arm and tickled my ear and said: 'Would you consider marrying me'" (362). Marlowe destroys this illusion swiftly and brutally: "'It wouldn't last six months'... 'For two people in a hundred [marriage] is wonderful. The rest just work at it... American girls are terrific. American wives take in too damn much territory" (362-3). Marlowe forces her to realize that it is his isolation which makes him a morally a man, and it is his mastery over carnality (and emotional involvement) that is the evidence of his powerful isolation: "I could buy you the world if it were worth buying," she tells him, not

understanding. "What have you now? An empty house to come home to, and not even a dog or cat, a small stuffy office to sit and wait. Even if I divorced you I would never let you go back to that." But Marlowe masters her once again: "How could you stop me? I'm no Terry Lennox." She cedes his point: men who get involved with women they cannot control are doomed as men. "Please," she begs, "Don't let's talk about him. Nor about that golden icicle, that Wade woman. Nor about her poor drunken sod of a husband" (363). Desperate to salvage her argument and the hope of marriage, she tries guilt: "I've paid you the greatest complement I know how to pay. I've asked you to marry me." But Marlowe dispatches her with cutting preciseness: "You paid me a greater compliment," he replies (363). This breaks her: "She began to cry" (363), Marlowe reports. However, she seems to accept that his abuse is well-meant, that he is saving them both from a doomed relationship. She puts on a brave face and hides her shame and pain with brittle wit: "I'm sorry I blubbered" she said. "In six months from now I won't even remember your name" (364). After she has gone Marlowe allows us to understand that this episode was no easier for him than for her. As she leaves, he remarks, "There was a lump of lead in the pit of my stomach... To say goodbye is to die a little" (365). But, unlike the other characters, Marlowe is able to ruthlessly fend off attachment, and it is this ruthlessness (remarked with a kind of awed disgust by Roger Wade) that is the source of both his strength and his loneliness.

While Marlowe can master the ordinary women he can "have" and can despise those he may want but does not have, he occasionally encounters a woman that incarnates his desire in such a way that he removes her from the realm of desire altogether, in an otherworldly space well away from carnal humanity. Eileen Wade is such a woman. When he first sees her, at the aforementioned bar, between his first and second instances of sexual disgust, he reports that

right then a dream walked in. It seemed to me for an instant that there was no sound in the bar... and it was just like after the conductor taps on his music stand and raises his arms and holds them poised.... [She] thanked [the waiter] with a smile so gentle, so exquisitely pure, that he was damn near paralysed by it. ... I stared. She caught me staring. She lifted her glance half an inch and I wasn't there any more. But wherever I was I was holding my

breath. (89)

Marlowe then feels the need to distinguish this blonde from other blondes (such as the "bleach job" he'd been ogling):

'There are blondes and blondes and it is almost a joke word nowadays. All blondes have their points, except perhaps the metallic ones who are as blonde as a Zulu under the bleach and as to disposition soft as a sidewalk. There is the small cute blonde who cheeps and twitters, and the big statuesque blonde who straight-arms you with an ice-blue glare. There is the blonde who gives you the up-from-under look and smells lovely and shimmers and hangs on your arm and is always very very tired when you take her home. She makes that helpless gesture and has that goddamned headache and you would like to slug her except that you are glad you found out about the headache before you invested too much time and money and hope in her...' (89-90)

This disquisition on "blondes" goes on for more than a page before Marlowe makes it clear that "The dream across the way was none of these, not even of that kind of world. She was unclassifiable, as remote and clear as mountain water, as elusive as its color" (90). Her voice, when she speaks to Marlowe, is "like the stuff they use to line summer clouds with" (95). Eileen Wade, in Marlowe's straining narration, is an almost ridiculously abstracted figure of his desire. As such, in conformance with the genre's moral structure, she is the one who poses the greatest threat to Marlowe, as she is the one who could most easily cause him to "lose control," she is the one who could most easily cause him to surrender his power of self-determination to another. And true to convention, she tests Marlowe and he almost fails. When Marlowe comes across her in her bedroom while she is "goofy," hallucinating (or pretending) that he is her former true love returning to her, Marlowe proves himself rather easily seduced. Looking at her "soft yielding flesh" as she lays naked, "thrash[ing]" and "moan[ing]" on the bed in front of him, Marlowe recounts: "I was as erotic as a stallion. I was losing control" (213). Luckily our hero is interrupted by a reminder that his temporary loss of control could result in a much more widespread loss of control through the mechanisms of blackmail, the lack of trust between himself and Roger Wade, as well as the sense of sexual indebtedness to Eileen. Being seduced by Eileen Wade would engender a "dirty little secret" that would undermine the moral basis of his autonomy and would make his existence

as morally duplicitous and as sensitive to social pressure as those he investigates. "Candy [the Chileno house servant, intent on blackmail, whom he hears listening at the door] saved me," he explains. "The spell was broken. I went down the stairs fast and ... grabbed the bottle of Scotch and tilted it... until the room started to get hazy and the furniture was in all the wrong places and... I was flat out on the leather couch" (213-14). Figuring Eileen as a witch who charms him and takes away that power of moral judgement which is the source of his autonomy and agency, he drowns his overwhelmed autonomy with an equally powerful version of loss of control with far fewer possibilities of extended consequences.

Recognizing Eileen as a siren, Marlowe has only to wait before the facts of the case inevitably come to confirm the evil of this rather unlikely suspect and justify his execution of justice, a justice in which her emasculated (and, in his case, nearly emasculated) victims are avenged. Against all logic, Eileen turns out to be the agent of Sylvia Lennox's and Roger Wade's murder, allowing Marlowe the moral justification for engineering the novel's final murder, Eileen's murder of herself. Eileen is a variation of the 'witch' figure of romance convention because she alienates men from their moral potentiality, charming them and then discarding them to live in a limbo, equally cut off from a life of individual autonomy and from the promise of her grace. She becomes disillusioned with Terry Lennox (her former husband, whom she thought died in the war), meeting him in Idle Valley years later, after he was captured and "broken," first by the Nazis, then by Sylvia Potter: "He was the empty shell of the man I loved and married... He should have died young in the snow of Norway, my lover that I gave to death. He came back a friend of gamblers, the husband of a rich whore..." (329), she writes in her suicide note. Lennox lives in the knowledge that she is in love with his former, masculine, forever-past self, an emasculating realization that finds its concrete manifestation in his always returning to play the "poodle" for Sylvia. So too is she dismissive of her husband — ostensibly, almost ridiculously, the blustering incarnation of a Whitmanesque image of virility and "freedom" — whom she has charmed, captured and rendered

(to believe Wade) "impotent," making this erstwhile purveyor of literary pap now completely unable to write. When Marlowe tricks her into a confession to the two murders, his witness (Howard Spencer) objects to his letting her wander away to a certain suicide: "We've got to call the police," he protests, "There is such a thing as law" (315). "Sure there is such a thing as law." Marlowe agrees, "We're up to our necks in it. All it does is make business for lawyers. How long do you think those big-shot mobsters would last if the lawyers didn't show them how to operate?" (315). "She must be a little insane'," Spenser points out. "I guess they'd never convict her." "They won't even try', I said. "But she doesn't know that" (316). The law, inasmuch as it is manifest in social institutions, is corrupt and weak: to counter that socially engendered weakness, Marlowe takes matters in his own hands, and offers an individual solution that may not be in accordance with the law but it is certainly in accordance with the novel's governing morality.

As the wooden love-making scene in The Long Goodbye illustrates, the detective does not have the capacity for *eros*, for relating. Instead he has only the paranoid capacity for insisting on the maintenance of the distinctions between self and others. It is for this reason that The Long Goodbye does not end with Eileen Wade's suicide. It ends with Marlowe establishing the difference between himself and Roger Wade and Terry Lennox, with clearly defining his own narcissistic integrity. Women are easily demonized on the same principle that uppity servants and pretentious members of inferior races (like Candy) can be so easily caricatured and vilified: they are different, but unlike racial others, they are also objects of the protagonist's desire. This combination seals the fate of the *femme fatale*, she will be guilty, even if, as in some variations, she herself is a victim of her own status as object of desire, a weapon men use against other men. As John Whitley points out, it makes little sense that Eileen Wade should be the murderer: her motive is weak (in the case of the first murder), and her method of murder is technically improbable in the second. But Marlowe comes to *know* it is her long before he can prove it, and it is precisely Marlowe's *irrationality* in this case, his willingness to work on an intuition about Lennox and loyalty

to the sensed masculine decency of Lennox and Roger Wade rather than any defensible interpretation of the clues of the case, that leads to this novel's feminine heart of darkness (see Whitley, 30). An *obvious* other is the agent of evil, true enough. But the separation of chosen from preterite, of those that are neither actively evil nor actively good; this is the level upon which deception and suspicion work. As in the paranoid delusion, the greater problem is not "who is my enemy?," but "are my friends and the people around me worthy of my trust," because while good is individual and potentially multiple, enmity is not singular, it is *diffuse*, poorly demarcated, partial, collective, and even potentially unconscious.

The problem of antagonism ("who is my enemy?") merely mobilizes the narrative machinery of suspicion, a machinery that continues to operate long after an individual antagonist has been isolated because the principle of evil is in its power to *infect* and *mimic* good, in its power to make a *collective* structure invisible within an *individual*. Just as the paranoid may be *hateful* of obvious difference, he or she is most *suspicious* of the seemingly normal; the greatest danger is posed by the *hidden*, by *deception*. In this genre, with its conventionally masculine protagonist and the conventionally "masculine" attributes of romantic heroism, the threat is in what seems most morally benign. As the "feminine" principle in both the hard-boiled detective story and in Schreber's delusional cosmos operates by subterfuge (constructing hidden networks, sending effeminizing god-rays while Schreber sleeps) while the "masculine" principle operates by negotiating lines of force (standing outside and moving among the networks; playing the various levels of God against one another, exploiting the gaps in His knowledge of living bodies) the greatest threat is posed by the *seemingly* "masculine" which is *really* "feminine." The threat is in other men, other versions of the self. Thus, like the hard-boiled detective the paranoid ends up isolated by both hatred and suspicion; hatred of what is obviously other, suspicion of what is seemingly most like his self.

4) **Schreber's delusion inverted:**

narrating femininity in early male-to-female transsexual autobiography.

The body, as our exploration of the hard-boiled detective story illustrates, is profoundly historical in its relation to ideas of culturally valued expressions of subjectivity. But what is less apparent is the way in which shared participation in a historical moment lends odd parallels in the body-self relation between the grimly masculine Philip Marlowe and the emphatically feminine narrators of the early male-to-female transsexual autobiographies we will examine. Just as “modernization” shaped both the structure and aesthetic understanding of lived experience, so too, a well-established tradition of scholarship with a debt to Foucault reminds us, it shapes the social existence of the body. Rosemary Garland Thomson summarizes this relation between modern social organization and the dominant images of culturally available corporeality:

Modernization not only reimagined and reshaped the body, it relocated it as well... [increasingly people] moved from farms and familial contexts into cities as well as into anonymous social and labour hierarchies... In addition to restless physical migrations, a surging marketplace both promised and threatened social mobility founded upon unstable incomes. All these dislocations created anonymity, forcing people to rely upon bodily appearance rather than kinship or local memberships as indices of identity and social position. Modernity effected a standardization of everyday life that saturated the entire social-fabric, producing and reinforcing the concept of an unmarked, normative, levelled body as the dominant subject of democracy... the notion of progress and the ideology of improvement ... implemented the ascendance of this new image of a malleable, regularized body whose attainment was both an individual and a national obligation. (11-12)

That the normative narrative articulation of this “modern” body, shaped by and geared toward the instrumental participation in increasingly industrialized economies, is Romantic comes as little surprise. Following Jameson’s observations discussed earlier, figuring the body as the possession of an isolated, fundamentally autonomous self that is ideally a participant in a liberal-pluralist *socius* governed by democracy (ideally an individually determined collective, rather than a collectively “imposed” individuality) undermined the ability to see this figure of the body as something with a

collective dimension that could be mobilized collectively to effect social and economic re-organization. Instead, the Romantic idea that if one had nothing else, one at least “owned” and was able to do whatever one wanted with one’s body, oddly enough coincided, as Thomson points out, with the aspiration to the most valuable *kind* of body, the one that one should most desire to own. Thus, within the image of unlimited potential self-determination, there was an impetus to conformity and, to use Foucault’s term, corporeal “docility.” While communal structures of institutional regularity lost power to organize individual experience, regularity was reproduced in the very idea of *individual* resistance to institutional “domination.” The tendency of this individually possessed and determined body to participate in increasingly regularized and seemingly externally determined economic organizations was obscured by the notion that this participation was voluntary, and that these tendencies were part of the progress of humankind toward a society of ever increasingly potential for individual self-determination. As we have seen, there is a tendency in “modernist” literature, like Chandler’s, to dispute this notion of progress, but the ideal of greater individual self-determination and possession remains, even if it is narratively relocated in pre- or post-industrial society. But even in this “modernist” reconfiguration of the self-world relation, the notion of the self’s ownership of and priority over the body remains stronger than ever. The “anomalous body,” as Bethany Ogdon’s comments on hard-boiled ideology illustrate, is seen as less valuable in that it is less capable of self-determination. Its anomaly is a sign of its greater potential to resist the attempts of its owner — the self — to “master” it, and therefore a sign of the greater tendency of this weakened self to fall prey to the seductive domination of oppressive collectives.

This distrust of the anomalous body is part of the post-Enlightenment tendency toward the hegemony of the “scientificist” vision of universe we discussed with relation to Freud. “This incipient scientific view, which depends upon the fantasy of objectivity and sees regularity rather than exceptionality as founding epistemology” Thompson writes, “imposes empiricism upon the narrative of wonder that had ranged relatively freely across earlier representations of [anomalous

body types]" (3). As Thompson elaborates,

The trajectory of historical change in the ways the anomalous body is framed within the cultural imagination ... can be characterized simply as a movement from a narrative of the marvellous to a narrative of the deviant... the prodigious monster changes into the pathological terata; what was once sought after as revelation becomes pursued as entertainment; what aroused awe now inspires horror; what was taken as a portent shifts to a site of progress. (3)

As discussed earlier, this scientific understanding is a gendered one, in that in its vision of the universe as malleable, dynamic and inanimate rather than stable, harmonious and infused with life associates selfhood with the ability to exert one's conscious will over one's body and objects of the world. This is a relation associated with masculinity, and, for Simone de Beauvoir, its opposite is part of the mechanism of the patriarchal construct that is "femininity":

The concept of Harmony is one of the keys to the feminine universe, it implies a stationary perfection, the immediate justification of each element depending on the whole and on its passive participation in the totality. In a harmonious world, woman thus attains what man will seek through action, she meshes with the world, she is necessary to it, she co-operates in the triumph of the Good. The moments that woman regard as revelations are those in which they discover accord with a static and self-sufficient reality. The joy that lies in the free surge of liberty is reserved for man, the woman knows the quiet sense of smiling plenitude... (621)

For Beauvoir the existentialist, political liberal and pluralist there is no question that this opposition between willed selfhood and materiality is an ethical one with political overtones, and that "harmony" is an oppressive concept: "Women love fascists for this reason" she writes, "[for] he incarnates power and mystery, not constitutions and processes of law and rationality... But this is false; the world is not static, and no individual has an essential place in it" (612, 626). The overtones of this uncomfortable opposition between the liberal romanticism associated with "masculinity," capitalism, the foundations of paranoid bias and the American individual-social relation) and this "fascist" romanticism associated with European nationalism, paranoid suggestibility, and (by Freud) with religion will reverberate through transsexuals' attempts to understand and articulate their demand for sexual transformation.

Where modern scientificism and early male-to-female transsexuality converge is in this understanding of the abnormal body as an “especially vicious normative violation, demanding genetic reconstruction, surgical normalization, therapeutic elimination or regulation to a pathological specimen” (Arnold Davidson in Thomson, 4). This view of the abnormal body is part of hard-boiled masculinity as well, though, as Ogdon makes clear, the violence it draws is sadistic rather than therapeutic.

- **transsexuality and Freudian-Schreberian “sex.”**

In response to a deep and persistent sense that their corporeal sexuality misrepresented or was somehow out of line with their “actual” sexuality, certain individuals in the early and mid-twentieth-century found that the surgical and endocrinological technology of their day held the promise of altering their external genital characteristics enough to give them the ability to live in society as a member of the “other sex,” or, in the more naive of these early experiments, promised to change them from biological males into a biological females and from men into women. A problem emerges, however, when these people try to explain this process to themselves and to others, for the stuff required by explanation — motive, origin, goal, justification etc. — is tied up within the terms of their culture’s dominant narrative of individual action. Given that this is the narrative that broadly informs Freud and Schreber, this action of male to female sex-change was bound to seem, in Freud’s terms, pathological — if the abnegation of masculinity was understood as the result of aberrant individual psychological development — or as “freakish,” “pathetic” or “ridiculous” in the Schreberian appropriation of the cultural narrative of sex, because the goal of their action was neither toward greater individuation through power over the external environment via instrumental control over the body, but was toward a greater *passivity*, toward an “Identity”

engendered by the surrender of the active self to some other or collectivity, facilitated by the self's own non-instrumentally-oriented action upon one's own body.

The transsexual phenomenon described by transsexual autobiography is real, just as the psychopathological behaviour described by Freud is undoubtedly real, but the *understanding* of that phenomena requires its articulation within some broader structure of meaning, a structure which both delimits the phenomena in its specificity (ie. making the individual psyche the basis of Freud's analysis) and which gives the phenomena the ability to make sense within the cultural structures of knowledge. The causes or the nature of transsexuality, like the causes or nature of paranoia, are vigorously debated elsewhere, and my study will touch on that debate only tangentially.⁷⁴ Instead this study will look at transsexuality just as it has looked at the term paranoia (rooted, for Freud in "transsexual denial") at the moment of its modern emergence as a contested notion within the cultural discourse of the early twentieth-century. And just as previous sections of this study unpacked and situated "paranoia" in its discursive contexts with regard to their informing narrative structures, so too will "transsexuality" be examined within a *narrative* problematic, as a particular kind of action that complicates cultural forms of understanding the relation of self-determined action to the sexed body. "Paranoia" in this chapter is apprehended not as a diagnostic tool or as part of a nosological continuum of which male-to-female transsexuality is the opposite pole, but is a term that is constituted within the same narrative complex as transsexuality, a complex internally stratified along gender lines.

Given the need of narrative to negotiate the autonomy and potential for action of the self with relation to its world (Freud's "narcissism"), how then is gender represented in stories that are *dominated* by this narrative preoccupation? Before examining the way in which sex (and later, gender) are figured in transsexual autobiography, we will return briefly to the way in which sex is understood in the very modern terms of Freud and Schreber that inform both the masculinity of "the thriller" and the femininity of early male-to-female transsexual autobiography.

For Freud, bodies matter, and male bodies have greater access to protagonistic success in his story of normal individual psychic development. As the narrative progresses from its illusory state of original narcissism, through its alienated phase, toward a post-alienated condition, the body moves from being the *source* and *ground* of meaning toward being an *object* of disembodied masculine meaning. Where the body gives the original narcissistic pre-ego its images of the self-world relation (fundamental images which remain and structure even the post-Oedipal ego), these images are gingerly discovered by the Freudian protagonist on his way to a mature understanding of his place in the world, revealed as essentially projective, and discarded, even while the body itself (like the external world of objects) is understood more and more *as* an object and less and less as an informing figure of knowledge. The ability to shift one's body from a source of meaning to an object of meaning has to do with one's psychic attitude towards one's body, and for this reason, in Freud's schema, the quest is tilted toward the masculine. Unlike the male, who, as explained below, tends to respond to the (painful) perception of castration (in Freud's sense) *productively*, identifying *with* the agency of castration, giving up the infantile narcissistic world shaped around one's own body for one shaped around the Father's infinitely abstracted one, the female tends to respond to castration anxiety differently. Realizing that she is prohibited from appropriating the image of the Father and knowing the world (in the shape of his abstracted bodily ego) in His terms, her only hope for Identity is through a partial recovery of her own original narcissism, making the Father, as it were, come to her by making herself not the subject of Paternal recognition, but its object and closing the gap between the self and His world that way.

If the paranoid is characterized by this kind of return of narcissistic motivation within secondary process thought, including coherent narrativization, how then does this particular kind of embattled "masculinity" understand itself? Of value here is Kaja Silverman's consideration of a certain subjective *posture*, what she calls (in her reading of Freud) "masculine masochism": the particularly gendered understanding of one's self as the locus of an autonomy (the site of moral

potentiality, clarity of perception and potential self-determination) painfully compromised by “the losses and divisions of cultural identity... the basic conditions of cultural subjectivity, conditions that are normally disavowed” (51).

As Silverman reads Freud, unlike the properly Oedipalized masculine self (which identifies with the aggressivity of the Father), and the normal feminine self (which identifies as the object of the Father’s aggressivity), the condition of male masochism stems from a frustrated wish to supersede the Father and the ensuing understanding of oneself as the unwilling object of His aggression. The self is seen as “emasculated” by its “restrictive” social situation, and this condition becomes an occasion for suffering. The male masochist “loudly proclaims that his meaning comes to him from the Other, prostrates himself before the Gaze even as he solicits it, exhibits his castration for all to see, and revels in the sacrificial basis of the social contract” (51). He puts his suffering on display in an attempt to recover a kind of (pathetic) agency as a substitute for that which he feels “society” has stripped from him. The display of his suffering is potentially subversive, for the pleasure is in his fantasized image of a counter-Oedipal community of individuals who could offer sympathy; a social order of fellow sufferers who also sense that their autonomy has been unjustly compromised by a hostile social order. He shows himself in his degradation, he displays his emasculation with regard to a fantasmatic image of an alternate community which would recognize him as a martyr for the cause of true masculinity.⁷⁵

This male masochism, Silverman argues, is a modulation of Freud’s “moral masochism” where, for Silverman, the erotogenic site of pain is “the socialized ego itself” (36). This form of erotogenic pleasure, privileging activities and conditions not directly related to coitus, “linger[ing] over the intermediate relations to the sexual object which should normally be traversed rapidly on the path towards the final sexual aim” (7.140), is for Freud a kind of perversion.

Freud identifies three primary pathological responses to the neuroticizing pressures of socialization and the acquisition of “sex,” differentiated by their respective manifestations. In

perversion, which is a relative absence or withdrawal of sexual/social neurosis, “clearly conscious fantasies” that transgress the sexual (and implicitly social) order are available to be acted out (Freud, 7.151, n. 1), just as the male masochist literally makes himself a kind of show, a display of suffering and indignity. Normal sexual and social existence is neurotic, for Freud, but benignly so because the perverse fantasies that derive from the polymorphous perversity of infantile sexuality are managed (and are manifest within) the neurotic structures of Oedipalization where they are re-narrativized into socially functional self-world stories. Pathologically neurotic responses tend to break into gendered alternatives. On the one hand there is the condition of hysteria, a “feminine” though, of course, not exclusively female neurotic response, an extension of the Oedipal pressure on the female to understand herself and her body as the object of sexual/social agency. In hysteria these fantasies are repressed beyond or in a different economy than that of normal Oedipal repression, pushed into the unconscious where they lose their access to conscious re-narrativization and thus become manifest in incomprehensible psycho-corporeal symptoms. These symptoms, however, can be therapeutically addressed if they can be re-narrativized with the aid of the (figuratively, if not actually, male) psychoanalyst acting as kind of an ego-surrogate to the patient. The more masculine pathologically neurotic alternative is paranoia, an extension of the Oedipal pressure to identify with social/sexual agency to the extent that the ego (narcissistically) *assumes* the position social agency and understands the Oedipal structures of social agency as inherently antagonistic or *emasculating*. The paranoid, as William Meissner observes, “is constantly preoccupied with issues of control and domination... Events and relationships are cast in the mould of an impending need to submit... Paranoid cooperation or obedience becomes a grovelling protestation of self, in which the patient feels his weakness and impotence and hates it. Such patients cannot give in to another person or accede to the will of another without such compliance taking on the proportions of a total or near total surrender of any sense of personal autonomy or independence” (1978, 107). In paranoia, the anxiety producing fantasies⁷⁶ are “projected in a

hostile sense onto other people” and renarrativized in the delusions characteristic of this disorder.

This preoccupation with the continual threat to autonomy leads Freudian analyst Robert Bak to identify paranoia as “delusional masochism” (297). For Bak, the paranoid delusion narrativizes an ego aligned “on the side of sadism” (297). The perception of widespread persecution and restriction of individual autonomy is placed, narratively, within a masochistic economy; the pain it causes the subject is restituted within a pleasurable narrative of sadistic vengeance. This pattern, as Jerry Palmer points out, is central to the operation of “the thriller” in which “violence by the hero... is intended to *exhilarate* the reader: since we are on his side, and believe that he is justified, we are free to enjoy the sensation of suppressing the obstacles that confront us/him” (1978, 20). The superiority of the hero in the thriller, Palmer writes,

is incarnated in violent acts that are deliberately and explicitly deviant, and yet justified. The individuality, the personal worth of the hero is presented as inseparable from the performance of actions that in other circumstances would be reprehensible; yet at the same time the ‘circumstances’ are a fictional construct, designed to justify the pleasure that the reader derives from the representation of such acts. (1973, 141)

The reader’s exhilaration, then, is a function of identification within what in Freud’s terms would be an anti-perverse neurotic economy: one does not derive pleasure through the display of one’s indignity (as does the male masochist), but from the annihilation of perversion itself, which is projectively understood to permeate one’s existence and to be coextensive with the painful oppression of individual agency and autonomy. External power, in this very masculinist, very paranoid economy, is demonized (recognized as perverse), associated with a pervasive condition of subjective pain, and then legitimately acted against. The male masochist “remembers his freedom” ... and *complains*. The paranoid “remembers his freedom” via the same narrative mechanism... but he (*re*)acts. This reaction need not be expressed in the explosion of violence and domination characteristic of the climax of positive thrillers like the Rambo movies or Mike Hammer mysteries. In the negative thriller, in which the antagonistic force of the environment and the isolation of the protagonist preclude the success of such a frontal response, a provisional, somewhat ambivalent,

strategic response is sufficient, and, as Frye points out, in keeping with the low-mimetic modulation of romance in modern fiction. “With the rise of the romantic ethos” Frye writes, referring to the assimilation of the Judeo-Christian martyr-romance to secular post-Romantic prose, “heroism comes increasingly to be thought of in terms of suffering, endurance, and patience, which can coexist with such weakness [the futility of direct action], whatever other kinds of strength it may require” (*Secular* 88).

Femininity is a similarly tricky notion to try to track in terms of this narcissistically shaped narrative. The feminine, as it is understood in the Western tradition and by Freud — in its passivity, self-identity and primacy of identificatory over intellectual relations — is characterized by a narcissism, but it is not the narcissism of romance, and only indirectly the narcissism of Frye’s ironic literary mode. Unlike the narcissism of subjective omnipresence beyond the end of romance manifest in the recovery of a state in which the self pervades the world (“Identity”), and can *feel* the nature of things instead of having to grope at their external forms with intellectual knowledge — “feminine” narcissism — the state of looking at one’s self as an object of the Other’s desire — seems to postulate a condition in which one’s self is *pervaded by* the world, is absorbed into and merely reflects another’s aggressive and less alienated narcissism. ‘Femininity’, in fact, is fundamentally confusing to the romantic structure of renounced narcissistic narrative because it cannot be expressed in terms of protagonistic agency; the structures of self-assertion and self-expression presumed by romantic narrative are foreign to it, except in a displaced, inverted form. Within the terms of the Freudian psyche; doubly castrated, the “feminine” hero would have to be a protagonist-as-object, a conflicted form of protagonism within the broadly romantic framework of that psyche. Questions of its developmental or ontological otherness aside, the feminine (which no female actually incarnates, needless to say) is quite simply *narratively* other, a protagonist finding identity in its own annihilation, its quest becoming-object rather than becoming-subject. There are plenty of stories about women, and even plenty of stories of women protagonists, of course, but

stories of *the feminine* as such require a kind of doubling back on the basically masculine outline of story (in this framework), just as the feminine is the product of a kind of doubling back upon itself of the basic "masculine" form of the Freudian libido. Not just a self which requires another kind of story, the feminine is a kind of negative possibility, an (un)character other to the selves of the human (as understood in the broadly romantic Freudian/Frygean sense) story itself. True 'femininity' (and this, of course, demonstrates the artificial nature of its attribution to women) is a black hole, an inarticulate and unintelligible zone; structurally subhuman rather than superhuman (thus, perhaps Nietzsche's misogyny). Female protagonists in narrative are not 'feminine'; they cannot be, for protagonism itself is formally 'masculine'. A 'feminine' character could not talk (and even if she could her words would not be "her own," for "she" is not capable of cogent self-expression), but can only be talked *about*. Inasmuch as female characters in narrative demonstrate the ability to incarnate the quest structure of romance they are functionally 'masculine' even if designated a woman. Thus the problem of feminine narcissism; femininity seems to designate a kind of quest, but it is a quest not to be a knower or a possessor, but to be amenable to be known, to be possessed through masculine agency.

The feminine, for Freud, is an *active* tendency *away* from the subjectivity of renounced narcissism, and thus presents certain narrative problems that constrict the possibilities of female protagonism. Carolyn Heilbrun, finding this pattern of femininity presumed by Freud and Schreber in "literature" as a whole, suggests that "Literature has tended to masculinize most activity, particularly worldly activity, even as it has recorded it. The women in literature who try to act, or who exercise will, are by the book 's denouements either prisoners or paralytics, literally or psychically. What tends to be aggressive and egocentric in a woman might easily be considered a quest for liberty and self in a man" (62). Though broad, her observation certainly applies to Freud's "femininity" as a constitutively conflicted protagonistic position in romantic narrative. There is a range of possible feminine relations to positive action, all somehow off-center with regard to this

narrative convention. The female character could be represented as a sort of masculine counterpart, but, as in Simone de Beauvoir's narcissist, her agency within this narrative is ultimately confined to her ability to conform to the image of the Other's desire; female characters can be "all woman," strong, powerful characters, but their power is a function of their ability to conform to the present or implicit expectation of what being "all woman" means. Like the masculine hero who is able to seize and strive and struggle to incorporate the image of the Father, this feminine heroine reproduced with such minor variation in so many pulpy romance novels may be able to seize and strive and dominate within her own sphere and with her own body in order to achieve the image of what it is the Father, and by extension the hero or the right man in the story, *wants*.

Representations of femininity which are more authentic (in Beauvoir's sense) may articulate the female character's (masculine) desire to seek identity, but recognize the incompatibility of that desire with the objectivity associated with the status of conforming to the image of male desire. In this case the character would be understandable as a figure of frustrated Romance. Edna Pontellier, protagonist of Kate Chopin's The Awakening is an excellent example of such a figure. It is also possible, of course, to represent female characters in terms of masculine agency, as subjects of desire conforming to the image of Paternal agency. But, this representation elides the problem of Freudian femininity, for these characters are no longer "feminine"; they are no longer subject to the paradoxical closed loop in which the feminine subject works to become the feminine object.

"Feminine" agency does not treat the body as an instrument helping to achieve an end, it treats it as the end in itself, the place where agency can help reunify consciousness with objectivity. Just as "narcissistic narrative" is oxymoronic then, so too is the phrase "feminine agency," for it designates a paradoxical fold in the way romantic narrative relates agency to self and self to body.

Thus male-to-female transsexuality, the wilful intervention on the body to alter the way it addresses the world as an object articulated in narrative, is fundamentally illegitimate because it makes no "story sense" in the romantic terms presumed by Freud's and Schreber's sense of

normality. Its story can be told, certainly, but it is very difficult to tell the story in a way that can elicit positive identification with the protagonist because its representation of the body conflates the instrument and object of legitimate protagonistic action. In the “masculine” terms of the narratives of narcissistic renunciation this transsexual subject becomes grotesque and pathetic: who could want to become “feminine” in these terms, and who would allow or desire the mutilation of their body to become so? If the transsexual attempts to appropriate protagonism (and with it its romantic presuppositions) s/he becomes a freak, a perversion: how can this kind of action be understood in terms of the quest? Schreber’s paranoia allows him to articulate his self-struggle for identity in heroic terms that are proper only to his own radically idiosyncratic reality (and therefore evidence of psychopathological delusion); the world presumed by his heroic protagonist diverges from that set of representations culturally validated as “reality” and Schreber refuses to overcode his narrative with some marker indicating its fictionality. Similarly, the male-to-female transsexuals whose autobiographies we consider below position their selves in non-fictional narratives, but unlike Schreber make every effort *not* to seem crazy. Their narratives generate dissonance (the response of disgust or amusement) by aligning their realities (in which sex-change takes place and is legitimate) with their culture’s reality (in which sex-change is illegitimate), and by aligning their protagonistic selves with the “extraordinary” position reserved for romantic heroism. The difference in the representation of this change in more contemporary transsexual autobiographies illustrates how, though agentive narrative function does not change, *figures* of agency can change radically with regard to that function, allowing, as we will see, the tragic freak or accursed misfit to become the outlaw vanguard of a new socio-sexual order.

- **transsexualism.**

Sexual transformation is a frequent theme of myth, and practices of surgical or endocrinological alteration of the genitals are widespread and ancient, but in both myth and medicine the transformation from masculine to feminine is viewed as something unique, something profoundly more than the rearrangement of a set of organs and hormones. Practices of genital manipulation — which include circumcision and clitorrectomy, castration, hysterectomy and hormone treatments as well as 'sex-change' procedures such as peotomy and vaginoplasty — may in some cases be rather crude mechanisms of controlling or enabling sexual behaviour, but in any case this is only a part of their general purpose. These corporeal interventions help produce a body which can live as a recognizably sexed being; they help make these bodies sexually understandable, if not completely sexually predictable. Engineering the body in these ways helps give a person "sex," which is fundamental to being recognized as a person at all. Genital organization and the sexual practices they enable and presumably engender underwrite a certain ability to belong in a community. They grant access to communal recognition either by enabling communal "normality" through the cultural regularization of the genitalia (ie. clitorrectomy, circumcision), or by enabling a form of communal exclusion, whether that exclusion erases communal authority (ie. the castration of eunuchs) or grants it, as certain ritual castrations have given access to "sacred" authority, a tradition remaining, for example, in deliteralized form in the Roman Catholic priest.⁷⁷ Modification of genital characteristics is undergone less to modify genital function than to effect or allow a certain way of thinking of conducting oneself with regard to a community.

'Sex change' surgery operates under the same reality; altering sex alters who we "are" and the alteration itself, in suggesting the non-stability of the sexed self, intervenes powerfully in the realm of who we are *not*, and, correlatively, can provoke a powerful exclusionary response. If the community recognizes its members through a certain set of images of proper selfhood, the transsexual's intervention in his or her own sexuality does not simply set up his or her self as a *variant* of a proper self, but as a type of *non-self* or an *other* kind of self. As a subject that is not easily

articulated within the forms and boundaries of social recognition the transsexual, is, in Elizabeth Grosz's terms, a freak: a human being who exists "outside and in defiance of the structure of binary oppositions that govern our basic concepts and modes of self-definition.... not an object of *simple* admiration or pity, but is a being who is considered simultaneously fascinating and repulsive, enticing and sickening" (56-7). It seems obvious that changing the sexed body is a boundary violation, but those boundaries are established and reinforced with relation to culturally available narratives. The freakishness of transsexuality, then, is a narratively negotiated category. Moving across cultural boundaries of gender, and against the grain of romantic self-agency, the story of transsexuals like Jan Morris and Lili Elbe strives to overcome this sense of freakishness, to erase the fascinating repulsiveness of boundary transgression in order to establish in narrative a potentially "human" subject with which to identify.

The least controversial genital modifications are physically "corrective," those undertaken to allow "normal" genital or reproductive function, however that is understood. These include the reconstruction of vaginal cavities which do not allow adequate penile entry as well as the use of penile implants or reconstructive surgery to allow effective erection. It is in the determination of "adequacy" and "effectiveness" that the cultural contingency of "sex" becomes apparent. Pharmacological intervention to allow normal genital function is also common: two currently well known examples are the topical testosterone cream which is claimed to increase vaginal sensation, clitoral sensitivity and vaginal lubrication, and, of course, the drug Viagra which stimulates the vascular circulation in the penis necessary to erection. Genital modifications, interventions or prostheses become controversial when they are perceived to be used to enhance or alter an already incipiently "normal" genital organization. Though various cultural understandings of eroticism tolerate some of these under the figure of *aphrodisia*, the cultural line between sexual enhancement and sexual perversion is usually fraught with some anxiety and is regulated by rhetorics of derogation. Usually these take the form of jokes, but frequently institutions which take an interest

in maintaining social conventions indulge in direct invective or explicit expressions of disgust and denunciation. From the frantic discussion of female oral contraception in the 1950's to the jokes about penis pumps, vibrators and 'Spanish fly' in the 1970's, to the late 1990's outcropping of Viagra humour and pop cultural preoccupation with variations of "virtual" or "cyber" sex, alterations to the structure, function or perception of corporeal genitalia produce profound cultural anxiety and generate swift and pervasive cultural responses.

There is no more apparent genital modification than 'sex-change' surgery, because it actually is perceived to *change*, rather than simply normalize or enhance "sex." Instead of clarifying or accentuating the person one's genital organization says one *is*, it changes the genital organization to accord with who one *feels* one is. Though it may not really be able to construct a fertile being or perfectly reproduce genitalia, it certainly alters the way one lives and understands one's sex and it shows very clearly that fertility or chromosomal-genital consistency are not exhaustive or final determinants of sex. The form of genital modification which generated the technology and way of thinking necessary to transsexualism was that which was intended to allow hermaphrodites to be recognized as unambiguously male or female. Sex-change technology arose from the medical practice of 'managing' intersexuality. Bernice Hausman, in her comprehensive but controversial 1995 study of the relation between technology and transsexuality, points out that hermaphroditism (the simultaneous presence in one individual of gonads or genital presentations characteristic of both sexes) is a relatively common phenomenon, but it is one that has moved in the previous several hundred years from an indicator of monstrosity or sacredness to a condition of biological anomaly. It has come to be seen less as a metaphysical symbol than a physical abnormality, and thus a fit subject for "corrective" surgical intervention.⁷⁸

While it was once thought that intersexed people had a 'real' biological sex which could be recovered with the removal or rearrangement of the improper parts, physiological research in the past century has thrown this presumption into doubt. Genital and reproductive organizations are

not originally or inherently bimorphic, contemporary anatomical research has shown, but follow a continuum of arrangements with varying degrees of fertility and recognizability with many that can not be unambiguously determined male or female. Therefore the justification for surgical intervention to produce unambiguous sex organizations has shifted from the recovery of the hermaphrodite's 'true' sex to the institution of its 'best' sex: the one which most accords with the patient's 'healthiest' way of living in the world. In the most difficult cases, where reproductive fertility and ostensible sex differ, this may mean that a subject with functioning ovaries may have them removed to validate her ostensible maleness even though the remaining gonads may be non-fertile testes. Or an ostensible female may have potentially functional male gonads removed to allow her to live unambiguously if infertilely as a woman.

This justification — the production of a unified sexual presentation to allow better social function for the individual — was that taken up by transsexuals to support their claims. Though the presence of some degree of anatomical intersexuality is often present, simulated or presumed in preoperative transsexuals, the characteristic which came to distinguish them diagnostically from transvestites or homosexuals was their *demand* for sex change surgery. Where intersexuality “fixed” the “dysmorphic” sexual body, transsexuality is understood as the presenting symptom of gender dysphoria, the “disturbance in gender identity” that generates “the belief that one is or should be, a member of the opposite biological sex” (Ross, 1). This body/self dysjunction is not characteristic of other forms of gender “deviance.” The homosexual and transvestite enjoy their genitals as they are, though they may take pleasure from them in ways that diverge from culturally tolerated practices, perhaps even from that divergence. As Kate Bornstein suggests, for the transvestite the pleasure is not in *wearing* the skirt; it derives from the knowledge of the secret *beneath* the skirt.⁷⁹ Jay Prosser’s work explores the phenomenal experience of the gender dysphoria characteristic of preoperative transgendered individuals, and in her exhaustive research it becomes apparent (in most cases) that the transsexual despises and feels completely alien to his or her own primary and

secondary genitalia. In many cases he or she cannot even *sense* them; they are invisible to his or her knowledge of the bodily self in a way that Prosser (after neurologist Oliver Sacks) calls *bodily agnosia*. The genitals are not felt to be an integral part of their "true" body; he or she wants them gone, and others, to some extent, built in their place. The sex of the body, though genitally apparent (in most cases) is not the sex of the *self*, and the body is figured as something alien, to the self: Elizabeth Wells describes the feeling of there being "a space between me and my body [that produced a kind of] nausea" (10).

When this double possibility of "sex" was articulated within the discourse of medicine, the sex of the self was called "gender," and the sex of the body was left as "sex." The emergence of this distinction — originally developed to express the phenomenal experience of preoperative transgenderism — was significant because it allowed the continuation of the "masculine" nature of romantic agency ("I will strive in the world to be who I am") while altering the object of that agency. The sexed body was now fair game, legitimate as an object of romantic protagonism, because it was no longer an ineffable core of the "I," it was a central but contingent attribute of the "I"; an "it."

More than any other, it was the work of Dr. Robert Stoller in the early 60's who articulated the connection between the emergent sex/gender distinction and transsexuality. Drawing from his extensive clinical experience, he outlined a tremendously influential profile of the patient who has a legitimate claim to sex change surgery. The transsexual, for Stoller, *knows* him or her *self* to be misrepresented by his or her genital organization, and frequently — though not always — senses that he or she is "really" the other sex. This profound conviction of sexual disjunction causes anxiety so great it impairs the patient's ability to function socially and can provoke self-violence. There is a deep sense that the body is simply *wrong*, in a way that makes living extremely painful. Whether or not one ascribes to a model of the psyche based on Freud's bodily ego the experience of transsexuality, as Jay Prosser establishes, does not allow one to presume that the felt somatic

dysmorphia is based on a prior psychic disturbance (as the psychological apprehension of the condition — much despised in transsexual autobiographical literature — long presumed), just as one must be careful of taking as self-evident the transsexual's claim that psychic trauma derives from an improperly constructed body. The phenomenal experience of transsexuality, based on Prosser's own experience and her analysis of transsexual autobiography, involves the *simultaneous* sense of psychic pain and somatic incongruity, an articulation expressible only with recourse to narrative. In the absence of manifestly intersexual genitalia, but confronted with the patient's narrative of psycho-somatic sexual disjunction causing a profound, pathological anxiety, Stoller argues that the physician — in the interest of preventing potential harm to the patient — may legitimately decide that this individual would be able to function if he or she could be assigned a "best sex": a genital organization that simulates the patient's perceived "real" sex closely enough to alleviate some of the dangerous anxiety. The transsexual, understanding him or her self within this etiology presumes his or her self "broken" and wants to be "fixed," appealing to the medical model within which intersexuals are "fixed" through the medical reorganization of their sexual body. The difference is that the sexual ambiguity transsexuals use to justify their demand is primarily psychosocial and not exclusively physiological. The model of intervention to produce a "best" or most socially functional sex remains, but the diagnostic criteria for intervention shifts as manifestly corporeal abnormality is presumed continuous with (or at least analogous to) psycho-corporeal abnormality.

The ground of this analogy between genital dysmorphia and transsexual anxiety attests to the fact that the "best sex" model always presumed a non-medical third criterion. It indicates that "sex" is always a socially constituted and regulated category, so genital disjunction could as easily produce psycho-sexual disturbance whether the disjunction was physiologically or psychologically manifest with regard to cultural "sex." The way that patients understand themselves and articulate their position in their lived world is seen to be significant enough — if it fits diagnostically

acceptable patterns — to motivate an alteration of their sexual body. Their disease, a potentially life threatening dis-ease, as Stoller repeatedly insists is *real*, and his support for sex-change intervention is motivated by his accordance with the physician's desire to cure, to prevent harm to the patient. Since there is no way to change the way in which "sex" operates upon the individual, the way in which the individual participates in "sex" can — and, in Stoller's opinion at the time, should — be altered in certain cases through alteration of the body. Stoller always recognized that the corporeal solution to transsexual anxiety was an inadequate and provisional one, and its therapeutic benefits have increasingly been questioned. But Stoller was sensitive enough to recognize that sexual self-understanding is neither exhausted by nor excludes the body, and that the sexual body could itself be understood as an *attribute* of sexuality rather than its source.

The stories transsexuals have had to tell to invoke medical intervention have changed over the years, but Stoller's narrative is the most widely recognized: the prospective transsexual should indicate a profound conviction of sexual disjunction, should include details which indicate the non-primacy of either homosexuality or transvestitism, and should relate the fundamentally disruptive nature of their conundrum to their psychic life, to the point of indicating its ability to provoke thoughts of suicide. Transsexuality, then, can be understood as a profoundly narrative condition. This is not to deny the realness of the physical or psychological pain suffered by the transsexual, or the reality of the surgical intervention on their sexed bodies. But this reality — the pain, the suffering and the medical intervention — are all meaningful inasmuch as they are regulated and understood with reference to legitimating narratives. Pain, sex, "gender," the body and medical technology specific to that body are organized narratively to articulate the causal relations between the functions, with agency the shared attribute of the patient (who articulates the motivating demand) and the surgeon or endocrinologist (who facilitates access to the technology of bodily intervention).

The transsexual autobiography faces the task of placing these local narratives of body, sex

and technology within a story of a self capable of apprehending, acting and re-acting to an environment. Autobiography is the act of articulating the relation between an individual and a (reading) community, and as such in this case it must reconcile the narratives of its subject's *exclusion* — the story of traumatic sex-gender disjunction — within discourses and narrative conventions that might facilitate its readers' identification.⁸⁰ This is the task of the transsexual autobiography: to convey the pain and disruption sensed in the psyche and in the body within a narrative that constructs that pain and disruption as something *legitimate* within the community, as a variation on a basic *humanity* (as it is narratively figured for that community) instead of the manifestation of some extra-human attribute (freakishness or sacredness).

The way in which this integration of narratives (the legitimizing medical narrative of disease and cure, and the cultural narrative of achieving identity) is achieved is through a refiguration of the narrative articulation of the sexed body. The body maintains its narrative status within romantic story form as an instrument of individual agency in the quest for identity, but the sexed-ness of the body is bracketed off from the sexed-ness *inherent in that narrative structure*; bodily sex is disassociated from another, more abstract formulation of sex ("social sex" [gender], or "mystical sex") that can figurally conform to narrative demands. With the introduction of the sex/gender distinction — not available, as such, to modernist writers like Freud, Simone de Beauvoir and the very early transsexual, Lili Elbe — agency is retained as a function of the self, but that agency is now able to apprehend even the genitalia of the body as a contingent and potentially instrumental aspect. Instead of genital sex being part of who the self *is* and therefore constituting a part of the condition of protagonistic agency, genital sex is conceived of being incidental, like the rest of the body, to the essential self which is still sexed, except that sex is now understood as an essentially *incorporeal* category "gender." Protagonistic agency can still be sexed, as a function of masculine or feminine use of agency (ie. striving toward subjecthood or objecthood), but that *narrative* agency is now able to determine rather than determined by, the narrative sex of the subject. The sexual body is thus

moved from the narrative sphere *internal to agency*, as something which agency presupposes, internalizes and takes as given as it moves "out" to apprehend objects, to something *external to agency*; an object subject to valid (non-narcissistic, in Freud's terms) action. The sexed body can become a part of the end of the quest for identity instead of a part of the agentic function of protagonistic questing.

- **early male-to-female transsexual autobiography**

As Freud points out, Schreber's denial of what might later have been recognized as transsexual demand spurred a delusional paranoid narrative of heroic resistance to intervention in his sexed body. But as transsexuality itself becomes a medical possibility and becomes expressed by individuals for whom it is a narrative object of desire rather than abjection, the narrative position of the sexed body within a non-fictional frame is allowed to change. The early male-to-female transsexual autobiography considered in this study still operates within the Freudian economy of narcissism in the emphasis on the body as the object of agency and attention, but the body is figured (as in paranoid delusion) in a way far removed from infantile narcissistic identification, in keeping with a high degree of renounced narcissism. Paradoxically, the narcissistic *pressure* to forge a relation between self and world (in the face of the recognized inadequacy of those received) in both transsexual anxiety and paranoid delusion like Schreber's (or the more contemporary delusions of alien abduction or those surrounding fluoridation of drinking water, for example) is quite evident. There is still the overriding desire to find out what the world means to the narrating subject and how that subject means in the world, and there is still the central recognition that the meaning of the body is the key to understanding the all-important relation of the self to the world. However, in these early male-to-female transsexual autobiographies the body in is not expressed as that

which gives the self its understanding of its place in the world; it is that which the self must *give* meaning to (and resist "wrong" meanings) in order to fix the proper self-world relations. Where the paranoid delusion is often centered around the need to maintain the purity or integrity of the body in the face of incomprehensible forces of somatic interference, these transsexual autobiographies are centered around the need to enlist a powerful external agency (described in awe-struck, almost mystical terms) to restore the body's integrity and purity. Though the locus of "self" is different (the one being lodged within the idea of the proprietary individual, the other in an idea of self within a benevolent greater order), the palpable discomfort with the anomalous, misrepresentative or alien body informs both narratives.

In both these narrative types, the body is less an immutable source of being than the essential external object which guarantees the abstract possibility of being; as the interface of being with the world, it is, as an object of the world, subject to dangers and flaws which the self can barely understand. In the paranoid delusion these dangers are usually posed by a figure of potent, incomprehensible collectivity, a *They* figure (manifestly collective, but inhumanly and incomprehensibly unitary) which imperceptibly controls and subverts the social norms that govern the actions of individuals and their bodies. In the transsexual autobiography, it is the materiality of the sexual body (and secondarily that materiality's apprehension by society) which is incomprehensible and alien to an essential self; the key to living one's selfhood — in one's body and in one's society — lays in the reconstruction of that alien bodily sex. Narcissistic anxiety articulated within romantic narrative moves from generating a situation in which individual heroism is figured as the protection of the body (and with it, true identity) from emasculating external forces (as in paranoid delusion), to generating a situation in which individual heroism is expressed in a struggle to reshape a malformed material body to accord with a true identity.

- **Two selves warring for control of one body: Lili Elbe and Man into Woman.**

In her study of the tropes with which transsexuality is conceptualized in the first half of the twentieth-century, Joanne Meyerowitz outlines the figural relations between sex, self and body that informed the emergence of sex reassignment surgery. In the pre-Second World War period Lili Elbe is a pivotal figure, for it is her narrative that first communicates to a broad public in first person terms the *experience* of what would come to be known as gender dysphoria, and figures that experience in the medical terms of the day. The idea of a surgical change of sex gained notoriety and some credibility just before the first world war (around the time when Freud was writing “On Narcissism”), when Viennese physiologist Eugen Steinach demonstrated in work on neutered infant guinea pigs that “The implantation of the gonad of the other sex transforms the original sex of an animal” (Steinach, in Meyerowitz 161). Soon after German sexologist Max Marcuse theorized a “drive for sex transformation” (*Geschlechtsumwandlungstrieb*) after investigating cases of those who, after hearing of the experiments of Steinach and others, demanded surgery to be transformed into the opposite sex. By the early 1920's cases of the removal of gonads accompanied by the administration of an “extract” of the target-sex gonad were sporadically recorded, but it was at Magnus Hirschfield’s Institute for Sexual Science in Berlin that research into human sex-change began to be conducted in earnest. Hirschfield theorized that all sexually “intermediate” types — hermaphrodites, androgens, invertes (homosexuals) and transvestites (this encompassing both cross-dressers and what would come to be known as transsexuals) — were all “natural variations that all likely had inborn organic bases” (Meyerowitz 162). In 1931 one of the institute’s surgeons, Felix Abraham, published the first scientific account of sex-reassignment surgery, outlining a procedure for castrating, amputating the penis and constructing a vaginal cavity in a male-to-female “transvestite.” It is about this time that Lili Elbe entered Hirschfield’s institute and received a series of similar procedures (with the addition of the implantation of ovarian tissue), culminating in her

death three years after the inception of sex-reassignment surgery.

The story of Lili Elbe now seems a tragic account of medical experimentation that — recalling Beauvoir's comments about femininity and fascism — eerily mobilizes many of the terms that were to coalesce twenty years later in the laboratories of Nazi doctors such as Josef Mengele, but it is presented within its semi-autobiographical narrative as the story of a tortured soul helped by a godlike doctor to achieve peace and tranquillity. Unlike the narrative of Schreber, which preceded Elbe's by a half-century, the change from a man into a woman is not presented as something which must be fought (and Schreber's paranoid delusion is the record of that resistance); it is presented as an inevitability which is incompatible with the corporeal body. It is presented as a process of change akin to a terminal disease which would literally kill the organism if the change were not medically facilitated, and the ultimate death of Lili Elbe is presented not as the result of medical intervention, but as something medical intervention miraculously succeeded in postponing, if only temporarily. Man into Woman: an Authentic Record of a Change of Sex, edited by Neils Hoyer and originally presented to a scandalized and titillated reading public in 1933, is "the confessions of the first person who was not born unconsciously through a mother's travail, but fully conscious through her own pangs" (270). Hoyer's self-described role is that of an editor; he arranges the documents Wegener left behind into a book, though at several points an unidentified narrator intervenes at great length and intimate proximity to provide connections between Wegener's material, his wife's contributions and others' accounts.

Wegener/Elbe's truth is certainly, especially at the time of its publication, stranger than fiction, a problem which shapes the narrative "rhetoric" of the story and which recur in the narratives in this chapter and the previous one, at both ends of the paranoid "continuum." Like the paranoid, Elbe finds herself in a situation in which the dominant relation between realist and romantic conventions as modes of articulating consensual reality seem to be reversed. The "real" world (self-understood through a broadly realist literary hermeneutic) — the real nature of human

sexuality in this case— is revealed as an illusion and the truth is found to conform to a far more romantic convention. The individual, contrary to realist presupposition, *is* capable of carrying out great, real struggles of self-determination, of true and present resistance against seemingly insurmountable antagonism and of recapitulating, in an individual life-story, the apocalyptic shapes of the cosmic narrative that are not mere romantic allegory intimated from within the confines of a realist self-understanding, but which are the present (if incredible) truth of that life. In the paranoid delusion the individual's antagonist partakes of original, cosmic antagonism as his struggle recapitulates the apocalyptic story of the process of restoring the separation between good and evil, while in Elbe's story the original fall which bifurcated humans into alien sexes is partially reversed. That reversal is itself seen as a recapitulation of the primal act of creation; Elbe understands herself not only as a "new Eve," a partial realization of post-human sexuality, but in the terms of the first passages of Genesis, a type of the formless void upon which the Spirit of God moved in His act of creation (251).

The "romantic" is revealed in Elbe's account (as in Schreber's) as the truth truer than that mundane, horizontal reality conveyed in normal understandings of "reality." This account, described on the book's title page as "the miraculous transformation of Danish painter Einar Wegener" (called "Andreas Sparre" in the story) into Lili Elbe is a mainly first person account of an early attempt at male-to-female sex-change surgery. Told in a florid, mannered prose, its reliance on the conventions of the fantastic novel leads the editor to insist that though "many chapters read like a novel, ... you all know that it is no romance, but nothing less than the strictly veracious life story of a creature seeking clarity and peace and rest." (285). A scholarly preface reinforces the "scientificity" of the account and further marginalizes the novelistic romantic conventions which shape the story within a non-fictional hermeneutic frame. In addition, a different and slightly contradictory strategy is used to undermine the culturally dominant understandings of sexuality and to contextualize the scientist interpretation of her story (which authorizes her story, but at the

cost of reducing its truth to a purely bio-mechanical level). In Lili the medical and the spiritual converge. Elbe's transsexual surgery is explicitly related in transcultural terms which emphasize the mystic nature of her condition and figure the surgery as the release of the mystical purity of her femininity. As Andreas' friend Neils remarks, "If you had lived in the time of the old Greeks, perhaps they would have made you a demi-god. In the Middle Ages they would have burnt you, for miracles were then forbidden. But today doctors are, at any rate, permitted to accomplish something like a miracle" (55).

The story tells of the development and implications of Andreas' incontrovertible persuasion that he "was, in fact two beings: a man, Andreas, and a girl, Lili. They might even be called twins who had both taken possession of one body at the same time" (20), and that Lili — quite against Andreas' will — was inevitably "gaining the upper hand" (49). Andreas, a successful painter, marries a fellow painter, Grete, when both are fresh out of art school. They share a happy life together, fulfilled in every way. Then Grete asks Andreas to pose as a woman for a painting. Andreas reluctantly complies, and soon does so willingly and repeatedly, calling this female model alter-ego "Lili." Lili soon begins to take on a life of her own, going to parties, spending whole days "out." Soon Andreas realizes that Lili is the destined occupant of his body, and he falls into deep depression. Several solutions are tried over the years to relieve this transsexual pressure, but none work. Andreas/Lili is at the point of suicide when he meets a doctor who suggests a radical sex-transforming experimental surgery.⁸¹ Hesitantly Andreas/Lili agrees, a series of operations is carried out, Lili emerges and tenuously begins a life of her own, before dying of complications from a final surgery.

Lili is always figured in terms of a pronounced though rather exaggerated 'femininity', and Andreas claims a paternal relationship to her, just as his wife Grete, claims a maternal one (20). Quite chivalrously "his ultimate hope was to die in order that Lili might awaken to a new life" (20) as an unambiguous woman. Lili's first emergence figures the connection (which will remain quite

prominent in this story) between sexuality and specularity. Andreas, the painter who looks at the world and represents it, first feels the emergence of an embryonic female alter-ego only when placed in the position of being *looked at* and represented *as an object*. Grete comments on this as well, writing that "When she [Lili] poses for me as a model a strange feeling comes over me that it is she whom I am creating and forming rather than the girl whom I am representing on my canvas" (93). Gradually Lili begins to 'come' more and more often, not just as a daughter figure but as a sort of little sister, playmate and friend for Grete. Much is made of how well Andreas/Lili 'passes' as a woman in social situations, and several anecdotes of her fooling amorous men or Andreas' family members attest to her "natural" womanliness. Lili's femininity begins to manifest itself corporeally in the body she shares with Andreas, to the point where Andreas has trouble "passing" as a man when Lili is not out. He writes, "not a soul took any notice of her [Lili] whenever she walked abroad, apart from the occasional pursuers. I, on the other hand, was stared at everywhere. Although I was dressed perfectly correctly as a man and took long masculine strides, people took me as a girl masquerading as a man" (109).

Andreas' body was transforming *itself* into a woman; it was not Lili's doing and he was most certainly not responsible for the change. Nature was taking its course: when the operations commenced the narrative suggests that the doctors found in Andreas, in addition to his two testicles, a complete, if dormant set of ovaries.⁸² Andreas was developing a female body shape and secondary genital characteristics (99) including what is describes as a form or analogue of "menstruation"; regular periods of persistent nosebleeds accompanied by an almost incapacitating moodiness and capriciousness (96, 99). All that remained of the man in him, the narration contends, was the fading Andreas-being and his increasingly vestigial male reproductive system. This contention is dramatically validated, for when his testicles are removed, "her" voice immediately becomes a "clear soprano" (128); where Andreas had been a heavy smoker she feels an instantaneous and powerful aversion to tobacco (129); and in place of Andreas' small, jagged,

regular cursive writing she instantly and spontaneously writes in an ornate, flowing, curlicued feminine hand (pictures provided) (130-31). Though it is treated quite euphemistically Andreas seems to undergo further surgery to remove his penis and to implant the ovaries of a "healthy 26 year old woman" (231). Lili survives and recovers well from these painful operations, enjoying a rather fulfilling life as an "ordinary woman among women" (277) for a short period, but soon returns to the clinic to have a final operation. Presumably a vaginoplasty, this operation would, by creating "a natural outlet to [her] womb" (274) enable her (the story confidently asserts) to bear children. She tells her doctor: "I want nothing more than to demonstrate that Andreas has been completely obliterated in me — is dead. Through a child I should be able to convince myself in the most unequivocal manner that I have been a woman from the beginning" (275). She never recovers from this surgery and dies in 1931, six months after its performance. Her surgically-assisted sexual transformation is figured as that of the completion of an improperly stopped development. It is the change of a "grub" into a butterfly (31), the rescue and release of an imprisoned girl-child (93). Pre-operative Andreas is figured as "fugitive" (35) increasingly recognizing his state of internal exile; his new sex is actually his/her being's primary one, a natural condition without the possibility of natural realization, "unveiled" or "unravelled" (134) through surgery.

Much is made of the distinctness of Andreas and Lili and the fact that "each of the beings within [him/her] is healthy and perfectly normal in its emotional life" (53). Even after Andreas begins to look like a woman, when he is Andreas he is "all man." He is shown to be or described as clear-thinking, logical, decisive, creative, knowledgeable about politics and economics, imperious, condescending, brusque, virile, active, able to drink hard and hold his liquor, aggressive, stubborn, effusively homophobic, attractive to women and occasionally rakish. Lili, on the other hand, is portrayed or described as passive, frail, easily tired, silly, unworldly, naive, domestic, intuitive, compassionate, altruistic, easily influenced, sensual, sensitive and self-conscious. The night before

his castration Andreas drinks hard and flirts heavily, and the next day he has a "masculine" conversation (about politics and economics) with the endocrinologist while having his blood taken. With the same endocrinologist the newly emasculated Lili babbles trivially (her silliness pointed out in explicit comparison to Andreas' masculine behaviour) and faints at the needle's penetration (52-3). Her femininity is a point of some interest and contention. She is "the most feminine of all of Grete's friends....," but this narrative affirmation is underscored by the description of its reception: "this was funny to them" (76) we are told, and a woman doctor at the clinic (who does not know her secret) tells her: "You seem like a female type of a vanished age... Women like you are best suited for a ... harem" (195). Lili's 'femininity' is nowhere more evident than in her dealings with her creator/master, her surgeon Dr. Kreutz. She trembles in his presence, and faults the other women at the clinic for not behaving in the same way, for "[h]ere in the clinic everybody was waiting for the Professor. Everybody had to share in him, and each woman received her share, even if it were only a tiny share" (185). S/he writes, "I no longer recognized myself. A strong impulse to resign myself, to obey, to submit myself unconditionally to another will, had seized hold of me. The impulse seemed to dominate me" (96). Most tellingly, her absolute femininity is signified by her loss of Andreas' ability to paint. Unlike Grete, who is a professional painter, or the other "modern girls" who strike Lili as being vaguely androgynous and neither one sex nor the other, Lili incarnates a distilled essence of femininity not found in nature. The inability to paint flows inevitably from this feminine essence, for her apprehension of the world has changed; she no longer experiences things as objects and forms, but *feels* them acutely though vaguely in shades of pleasure and pain (96, 213).

Hoyer's account reads almost as a literalization of Freud's heuristic account of masculine and feminine tendencies. Andreas is outward directed; an artist, capable of apprehending the world as an object (an aesthetic object) and appropriating that object through the medium of painting. He is curt and arrogant (and as his/her personality decomposes into mutually exclusive

components, these tendencies exaggerate in their presence and absence); others are conceived in normalized terms and apprehended either relatively indifferently or as instruments or obstacles. His attachment to Grete is "anaclitic" in the Freudian sense, of being characterized by a self-abasing adoration. His own self is not his object; his self is his invisible position of external apprehension, and inasmuch as his body is figured as the objective attribute of his self (and as it does not figure in his work in the world), it is relatively unimportant to him. He is told that he cuts a fine and attractive figure of a man, and he was told that he was a pretty boy, but s/he does not begin to be aware of his/her body as an object — a fallible and inadequate object — until she looks at herself as Lili. The emergent Lili is almost comically "feminine"; strenuously passive, frantically concerned with her status as an object in conformance with an image of femininity and exaggeratedly overawed by the presence of the masculine agent (Dr. Kreutz). She is his object, his creation, and his agency silences even that small amount of hers which speaking with him might assert. In addition to being physically unable to speak to Dr. Kreutz, the range of Lili's discourse changes radically. She loses all interest in the public domain and the world outside of the hospital, but is intensely interested in the affairs and micropolitics of the patients within. She wishes only to remain cloistered in the paradisaical sanatorium as a nurse or a nun, fostering sororal and maternal relationships with the ailing women she finds there, under the benevolent, occasional, paternal gaze of the good Doctor. Lili loses Andreas' ability to represent, but gains an ability to *feel*, to empathize with the things of the world in a way that Andreas, she writes, "never could" (155). The world and its people are no longer objects to "little Lili" (the diminutive of her name is frequently used), but inexpressibly endowed with vibrant lives of their own that Lili — now immersed in rather than seizing from without the spirit of the world — apprehends with moving and painful emotional immediacy.

More than anything Lili is now, to herself, an image which needs to be appropriately incorporated, reflected in her body. Her body, the object of Kreutz's knife, becomes, through an

extension of his agency, also a site of her own (thus delimited) agency. Like Else fallen limp in Rick's arms, Lili is resolved to let Kreutz do her thinking for her: "he always knows what is best for [her]" after all (166), while she, relieved of that need to establish distancing relations with the world, can go about reclaiming the emotional substrate of object relations. Her body is no longer imperceptibly presupposed by her self as an instrument of agency or an object in the service of her own agency; it is now, as in Freud's formulation of post-Oedipal femininity, an object of the self in that self's agentive quest to become an object.

Lili's body is not just sexually different from Andreas' in a physical sense; it is fundamentally different in a narrative sense. And the narrative modulation between Andreas' self representation and Lili's is in accordance with the body-implicated narcissistic modulation articulated by Freud. Andreas' active and appropriative apprehension of objects, including his artistic activity (which, as Freud notes, can characterize a highly renounced but libidinally potent narcissism) are, in the romantic terms of the narcissistic narrative, typically masculine. If her narrative were not so acutely marked by a real sense of suffering, yearning and fatalistic doom, Lili's "femininity" could be read as an almost comical inversion of this situation. But the pervasive tone of suffering, the filtered joy that accompanies constraint and martyrdom on the true path, this variation of Freud's moral masochism, is not just the accidental attribute of Lili's painful life (though it certainly is that as well). To some extent, it is one possible essential attribute of her romantic femininity. The feminine in romantic narrative, if not simply the object of desire or the locus of a certain kind of antagonism (as explored with reference to the hard-boiled detective story, below) is a site of present or potential mourning, of a grief that accompanies the lack of subjective agency and therefore negatively validates protagonistic agency. As a figure of understanding one's self as an object of external agency, fatalism is as much a part of the narrative logic of Lili's romantic femininity (satisfied by her tragic early death) as it is a response to a medical prognosis. Unlike the romantically "masculine" tendency to cast objective relations in instrumental terms, and thus respond to a painful situation by

trying either to overcome the obstacle or insulate the self, this form of romantically feminine response identifies with and understands the self as a part of the situation, making Lili's suffering and yearning compatible with romantic femininity (including Freud's figuration of it) as well. This is not to say that suffering, yearning and fatalism were not real or warranted attributes of Lili's condition. Rather, it is to say that they are narratively consistent with her self-articulated character and are therefore, in addition to being really present, also narratively legitimate and validated. The sexed body is not, in Lili's narrative dissociate from the narrative function of sexed agency; changing biological sex is accompanied by a change of narrative sex. The shift from a position of "masculine" narcissistic renunciation and romantic subjectivity to a position of "feminine" narcissistic renunciation and romantic objectivity has been facilitated, in this narrative, through medical intervention in Lili's sexed body; the bodily change allows the narrative change.

- **Gender before sex: Jan Morris' Conundrum**

This sense that sexuality is deeply tied to the body will change in the years following Hoyer's book, as "gender" emerges as a category of self-narrativization which allows one to conceive of one's true sexuality as something independent from the body's socially recognized sexuality. With the emergence of the sex / gender distinction the "two beings warring for control of one body" motif that characterizes Hoyer's book will fade, and the "wrong body" motif which posits a single unified person living in a sexually non-representative body, will emerge, gain, and then lose hegemony as the self-explanatory narrative of transsexual autobiography.

Prior to the Second World War the justification for sex-reassignment surgery was represented as directly analogous to the management of intersexuality. Even when there was no discernible corporeal evidence of intersexuality, doctors at Hirschfield's instituted presumed some

as yet undetectable basis of organic intersexuality that was compelling the demand for surgical sexual transformation. The thought that biologically “normal” people could demand that a doctor “mutilate” otherwise healthy flesh was still not accepted, and, it was feared in the American context, would expose doctors to the criminal charge of “mayhem.” Gradually, Joanne Meyerowitz explains, in the 1930's and '40's thinking began to change and the idea that sex-reassignment surgery addressed a problem of male-female biological indeterminacy began to give way to the idea that this surgery could instead address a problem of psychological / biological conflict (168). In 1949 sexologist David O. Cauldwell, invoking Kraft-Ebbing's “*psychopathia sexualis*,” coined the term “*psychopathia transsexualis*.” Transsexual sex-reassignment surgery, for Cauldwell, was still the solution to a problem, but the problem was no longer pathological: it was a *psychopathological*. Separating this psychopathology from sexual orientation and preparing the ground for the Stoller's distinction between sex and gender, Cauldwell writes that “Trans-sexuals are individuals who are of one biological sex and apparently psychologically of the other sex. Trans-sexuals include heterosexual, homosexuals, bisexuals and others” (in Meyerowitz, 169). It is in this context, in the 1950's and '60's that Jan Morris' sexual transformation is narrated.

Morris' narrative is interesting for the terms of this study for several reasons, but not least because of its historico-cultural situation: though Morris writes her story in the 1960's (and continues writing to this day) and uses the sex-gender distinction to articulate her conundrum, her narrative configuration is firmly situated in that set of presuppositions (which I am loosely calling “modern,” as opposed to the next generation of writers like Kate Bornstein who I will identify, for lack of a better word, as “postmodern”) shared by Schreber, Freud and Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe.

Autobiographical and biographical accounts of several sex change patients were published in the 1950's and 60's, none more influential than that of Christine (née George) Jorgensen. Beginning in December 1 1952, when the New York Daily News put the “shocking” story of the

ex-GI who became a “Blond Beauty” on its front page, Jorgensen became a media sensation, an instant celebrity who maintained (and, as an entertainer, to some extent, cultivated) the fascination of the popular press for several years (Meyerowitz, 159). Her story — of a soldier come home from the war only to wage a new struggle to have the medical establishment and its newly developed surgical and endocrinological technologies make her body conform to her essential womanness, and to have his/her transitional and post-operative body sexually recognized — set the narrative pattern for post-war transsexual autobiography. With Jorgensen the metaphor for transsexuality began to shift: though she is vague about her condition, the initial press reports associate her condition with the sex-assignment surgery used to manage intersexuality. However, Jorgensen troubles this model, and it is not long before less comfortable hypotheses are being made. In response to Christine’s comments that she had performed adequately as a male prior to her surgery, some reports began to attribute her a “pseudo-hermaphroditism,” in which her intersexuality was presumed real, but hidden behind a corporeal facade of maleness (Meyerowitz, 172). When the press finally took Jorgensen at her word when she said that she had been a genitally “normal” male prior to her surgery, the tone of coverage briefly shifted: she was described with male pronouns not as a woman, but as a mutilated, castrated or somehow altered male. Jorgensen was hurt, and proffering a biological explanation (“hormonal imbalance”) for her gender dysphoria to supplant the stigmatization of the other explanations being offered — either psychopathological delusion or extraordinarily perverse homosexuality — her coverage resumed its treatment of her “as a woman and a star” (Meyerowitz, 174).

In the liminal period between the “two souls in one body” metaphor and the “woman trapped in man’s body” metaphor, Jorgensen described her condition as “lost between the sexes,” a figuration that manages to avoid the gothic overtones of the first and the sharp nature / culture division of the sex / gender opposition that informs the second. Noticing the similarity between Jorgensen’s metaphor and the conceptualizations of sex and gender that transsexuality was

beginning to evoke in the 1990's, Susan Stryker argues that Jorgensen is a figure who incarnates some of the problems of signification, subjectivity and sexual embodiment that characterize the mid-century epistemic-shift toward what has become known as postmodernity. For Stryker, the emergence of postmodernity can be "mapped" through the representation of Jorgensen's transsexuality.⁸³

Conundrum, the autobiography of Jan (né James) Morris, published roughly twenty years after Jorgensen's press debut, follows this narrative pattern, but concentrates on explaining (in the tone of one erstwhile gentleman to another) the 'conundrum' this narrative presumes: the condition of a misalignment of gender and sex in one person. Morris' account roughly follows the progress of the writer's life, relating those events and experiences necessary to inform the book's larger contemplation of sexuality.

Morris is a professional travel writer, and this story has the easy, acute, occasionally glib, lucidity native to that genre. Just as a traveller cannot describe a culture except through her own experience of it, Morris, in writing about her writing, indicates that she prefers the first person over the "objective" perspective, which allows her to slip around the vexing task of trying to reassert the "reality" of her seemingly fantastic or romantic narrative that dog other stories considered here. She evades the pressure to ground her story in "reality" through the invocation of the primacy of the *subjective*, underwritten by an authority granted by the sheer rhetorical competence and confidence of her narration. Because it is real to her, her narrative implies, its reality is sufficient to command an identification already almost compelled by the sure movement of the narration. She readily admits the shaping influence of narrative pressure and explicitly excuses the narrative from 'rational' judgement: "Where there are evasions, they are aesthetic rather than secretive" she writes, and "[i]f the whole fable is blurred in a suggestion of arcanum, that it is because I see it so" (7). The combination of intuitive incisiveness with a certain "quick emotionalism, hovering tear, heart on sleeve [and] the touch of schmaltz" (124) which she feels characterizes her prose is not simply the

narrative expression of the traveller (as opposed to the "explorer" or geographer); Morris explicitly places it in the context of a certain understanding of femininity (opposed to its defining masculinity), of various exotic cultures such as the Venetian and the African (all opposed to an England which is splendidly institutional in its army and its clubs and distinctly run by imposing yet innately gentle men of a certain class), and, of all places, of Oxford, the stony embodiment of feminine grace and tolerance which, for Morris, cradles masculine achievement and gracefully figures an ideal masculine/feminine relation. For Morris, then, the fact that the *way* she writes is "feminine" supports her contention that she has always been a woman who has lived as a man because of her male body; her mode of expression figuratively represents her mode of sexual being.

Of course, her understanding of "femininity" needs definition and explanation, a task which occupies much of the book. Morris associates femininity with the capriciousness which comes of a harmless abnegation of responsibility, with the self consciousness that is opposed to focussed action, with a mysticism and intuitiveness that is opposed to logic and intellectual rigour, with a privacy and individuality that is afforded to one outside of the public realm and outside of social expectation and censure. The woman she becomes is conceptually in accordance with what she (quoting Goethe) calls "the eternal feminine" (36) essence of her self. But this femininity, while essential, is always posited relationally and given the same relational valence: it is associated with the situations of passivity which *enable* the operation of structures of authority; with the situations of care and nurturing which *support* structures allowing accomplishment; with the *private* moments and situations within powerful institutions away from public performance; and with the *anecdotal*, *quotidienne* conversation which offset and provide the background against which rigorous or vigorous intellectual and political pronouncements stand out. She is quite clear that the value of this femininity is derived from its association with masculine counterparts, just as those masculine counterparts are figured as completely reliant upon and imbricated in their own, often

unacknowledged, feminine counterparts.

Morris explicitly derives this understanding of femininity from her odd dual existence. The book tells the story of a well educated, happily married, upper-middle class Englishman and father who shared in the fading glory of Britain's colonial institutions. Educated in public schools, fighting in a "splendid" cavalry unit of the British army, foreign correspondent for the Times of London, member of Hilary's expedition to Everest, Morris makes it clear that the pleasures of masculinity (including the pleasures of that "superior machine," the male body [76]) are inextricably associated with participation in highly hierarchical, highly traditional and highly respected institutions.

Masculine institutionality is respected, but the pre-operative James Morris resents his body (while still admiring it) because it places him in the wrong relation to those institutions; though he enjoys his participation in the realms of power and prestige he does not feel at home, he feels out of place.

While uncomfortable, this relation is not without its upside; young James has the ability to act as an observer of a powerful and exotic culture from within, "a spy in a courteous enemy camp" (35).

And because, Morris observes, "the whole of English upper class life ... was shot through with bisexual instinct" (36), James' ambiguity does not generate severe intolerance among those classes and in those places (like Oxford) where those institutions dominate.

But though living very much as a man, James is actually a woman without a female body. Her first-hand experience of masculinity leads Morris to an understanding of femininity. The discussion in which she opposes the well-intentioned dowdiness of the Manchester Guardian to the stern splendour of the *Times* makes it very clear that the wrong kind of femininity is the kind that tries to set up institutions of its own based on unmasculine (less hierarchical, *petite-bourgeois* rather than upper class) principles: "I disliked working for the Guardian" she writes, "because it was like working for a woman rather than a man. I resented the paper's stance of suffering superiority, like a martyred mother of ungrateful children, and did not like being tarred with its earnest, consumer association, playgroup brush" (67). Institutionality, Morris makes clear, is inherently masculine, as

an instrument of collective agency, and those who wield the institution's agency should not only be men, but be *masculine*, that is, not primarily bound by a consideration of "social concerns." Having been at the center of "true" institutionality — the army, the Times — Morris articulates the Guardian's drawbacks in the sexed terms with which she frames her own narrative of sex-change. As a man who was "not undistinguished in a slight way," Morris had become accustomed to "the respect which an educated Briton could expect all over the world" (102); she had been part of the institution that was the British Empire, and she was an agent rather than a subject of that Empire. But it was that agentive subjectivity that Morris withdraws from in the description of the inherent femininity which she eventually realizes in her sex-change. Though she sometimes regrets the lack of respect shown to her post-masculine figure, she makes it very clear that she treasures her new life away from the limelight and responsibility of power, authority and public affairs. Occasionally frustrated by masculine insensitivity in the presence of her manifestly female self, she admits being secretly flattered when men — like the London cabbie who gives her an unsolicited "carnal" kiss and a pat on the bottom (144) — act toward her like real men (she assumes) act toward real women.

Needless to say, her association of a natural masculinity with the lower class cab driver (as opposed to the institutionally sublimated masculinity of the upper classes) manifest in his crude sexual advance indicates the profound implication of historically and culturally specific overtones of class in her understanding of masculinity and femininity. Through the book she makes it clear that her conundrum presented an obstacle mainly to narrow-minded middle class middle-Englanders. To the upper classes, whose institutions are sexed but who are otherwise superior to sexual conventionality, and to the lower classes, who incarnate (as do primitives, South Europeans and the Welsh) a sort of "natural" sexuality free of stuffy moral overtones and narrow conventionality, her conundrum is as much or more sacred than profane, more likely to be recognized as splendidly eccentric or marvellous than perverse. But, oddly enough, becoming a woman, for Morris,

involves shedding her intimate association with Wales, the upper classes, Oxford and South Europe. As a woman Morris moves her highly individuized existence living in a grand house in Oxford and a beautiful cottage in Wales into a modest flat in pleasantly stodgy Bath where she finds pleasure in getting groceries and becoming a part of the neighbourhood community. In short, she becomes exactly the kind of middle-class middle-Englander who, she felt, was least capable of sympathetically comprehending her "conundrum." She passes, and in passing, finds external corroboration for her own sense of no longer being an exile within her body and within her culture.

As indicated above, the narrative with which she chooses to articulate her transsexuality is not that of Wegener's struggle between two independent selves for control of one body, but one of a split between self and body (expressed in terms of the gender / sex distinction), a split which can be partially closed through medical intervention. Her story, she writes, is the story of her quest for unity or consistency of self: for "Identity" (43). Becoming a woman means, for Morris, becoming general rather than particular, "normal" rather than extraordinary, and, in a sense, a taken-for-granted object of culture rather than a subjective framer of culture. She continues to write, but without the critical displacement and externality she associates with masculinity. No longer does she want to *appropriate* her environment; she wants to *identify with* it, to become a part of it. The sex / gender distinction offers Morris a non-paranoid but still romantic narrative response to transsexual anxiety. Unlike Schreber, for whom transsexual anxiety generated a narrative of heroic resistance and vigilant, isolated, defensively appropriative masculinity, Morris' transsexual anxiety, in its narrative figuration of the body as an acceptable object of romantic protagonism via the sex / gender distinction which puts agency in the realm of gender and sex in the realm of objectivity, is able to articulate narcissism differently, making the sexual body a valid object of agency instead of a site of indefensible antagonism. The body becomes akin to Andreas' work of art, a surface upon which a representation can be inscribed, a surface that will not only represent an inner truth, but which, as a part of the world rather than a part of protagonistic agency, will represent that truth to

the world in terms the world will recognize.

Certain patterns emerge in the narratives of both Morris and Elbe: there is a sexed opposition set up between passivity and activity, self-determination in the service of increased individuation versus a willingness to submit to authority and accept the natural right of governance of tradition and social structure as part of a poorly individuated collective, a corresponding willingness to recoil from a public sphere to an enclosed private or domestic sphere, a loss or modification of creativity or intellectual rigour corresponding to an increase in empathy and ineffable identification with the environment.

And both Morris and Elbe display what Meissner, quoting Erich Fromm, calls “authoritarian personalities,” which he identifies with paranoia in that its acute sensitivity to social power distribution is easily translated into the paranoid’s anxiety about personal autonomy.

Fromm writes that

For the authoritarian character there exist, so to speak, two sexes: the powerful ones and the powerless ones. His love, admiration and readiness for submission are automatically aroused by power, whether of a person or of an institution. Power fascinates him not for any values for which a specific power may stand, but just because it is power. Just as his “love” is automatically aroused by power, so powerless people or institutions automatically arouse his contempt. (1941, 190-91)

The expression of relation to power or social agency as “two sexes” is not, in either paranoid delusion, in these early male-to-female transsexual autobiographies or in the hard-boiled detective novel, an incidental metaphor. It encapsulates the relation between power, autonomy and sexuality that governs Schreber’s memoirs, informs the Freudian psyche and legitimates the narration of Elbe and Morris’ change of sex.

- **Performativity and gender fluidity: Kate Bornstein’s Gender Outlaws.**

If Morris’ story ends up with a recovered Identity between reality and appearance, between

bodily sex and gender, it also ends up (like Elbe) reasserting the terms of Freudian narcissism-based femininity in its conventionally romantic conclusion. She has travelled the path of masculine romantic protagonism to a site of non-masculinity; and, like Freud's feminine ego she has strenuously and actively constructed for herself a site that she can consider marginal to "real" activity. Kate Bornstein, in her 1993 autobiography figures her own transsexuality as part of a path not toward a form of feminine Identity, but toward what Deleuze and Guattari would call a "becoming-other" that disrupts the very gender identity system. Here Bornstein indicates the difference between her story and the narrative patterns that inform Morris or Elbe's autobiographies:

Up to the last few years, all we'd been able to write and get published were our autobiographies, tales of women trapped in the bodies of men or men pining away in the bodies of women. Stories by and about brave people who'd lived their lives hiding deep within a false gender, and who, after much soul searching decided to change their gender and spent the rest of their days hiding deep within another false gender. That's what we could get published about ourselves — the romantic stuff which set in stone our image as long suffering, not the challenging stuff. And it always seemed that the people who would write about us either had some axe to grind or point to prove, or they'd been hurt and needed someone to blame it on. People like Janice Raymond, Catherine Millot, and Robert Stoller have ultimately perpetuated the myth that transgendered people are malevolent, mentally ill, or monsters. (12-13)

As Bornstein points out, her self-representation is a polemical one that positions her in the often heated debate not only against the Morris / Elbe / Hirschfeld / Stoller understanding of transsexuality, but against that of people like Janice Raymond, whose book The Transsexual Empire outlined "the *locus classicus*" (Stryker 1998, 159) of what became the queer and transgender argument against transsexuality. Oddly enough, however, the narratives of the "long-suffering" pathological transsexual of Elbe and Stoller, the "fifth column in the battle of the sexes" transsexual of Janice Raymond and the "gender outlaw" transsexual of Kate Bornstein are all informed by various modulations of the narrative configuration of gender that also informs Freudian psychoanalysis and Schreber's delusion.

The problem of "freakishness" comes down to the interpretation of sex-reassignment

surgery: does this demand for surgery make the transsexual the “queerest” of the queer, the person in which cultural understandings of sex and gender are, through the willingness to cut the flesh, most viscerally and powerfully challenged, or does this demand for corporeal alteration make the transsexual a victim of gender akin to the vomiting bulimic or steroid addled-bodybuilder, who would mutilate the body in a pathetic attempt to conform to idealized cultural notions of gender? Is surgery an expression of individuality that can be mobilized to critique both the cultural system of gender as well as presumptions about the corporeality of queer sexuality? Is it an interference with the natural liminality of the transgendered self that blunts its disruptively queer potential? Or is it part of the attempt to align sex with gender and (depending on the point of view) help move the self toward Identity or wholeness while alleviating a pathological and potentially transgressive gender dysphoria?

Many theorists — often transsexuals themselves, such as Bornstein, Sandy Stone and Susan Stryker — draw on discourses of human rights to see transsexualism as a triumph of the individual right to possession and determination of the body, and of the right to determine and define one’s sexuality for one’s self. Depathologizing the demand for surgery and removing the transsexual from having to go through the demeaning ritual of having to prove him or her self “crazy” enough to warrant medical help is seen as a triumph for the dignity of the individual over the corporeal oppression of social institutions and cultural conventions. While, James Nelson explains, the standards for the medical management of transsexuality set out by the association of health care professionals involved with sex-reassignment procedures⁸⁴ preserves for the medical establishment a “gatekeeper” role, a 1993 conference on transsexuality attended primarily by transsexuals themselves⁸⁵ generated a set of “Health Law Standards” which focussed much more centrally on what was described as the natural, trans-historical, non-pathological nature of gender dysphoria and the inherent right of persons “to use hormones and reconstructive surgery to express their gender identity” as part of the ability of persons “to control their own bodies” (220-21). However, as

transsexual Susan Stryker explains, there is still widespread ambivalence about this increasing control by transsexuals over the mechanisms of sex-reassignment medicine: "It remains to be seen whether this development is more akin to the proletariat gaining control over the means of (our) production or to colonial subjects becoming functionaries in the imperial bureaucracy" (146). Taking over a system of power relations and identity-production, Stryker implies, may as easily perpetuate and internalize those (oppressive) power relations as to emancipate the previously oppressed from them.

Describing her decision to request sex-reassignment surgery, Stryker's account illustrates the rationale behind the Health Law Standards and the ambivalence they generate in the transsexual and transgender community. Recognizing her gender dysphoria, Stryker writes that she shied away from surgery because she perceived that transsexuals were "compelled by their doctors to try to pass, to claim a coherently gendered life course that they had never experienced, and to lie about their desires if they happened to be attracted to members of the gender into which they wanted to transition. I found the inauthenticity required by those demands repugnant" (150). However, instead of feeling, like Morris, that surgical reconstruction moved her somewhere closer to a state of "Identity," for Stryker (like Bornstein) transsexuality is a mode of realizing — for the self and for others — a more liveable, more dynamic form of subjectivity. "I began to see transsexuality not as an inauthentic state of being but rather as yet another communicational technology through which I could attend to the care of my self," Stryker writes. "It was a medico- scientific, juridico-legal, psycho-therapeutic apparatus for generating and sustaining the desired reality effects of my gender identifications through the manipulation of bodily surface, thereby extending those effects beyond dungeons or drag bars into more widely shared social spaces" (151).

Though ambivalent about surgery herself, Stryker has scorn for those who pathologize the transsexual demand for surgery, and is especially scornful of those from queer or feminist academe, for whom the pain and misery of the transsexual's gender dysphoria marks the point at which the

sex-gender system collapses and through which it can be undermined. There is a tradition in feminist and, later, transgender and queer theory, as Nelson puts it, “of being suspicious of transsexual surgery, in that it tames a potentially unstable gender situation that could become the site of political critique and mobilization to attack the patriarchal sex-hierarchy system, preferring instead to highlight the medical role of, first, pathologization and, second, physical mutilation” (216). Surgery, in this view, is akin in Marxian terms, to buying-off the vanguard of the proletariat; by throwing a false solution to those most acutely aware of the structural problem. The potential for revolution is shunted off into facile, often superficial and meaningless “reform.” Instead of allowing the fact of transgender to destabilize the system of gender division, sex-reassignment surgery in this view, like cosmetic breast-enhancement or penile enlargement surgery is merely a technological mechanism of reinforcing the extant gender-role system through the mutilation of a healthy, biologically if not socially “normal” body. These queer moralists, Stryker feels, devalues the experiential reality of transsexuality in favour of a wish to exploit the pain of gender dysphoria for political ends. While those ends may be quite worthwhile they do not, for Stryker (and others, like Nelson and Rubin) justify the condemnation rained upon transsexuals who do not publically signify their condition in this way by members of the queer community.

This shift in the values associated with sex-change from “passing” (trying to “fit in” as a man or a woman) to “crossing” (using the transgender body to disrupt binary gender categories) and from “transsexual” to “transgender” is associated most prominently with early 1990's work by Feinberg, Stone, Bornstein and Stryker, among others. But, Stryker cautions, echoing Bidy Martin's critique of Eve Sedgwick's queer theory (that in valuing those who “cross” more than those who do not, it allows for no positive assumption of “straight” gender roles) “it becomes increasingly easy to see how ... transgender can function as a version of antitranssexualism — yet another version of the morality tale that condemns the cutting of the flesh” (153). As Henry Rubin puts it, “a rift is developing between members of the trans community [”who refuse the

confessional strategy of coming out ... [and] do not conceive of their life projects as gender fucking”] and this emerging scholarship” (276). Most of the transsexuals with whom Rubin has worked “like most other people, tend to essentialize and ahistoricize their identities” (266), and for this these people are made out “to suffer from another kind of false consciousness, where essentialist narratives are assumed to recapitulate gender normativity” (276).

These three informing narratives, all of which surprisingly operate around some notion of the gender associations that inform Freud and Schreber, seem to contribute to the understanding of transsexuality, without one being able to finally displace the others. These are: 1) The “essentialist” narratives of those (like Stephanie Castle, as described in her 1992 autobiography, *Feelings*) who use stories similar to those of Jan Morris or Lili Elbe to describe their condition, place an emphasis on “passing” and tend, while arguing against gender rigidity (the notion that gender “precludes transfer from one gender to the other”) to attribute their change to a compulsion outside the control of rational, individualist voluntarism and ascribe a value to “femininity” similar to that Schreber (and Philip Marlowe) despises. 2) The “queer” version of “transgender,” which invokes a narrative configuration of gender to selfhood oddly like that of Philip Marlowe, in that it combines a valuation of the body in its integrity, and exhibits a profound distrust of self-inflicted bodily intervention, preferring instead that the body be used as an instrument to further agency (political emancipation, disruption of the gender system). Those who invoke this view of transsexuality share with Marlowe a deep distrust of the way in which collective institutions (“the medical establishment”) and thought patterns (“the gender system”) restrict, oppress or infringe upon the individual. 3) The voluntarist transsexual like Bornstein, Feinberg or Stryker. In this narrative the body is understood both as instrument and object of conscious and unconscious self-performance, which is viewed as the real nature of subjectivity. Based upon a the “masculine” presumption of the primacy of will over both body and social “convention” (that informs Freud, Schreber and Marlowe), but unwilling to reify the body’s instrumental status, this narrative detaches it instead

from the temple of self and makes it an instrument of self-inscription. In this move it effects a key modulation of the Romance narrative figuration of the self-body-world relation, a modulation we will consider more closely looking at Bornstein's autobiography.

In her 1993 book Gender Outlaws: men, women and the rest of us, Bornstein, like Morris, contends that "Transsexualism... is a passionate, lifelong, ineradicable conviction, and no true transsexual has ever been disabused of it" (13) but unlike Morris her autobiographical narrative does not travel from masculinity and falsehood to femininity and Identity. Rather, she recognizes her lack of identification with masculinity and uses that recognition to position herself outside of the dual gender system. Morris' "Identity," for Bornstein, is precisely the trap into which transsexuals are prone to fall, and she indicates that her personal choice has been to try to incarnate "gender fluidity." For Bornstein, because gender is essentially something that is played out, everybody is always only "passing" as a man or a woman, "performing" masculinity or femininity. The most outrageous "drag queens" — Madonna and Arnold Schwarzenegger are mentioned by name (138) — are those whose gender performances are so excessive that the presumed fusion of gender and biological sex is thrown into question. The drag queens' hyperbolic assertion of sexuality can be seen as something which gestures to but has no inherent connection to the individual's reproductive biology. The success or failure of the performance needs no genital validation; the performance *presumes* the genitals without the genitals being able to actually produce, inhibit or otherwise regulate the effectiveness of the performance (outside of sexual intercourse itself — this is why she insists that "sex is fucking, gender is everything else" (116)). Gender exaggeration like that incarnated by a Schwarzenegger or a Madonna ironizes the sex / gender relation and makes it "camp."⁸⁶

Bornstein's personal experience does, however, lead her to consider the flip side of gender fluidity and performance which other theorists have been accused of playing down. She recognizes

that while the lack of "identity" can produce a sense of exhilaration in the freedom from gender constraints, being outside of gender also produces anxiety and disorientation. And because gender identity is essential to communal subjectivity, its lack may produce painful reactions from members of the community wishing to protect the community's integrity. She quotes Murray S. Davis:

The vertigo produced by the loss of cognitive orientation is similar to that produced by the loss of physical orientation. Philosophic nausea, certain forms of schizophrenia, moral revulsion, negative experience, the horror of having violated a taboo, and the feeling of having been polluted are all manifestations of this mental *mal de mer*, occasioned by the sudden shipwreck of cognitive orientation which casts one adrift in a world without structure. People will regard any phenomenon that produces this disorientation as "disgusting" or "dirty." (in Bornstein, 67)

Politically she endorses a version of strategic essentialism; passing as a man or a woman minimizes the chances of non-productive or dangerously uncontrolled political reaction, like getting laughed at by a "bum" on the subway car or beaten up in an alley.⁸⁷ Though gender fluidity may be an intellectually viable concept, lived reality, for Bornstein, requires the assumption of some form of identity to enable the subject's participation in community, even if that identity is known to be temporary and formed in accordance with situational pressures.

To this end Bornstein speculates on the possibility of forming a community of "gender outlaws" comprised of people who challenge culturally mandated gender roles, people for whom gender plays an essential part, but who incarnate the fact that gender is essentially a part that is being played — if not always entirely voluntarily or consciously. In effect, it would be a community which doesn't grant identity to its members, but post-identity. She also recognizes the inherent difficulty of this project, in that the success of transsexuality for its subjects is often measured in its invisibility. Transsexuality, as the stories told by Morris, Elbe or Schreber makes clear, is seen not as a site of identity itself, but as either a threat to or a bridge to a communally recognized and pre-defined identity. As Bornstein writes:

I think transsexuals keep away from each other because we threaten the hell out of each other... We bring our very personal explanations for our existence into contact with other transsexuals who have been spending *their* lives constructing their *own* reasons for existence.

If, when we meet, our world views differ radically enough, we wind up threatening each other" (63-64).

Most of these "personal explanations" have to do with the fact that transsexuality is so implicated in "passing"; even the success of the transsexual demand (in Stoller's criteria) presumes the centrality of the goal of passing as a member of the opposite sex. After spending lives and fortunes trying to reconstruct the body to look like that of the other sex most transsexuals would rather spend their energy trying to be (or be taken for, which is the same thing for Bornstein) that other sex. To go through all this and then come out as a self-proclaimed "fake" is not an appealing — and may be a rather dangerous — option for many transsexuals. Associating with "out" transsexuals could blow their cover and would effectively undo the work of their lives. The distinction between sex and gender having been opened to articulate the condition of successful "passing" as the goal of sex-change surgery, its logic proliferates quite outside of those therapeutic constraints. Dissociated from the body, masculinity and femininity become arbitrary constructs of gender, no more essentially valid than any other way of living one's sexed body.

Bornstein spends a good part of the book examining the narratives of gender identity, whether they support the subjectivities of those who take their gender for granted and assume a natural connection with sexuality, or whether they are used by those who have had to build a connection between their bodies and some gendered identity. Her narrative then, is one of transcendence (the self overcoming constraints to achieve true (post) identity) and it is as romantic as Morris', though in Frye's terms it is a more revolutionary, less "kidnapped" form of romance and counterbalanced with a pragmatic realization of the benefits and pleasures of a certain amount of immanence (ie. provisional Identity has its place). Transsexuality, for Bornstein, offers a wonderful space of potential emancipation from "sex" (the lived fusion of biological and social sex roles), in that in reversing the primacy of the biological and the social/cultural/psychological (gendered) components of sex, it allows biological sex to be understood as a non-determining category, and, potentially, offers a lived situation of freedom from the restrictions implicit in the naive

apprehension of "sex." However, as Bornstein is careful to maintain, one does not *live* the sex / gender distinction; when one apprehends one's self and others as sexual beings, the decomposition of sexuality in its lived acts into a biological and a social component is only a secondary and occasional response. One does not stop at every moment to question what degree of that sexualized perception is determined by biology and what is social; one simply experiences a sexualized situation and responds. The sex / gender distinction may make a theoretical sense of a kind, but "sex" (the sense that our social sexual selves and our biological sexual selves can be taken for granted as naturally interdetermining) is where we have to live and in which much of our pleasure and our "self" resides. To be "sexual," in the naive, phenomenal sense that the gender outlaw blatantly wielding his or her transsexuality seeks to undermine, is, for better or worse, to be human. Though principled, the gender outlaw would find itself leading a lonely and dangerous existence, as have other romantic figures of post- or *uber*-humanity. Though the "human" may be based on theoretically unsupportable and (within this romantic narrative of individual transcendence over both biology and society) ethically inferior criteria, it is the subjective situation within which communal life happens. Therefore Bornstein uses the narrative of transcendence as a sort of lever; the gender outlaw is less a destination than a situational tool. Employed properly, and in the right situations, it is good for prying "sex" away from its accompanying restrictions and presuppositions, effectively opening up a space of gender freedom. But, in the postmodern twist to her romantic narrative, Bornstein does not necessarily encourage gender outlawhood as a substitute for Identity; it is a heroic stance in some, situationally (and politically) appropriate narratives, but in other situations, the transsexual (like anyone else) may just want to have (or be) "sex."

Bornstein appropriates the sex / gender distinction to articulate the field of the transsexual's freedom and possibility rather than to diagnose the vicissitudes of the transsexual's pathology, for which it was originally posited. Its use in Stoller's narrative, for examples, allowed transsexuals to gain access to sex-change surgery, but as subjects of medical intervention it places them in the

position of having to understand themselves as "sick"; the gap between "sex" and "gender" was the wound medicine sought to close. Of course, this is a profoundly unsatisfactory way to understand one's self in terms of the autonomous, active subject of Romantic narrative. It casts the transsexual trying to understand his or her self as either crazy enough to have made him or herself look freakish enough to attract social attention of a dangerous kind, or crazy enough to be emotionally disturbed enough to hurt themselves. And in the imperfection of sex-change technology remains evidence of the transsexual's folly; he or she does not *really* change his or her sex. Rather, the surgery is designed to try to *fool* society, and the individual him or herself, into believing that their sex has been changed in order to ward off the most malignant varieties of future harm. The medical 'solution' carries for the transsexual the evidence of his or her 'problem'. The 'problem' for medicine is mental and social, the 'solution' is physical, but it is a partial solution which necessitates the mutilation of a healthy body because the sick mind cannot be reached by the scalpel. So while medicine provides a discourse which transsexuals must master to gain access to medical technology, many transsexuals stridently resist the subjectivity forced upon them by that discourse, because, understandably, they resist having to think of themselves as mutilated lunatics.

Therefore, in each of the transsexual autobiographies above, the paradigm drawn from physical intersexuality is used to explain the condition, except that the hermaphroditism is articulated as a problem of sex and gender distortion rather one of sexual biology. But where medical intervention in both transsexuality and intersexuality is motivated by the production and maintenance of a "best" sex, in their autobiographies transsexuals tend to retain some idea of that medical intervention being motivated by the recovery of a "real" sex. If his or her operations are just to reduce his or her danger, then the transsexual must think of him or herself as constitutively sick. But if the operations can be seen as repairing a *real* problem, then transsexuals can see themselves as people who have been — at least partially — *cured*, rather than duped. When the medical profession abandoned the recovery of the "real" biological sex as its motivation for

surgically aligning intersexed patients, it did so because no consistent and determinate physiological basis for determining sex could be established. Transsexuals like Bornstein take this finding but use it differently. Where medical professionals abandoned the idea of real sex in favour of best sex, transsexuals have been able to claim that the reality of sex is not and never was biological, that the reality of sex is and always has been somewhere else, that the primary discourse for articulating sexuality should be (and should have always been) myth or mysticism or sociology. Bornstein's transsexualism retains the idea of "real" sex, but uses the concept critically rather than in a naive physiological sense.

The retention of some sexual "real" is necessary to transsexuality, if only because it is invoked by narrative pressure. To the transsexual, physiological sex has to be unreal, for the act they demand is justifiable only if physiological sex were plastic and not finally determinate. But for the transsexual, sex itself has to be presumed to be real on some other level or else there would be no reason to change. In a romantically structured narrative an active change of sex has to be framed in a story in which that change brings the protagonist closer to the end of his or her quest. And if the change has to do with sex, then the end of the quest has to have something to do with sex, though it may be sex understood on quite a different level and called something else: "gender," for example, or "Identity." But even understood as some sublimated end expressed in mystical or mythic terms, the action the transsexual undertakes and must justify narratively is a very messy and often quite painful set of corporeal interventions.⁸⁸ This poses a problem, for if the action of moving toward a goal or making one's self more complete and at one with the cosmos is, in Frye's terms, romantic, the consideration of one's own body as the object of work is Ironic and the taking of one's own body as the object of work is comic, grotesquely mock-romantic. In romantic narrative the body helps the self find Identity by acting as an instrument or an obstacle; the body helps the protagonist by fighting or running, or it hinders him by getting hurt or hungry or inappropriately aroused. But the transsexual can treat the body as an instrument or an obstacle

only at the expense of making their work on the body seem freakish — because once the separation between object of action (world) and instrument of action (the body and technological extensions) is collapsed, the transsexual autobiography tends to fall into the convention of mock-romance, and the transsexual finds him or herself once again, a freak, a hero who is laughed at or pitied rather than identified with.

- **strategies of narrating non-freakish transsexuality.**

The transsexual can try to restore dignity and fit better into the romantic pattern in a few ways, but each of these ways mean that their action has to be sublimated and their relation to agency displaced. One option, chosen by Jan Morris, is to express the removal of the male genitals (and perhaps the addition of female genitalia) as a sort of erasing of the body itself which allows the spiritual nature of the self to become manifest. The spirit's social manifestation can then come out properly and the self can live as it should socially, if not reproductively. This is a very powerful narrative, and Morris is quite frank about its origins: she associates the removal of her male genitals with the removal of her masculinity *tout court*, and is thereby granted the privilege of standing outside of masculine society and its institutions. Explicitly drawing on the figure of the nun (as opposed to the priest, whose abnegation of corporeal masculinity allows him to become *more* masculine, a figure of institutional masculinity), Morris equates this removal from masculinity as a removal from sexuality itself and a move closer to a principle of eternal femininity.

Morris' "eternal feminine" is narcissistic in that it positions itself against those things which Freud indicates come from narcissistic renunciation: the desire for order, the quest for general terms, the aggressive ambition to know what the world is really like, to have authority and to wield power. This 'eternal femininity' Morris seeks to incarnate is narcissistic as well, not in that it seeks

attention, but in the sense of Freud's female narcissism picked up by Beauvoir; that form of self-alienation which seeks to incarnate as the proper identity of the self an image given by another. In moving from male to female, Morris seems, in every sense, to want to move from being someone extraordinary who attracts and commands attention (of both the good and the bad kind) to being someone who blends in perfectly and completely fades out of those spheres which are marked for special attention. She wants to be a "normal" woman, which may be an even more alienated form than those narcissists who, Beauvoir remarks, try to be super-women: more beautiful, witty and charming (according to the convention of the day) than other women. Normality is a much more complex and equally alienating convention, in Beauvoir's terms, but it seems Morris' end. In an inversion of the romantic habit of having the hero's success measured by the ability to ethically separate himself from society, the end of Morris' quest is the submersion of the self in those least distinguished (but most "natural") parts of society.

In true romantic style Morris privileges this eternal femininity as a purging of sexuality from the body, leaving the body an instrument which guarantees a certain social position (normal woman of Bath) and which is able to act as an aesthetic instrument (it is "clean"). Her post-masculine body is profoundly Erotic in a narcissistic sense — it aggregates and joins with the world — for without that (masculine) sexuality which wants to (in Freud's terms) go out and sadistically *use* the world, she is able to feel compassionate and connected to the world around her, she is able to *identify* with the world and *feel* rather than *know* its reality. Because Freudian masculinity is articulated along the narrative patterns of romantic agency, it is no surprise that having left behind her very Freudian masculinity, the post-operative Morris also positions herself outside of the romantic narrative. Agency, like sexuality and intellectuality, is something left behind in the world of those who are still on the quest. She, who has reached the end, has found the end of strife and is therefore past the need to strive, to know and to conquer. Morris' sex change can fit into a romantic pattern only by figuring the sexual body as something she outgrows and leaves behind.

For Morris the goal of sex-change surgery is freedom from the corporeal and social demands of masculine sexuality and a recovery of narcissism on the other side of its renunciation. This is reliant on the sex / gender distinction. In "sex" Morris figures herself as an alienated being, so by erasing the biological markers of sex, she finds herself able to live *as* a woman, her "sexed" existence being entirely defined in terms of "gender"; she can recover an image of herself in the world only by removing the troublesome body from the equation.

Another way of reconciling male-to-female sex-change surgery to romantic narrative patterns is to figure the surgery as movements in a battle between two separate individuals. This way protagonism and antagonism can be easily kept separate and the romantic quest can be expressed in terms of a more properly apocalyptic unity; only one can survive, and that survival of that one will be marked not by the loss of the sexual body but by the recovery of a fully functional and non-conflicted sexual body. In Elbe's account her former body housed two separate and distinct beings. Gradually, as Lili became ascendant the sexual body of Andreas became more and more compromised, not inherently but intermittently; when he was a man, he was all man, when he was a woman, he was all woman, except for his body. In true romantic fashion Andreas sacrifices himself for Lili, and his death gives life to a more perfect sexual being than that which had previously existed. That being is fully sexual, except, paradoxically, in her lack of functioning genitalia and reproductive organs. Andreas, before his demise, arranges that Lili shall have those too, and it is Lili's request to have her corporeal sexuality made more perfect through the creation of a fertility-enabling vaginal canal to her presumed uterus that results in her death. Again, the end of this narrative is narcissistic in the primacy of identificatory knowledge and the shying away from the characteristics of renounced narcissism. And again, it is a romantically appropriate narrative in that the story is Andreas': he is the site of agency and protagonism, and the story's moment of transcendence is the point of his "death." Even in her own story and to herself Lili is an object virtually incapable of agency. Her "life" is romantically acceptable because it is the counterpart of

Andreas' heroic death, and so this story is actually the autobiography of Andreas and the fruit of his grace. Inasmuch as Lili is given the power of self expression it is only to think of herself as a different sort of thing than Andreas, but even that overstates her ability to make herself a narrative protagonist. Thought is not the primary way Lili understands her place in the world; compassionate or anxious identification is. Andreas is a narrative character of thought and action who gives form, Lili is a character of desire and passivity which seeks form. Again, the movement from masculinity to femininity follows both Freud's narcissistic logic and the logic of romance narrative which Freud incorporates to understand femininity and masculinity. This story avoids the imputation of freakishness by retaining the viability of Andreas as an object of valid romantic identification, and by setting up Lili as an object of fascination and pity. Instead of having the hero and the distressed damsel facing each other across the axis of the story's agency, they follow each other in the narrative progression, but they are both still there, and the hero still altruistically rescues the damsel.

Is it possible to articulate male-to-female transsexuality in a romantic narrative pattern while retaining, for the post operative character, an intellectually structured agency and a body that is presented in both its carnal and its ephemeral sexuality? Kate Bornstein's story attempts to do just this, but in maintaining the primacy of the intellectual control that gives her such powerful agency she is forced to treat her body as an instrument of mind, albeit an unruly one. Her power to set her body free of the constraints of sexuality comes from the fact that she is able to know how her body is known as a sexual object. Her body becomes the site in which her mind wages her struggle for autonomy and in which her self wrests autonomy from external (social) influences. Bornstein privileges the carnal nature of her post-operative sexual body because its independent presence must be asserted in order to make her point that gender — the culturally variable way sexuality is imposed as it is lived out and understood — is independent of the carnal body. She can enjoy physical sex, whether man, woman or gender outlaw; and this separation of carnality from social sex

roles allows her to control both her body and her social sexuality. In conformance with Freudian masculinity and with romantic protagonism, Bornstein figures her body as an instrument. Just as the hero must arm himself with sword and shield order to increase his body's potential to assert his agency and to protect against the damage it might incur which would hinder his agency, so too is Bornstein's use of her body figured as manoeuvres in a battle, a battle to protect the whole self from social restrictions on its movement. Unlike Morris and Elbe, for whom the post-masculine characters are romantically "feminine" Bornstein retains her narrative position as a valid object of romantic identification by retaining a narratively "masculine" protagonistic character. Her bodily change is not accompanied, as it is in Morris and Elbe, by a narratological change but merely a reconfiguration of the body-self-world arrangement. Though her body is arguably no longer "male," her character, in the terms that inform Schreber, Freud and Marlowe, remains "masculine."

This is not a cop-out by Bornstein, or some betrayal of her transsexuality. Instead, it marks, narratively, her attempt to disengage the somatic changes involved in sex-change from the culturally dominant forms of understanding a transition from "masculine" to "feminine." Unlike Morris or Elbe, Bornstein retains the primacy of the thematic, the general, the polemical and the political in her narrative. She does not resort to abstractions in order to articulate her particular situation. She takes her situation as a given, and uses its cultural eccentricity to ground a coherent and politically polemical set of thematic discussions. Her experience is not the primary object of the story, it merely authorizes the story's political and conceptual arguments, and the book addresses the person only on the way to the political subject. This is a powerful gesture of reappropriation, for, as Bornstein points out, transsexual self-articulation had long been confined to the ghetto of autobiography as a form of sensational literature. Like the stories of sensational violence made more scandalous because of their plausibility in the "true crime" tradition, transsexual autobiography presented sexual perversion that was all the more fascinating because it was "true." Arguably this is still the way transsexuality is mainly presented; Bornstein may have turned her

appearances on tabloid TV into moments of political assertion but, as she remarks, she was probably booked and watched by those seeking entertainment of a more salacious kind.

Bornstein's use of theoretical and medical discourses marks a fairly powerful narrative repositioning of her post-operative transsexual subject. Analytic accounts of transsexuality were reserved for non-transsexuals and constituted the transsexual as a patient, as an object of the heroic scientific subject in a narrative that told the story of scientific advancement rather than the transsexual's personal quest for identity. The transsexual, represented as a case in a medical journal, is an object and a pathological one at that. By using the language with which transsexuality had been analytically understood in an autobiographical narrative of *self-articulation*, Bornstein finds a way to make the freak speak back in a way that tries to make him or her not a freak at all, but a valid subject as lost and confused but as or more earnest, autonomous and proximate to truth as any other valid subject. Bornstein's narrative takes as much delight in mocking and undermining medical discourses of transsexuality as it does in reappropriating the authority those discourses offer. As Bornstein's efforts to tell her story in narrative, in performance and on the trash TV talk show circuit attest, scientific discourse is not the form which Bornstein feels can most completely legitimize transsexuality and make transgenderedness a valid subject position. Scientific discourse is useful and is a language that must be mastered if only because modern transsexuality is a creature of technology and is primarily and originally articulated in scientific discourses. Therefore the reappropriation of self-definition must begin with a reappropriation of scientific discourses. But for this very reason, as Bornstein's work illustrates, transsexuals have to try harder to articulate themselves in terms other than the scientific, to make themselves visible as people in the stories a given culture tells itself to understand the relations between people and things. Transsexual subjectivity, valid but pathologized in scientific discourse, has to define itself as something other than a freak. Intellectually they may be describable in valid terms, but they have to represent themselves both to themselves and to others as *people*. Ultimately, the transsexual's goal is to tell

his or her story in a way that can provoke a positive identification — even if only within a circumscribed “alternative” community — and that means constructing him or herself as a narrative character of valid romantic protagonism, of working with the narrative categories of masculinity and femininity even while telling a story which tends to undermine, in its very form, the validity of their presuppositions.

Conclusion

This project's intervention in political and cultural debate surrounding the nature and function of modern individuality is ambivalent, mostly because paranoia figures the absurd extension of both alternatives. On the one hand, it is difficult to differentiate those subjectivity of those who argue for the legitimate hegemony of the "masculine" (human) individual subject over his body and its relation to social institutions from that within which paranoia is located. The distinction would have to be made on the basis of the "reality" of the world in which the individual existed (and to which he or she was opposed), and the likelihood of his or her "legitimate" moral opposition generating individual intervention. If, like Schreber, the narrative world was clearly bizarre and could, under no circumstances be recognized communally as "real" (though, again, this is historically variable... there have been communities who have accepted worlds as seemingly bizarre as Schreber's), and if, like Schreber, the person seemed willing to move from moral suasion to moral action to justify his or her vision, then the individual would clearly be designated paranoid. But cases abound in which the opposition is not nearly so easily maintained.

The world perceived by "Unabomber" Theodore Kaczynski, for example, is not altogether different from that described in many other discourses critical of contemporary capitalism and its associated forms of society, culture and economic organization. The difference is in the relation of self to Other that seems to have informed Kaczynski action. Where most leftist critiques of capitalism appropriate some form of "us vs them" mould in which proper action is shaped, Kaczynski seems to have moved within an "I vs them" narrative configuration that ruled out his participation in collective action and left him — logically — no alternative to individual intervention that fell into the pattern of "scanning" behaviour from a position of invisibility (in his case, scanning the media from his off-the-grid squatter's cabin in the Montana wilderness) followed

by increasingly violent, directed, unilateral action that eventually culminated in his production and sending of letter-bombs. This difference in self-understanding allows an emphatically un-paranoid “technocritic” like Mark Slouka to assert that Kaczynski was “both utterly mad in his methods, and essentially correct in his analysis of the issues we face.” For Slouka, Kaczynski should be despised not because he chose to act against the conspiracy but because that action was ineffective and morally misguided. Unlike Marlowe, Kaczynski’s action did not neatly punish the guilty (or allow the guilty to recognize their guilt and punish themselves). Instead, he harmed those with no cognizance of their own guilt. And, unlike Marlowe, who always manages to get the media to print something that vindicates his action, though Kaczynski succeeded in forcing the media to publish his “truth,” unlike in The Long Goodbye, this publication was not followed by a universal recognition of its truthfulness. Instead, “They” (industrial capitalist society) were able to overcode and delegitimize his document, making Kaczynski’s action self-defeating in that it provided “ammunition to his ideological enemies... making it easy for them to demonize those, like [Slouka], seeking to keep open a legitimate debate about our technological future.” Kaczynski is paranoid, certainly, but this pattern is very similar to that of Philip Marlowe and, with considerably less spectacle and from a point so far removed on the political spectrum that it overlaps not only with that of the “survivalists” that are said to be scattered in similar cabins through the North American wilderness, but with Johnny Rambo of the movie First Blood.

In this emphasis on the associations of paranoid individualism with liberal self-possessive individualism I do not wish to downplay the historical significance of the spread of this kind of self-understanding. In the broad de-colonialist movement of the mid-twentieth century the image of the self-determining individual oppressed by hostile collectivities provided a launching pad for critique of and eventual collective action to remove, in many cases, real structures of (usually) statist oppression. Whether this form of oppression was merely exchanged for another in the form of the

newly liberated individual's "voluntarist" participation as a poorly protected labourer in an economy increasingly governed by neo-colonialist MNC's, trans-statist regulatory bodies such as the IMF and NGO's of various stripes remains to be seen. On a personal note, living in Czechoslovakia in the period immediately after 1989's "Velvet Revolution," bathed in the grandeur of Vaclav Havel's liberal moral vision, it seemed possible to believe that individual "freedom" was, if not the end, at least must indeed be the high point of history, however noxious its figuration — by Fukiyama and others — as the global triumph of a quintessentially American value. Returning to the Czech Republic some years later and noticing the way in which the vibrant sphere of cultural and national tradition had been hollowed out and filled by a sense of cynical, ironic individualism responsive to the rituals of consumption rather than collective culture, this optimism has been severely tempered.

If paranoid bias is to some extent formally indistinguishable from forms of popular "masculine" heroism and morally indistinguishable (except in the efficacy of its execution) from certain forms of "legitimate" action, paranoid "suggestibility" is even more difficult to distinguish. Paranoid suggestibility, that aspect of Fromm's "authoritarian personality" that loves to admire the execution of strong, morally self-determining individuality (and loves to participate in the system of subjugation erected around that individuality) seems, arguably, to account far more adequately for the operations of contemporary Western democracy than does the Jeffersonian ideal of the autonomous, rational, fully-informed citizen making a choice that judiciously balances self-interest against morality and collective responsibility. While culturally legitimate views of the world tend to obscure the connection of collective action with paranoid suggestibility, those views that are culturally illegitimate — like, much to his (and to a large extent my) dismay, those of Mark Slouka — are far more easily associated with this aspect of paranoia. From Hofstadter's The Paranoid Style in American Politics to contemporary interest in the Anti-communist John Birch society of the American '60's there has long been a tendency to associate paranoia with political "extremism,"

especially of the right.

Though paranoid suggestibility is often associated with soldiers and fanatical, violent, often male members of ideological constituted groups, there is a pervasive association of “femininity” — the femininity that, for Beauvoir, makes “women” (the woman one is not born but becomes) love fascists — with the desire to be subsumed within another’s self-determining individuality. Though this form of subjectivity (or lack thereof) is patently noxious to me, and I recognize that this discourse of individual autonomy and human rights has proven valuable and enriched the lives of real people in real situations of oppression, I also felt compelled to explore the continuity of these discourses with those of an earlier modernity, noting the points at which their informing narratives overlap those of Schreber and participate in the same post-Enlightenment rationality that is appropriated in a figure like Marlowe to valorize “masculinity,” anti-femininity and rigid gender division.

In this view “femininity” is seen as a trap: in exchange for security and protection the feminine subject gives up autonomy, self-determination, and in Beauvoir’s terms, any chance of full, relatively non-alienated subjectivity. Females and those in otherwise marginalised gender formations are exhorted to strive for autonomy, the capacity for self-determination, freedom from cultural categorization or definition, aggressive pursuit and defence of one’s own interests, and for the arrogation of the right to please one’s self and take pleasure in one’s own way rather than take pleasure through the provision of pleasure to others. In short, queer theory appropriation of this discourse seems to ask, in the words of Suzanna Walters, “why can’t a woman be more like a fag?” The substitution of “fag” for the conventional concluding word, “man” indicates in a tongue in cheek but nonetheless accurate way the way in which conventionally “masculine” attributes are valorized in this discourse.

Is there a viable alternative? We saw in the 1970’s the emergence of a form of critique that

valorized aspects of the conventionally “feminine” position, but, in addition to the conceptual difficulty of associating attributes of passivity, nurturing, identificatory knowledge, gentleness, certain forms of irrationality etc. that disrupt “male” rationalist discourse with the female body, there was also the fact that ceding “masculine” discourse to men also, to a large extent ceded effective participation in a public sphere in which action was and continued to be taken that had real effects on the lives of real women. Frye identifies an “earth-mother” narrative pattern of which he finds largely assimilated vestiges in the Western textual tradition, and which is often associated with a rather romantically conceived primitivist reading of non-Western cultures (like the Welsh or African cultures Jan Morris describes, for example) and Mystical theological traditions (like those of the Orientalized “East,” for example). This pattern that articulates a radically different kind of subjectivity is geared toward the harmony rather than opposition of self and world, subject and object, and integrates a temporality that is the stasis of the cycle rather than the progressive dynamic of straight-line teleological “sky-father” romantic narrative. But is this narrative a viable alternative to current political discourse, whose alternatives seem to be defined by the figures of paranoid bias and paranoid suggestibility? The field of contemporary political discourse would seem to suggest otherwise. But those — such as odd bedfellows like Fredric Jameson and the proponents of the Gaia hypothesis, for example — who argue that narratives centered on and articulated within the terms of the (latently paranoid) individual cannot conceptualize the kinds of collective activity necessary to effectively intervene in the inhumanly virtual (metastitized) field of global multi-national capitalism would suggest that a general adoption of some ‘non-paranoid’ narrative figure of agency is absolutely necessary for the attainment of a stable, sustainable mode of human existence.

Notes

1. See Morris Schatzman's Soul Murder: Persecution in the Family (New York: New American Library, 1973) for an exhaustive discussion of the critique of Freud's homosexuality hypothesis.
2. Louis Sass (Madness 374-397) summarizes the neurobiological and genetic research into schizophrenia. He notes the biological reductionism of much of this work but acknowledges the central role of neurobiology and, in some cases, genetic predisposition, in the onset, if not the experiential structure of many forms of schizophrenia.
3. Sonia Kruks explains Beauvoir's modifications to the early Sartrean phenomenological subject in her "Simone de Beauvoir: Teaching Sartre about Freedom" in Margaret A. Simons (ed.) Feminist Interpretations of Simone de Beauvoir (University Park, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995. 79-96).
4. In Butler's "Sex and Gender in Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex" (Yale French Studies, 72 [1986] 35-49), Beauvoir's idea of the body as "situation" is situated as a modification of the Sartrean situation, and is rearticulated in a way that authorizes the vision of gender that Butler would go on to explain more fully in her Gender Trouble (1990) and Bodies that Matter (1993).
5. This is a major point of debate, with "essentialist" transsexuals like Jan Morris arguing for the a notion of gender that is prior to will and intention, while "voluntarist" transsexuals like Kate Bornstein argue that gender roles are essentially lived choices that can be assumed and discarded situationally and at will.
6. This oppressive condition springs from the recognition of *meaning* where there was once *being*, *textuality* where there once seemed only *reality*. Leo Bersani points out that by "repeat[ing] phenomena as design" the paranoid renders the phenomenal explicitly textual, then gives her epistemological products ontological status. The paranoid, as Bersani points, out, cannot in good *faith* pronounce the sentence "I am paranoid," but only "There is a conspiracy" (Bersani 101). As Francois Roustag points out, a paranoid cannot laugh at himself, because to laugh would be to recover an ironic distance from one's own knowledge and to contemplate the possibility that he or she may be making it all up. In paranoia the hermeneutic circle must be disavowed, but that disavowal, that refusal to receive knowledge within the fuzzy parameters of human perspective, opens the door to this progressive extension of hermeneutic activity to the limits of epistemic possibility. This limit can manifest itself in the psychotic condition of delusional disorder or, possibly, in the condition of melancholia Jaqueline Rose associates with radical skepticism (see below).
7. Kraepelin's textbook went through numerous changes and revisions, and the relation of "dementia paranoides" to "dementia praecox" changed as well, until in its 6th edition (1896) the descriptive characteristics of "paranoia" were distinguished from dementia paranoides and dementia praecox in way that roughly conforms to the DSM IV's distinction between a kind of paranoid way of self understanding ("paranoid personality disorder") and the more psychotic and bizarre delusional structures of delusional disorder: persecutory/paranoid type and schizophrenia: paranoid type. In his 1911 Dementia Praecox or the Group of Schizophrenias, (New York: International Universities Press, 1950) Emile Bleuler expanded and formalized Kraepelin's distinctions in a work that became central to the twentieth-century understanding of paranoia.

8. P.A. Magaro makes the distinction between paranoid schizophrenia and the other two subtypes of schizophrenia based, in part, on the different cognitive organizational patterns. Paranoid cognitive style is, among other things, characterized by what this essay will refer to as abnormal abductive logic (jumping to conclusions based on impartial information), rigidity and a reliance on “verbal information processing”, on a highly narrative form of self-understanding. Swanson’s categories refer to all forms of paranoia, including, but not constrained to the more bizarre, disordered and often psychotic delusional patterns of delusional disorder and paranoid schizophrenia.
9. Prior to the DSM IIIR (1988) this category was simply called “paranoid disorders,” but was changed to recognize the specificity and the not necessarily paranoid ideation of delusions such as erotomania and delusions of grandiosity.
10. As Richard Noll reports as late as 1992, “It is not exactly known how this personality disorder (“the paranoid slant”) is related to schizophrenia, paranoid type, or to the delusional (paranoid) disorders.
11. My use of “paranoia” in this essay, will be most consistent with “paranoid personality disorder,” in that I am primarily describing the general patterns of paranoid cognition that are not necessarily highly bizarre or psychotic (though paranoid delusions of both the disordered and schizophrenic type — apart from being more “bizarre” [ie. instead of “my boss is always watching me,” it is “aliens are always watching me”] and logically inconsistent, often share similar cognitive patterns).
12. The consideration of paranoia in explicitly political terms is well-researched, from Erich Fromm’s analyzes of “the authoritarian personality type” and the rise of Nazism in Germany, through work in both Swanson’s and Meissner’s overviews of paranoia that considers paranoid personality and paranoid processes as participating in the operation of especially inward looking and centripetally organized political organizations. More recently, in James M. Glass’ Delusion: Internal Dimensions of Political Life schizophrenic (“primarily paranoid” [xix])delusion is analyzed as a kind of primitive articulation of the self-world relation that is manifest in political consciousness. For Glass delusion is regressive, it articulates a fundamentally narcissistic self concerned with issues of violence and abuse, domination and victimization, power and control. The Hobbesian postulation that this is the “natural” condition of mankind is a narcissistic projection fully realized in the story-world of delusional pathology. Glass’ unabashedly humanist hope (with its rather refreshing return to an affirmation of “acculturation” or “therapy” as a positive intervention in cultural and individual life) is that therapy can help move that world toward a Rousseauian world of pity and empathy, a horizontally rather than vertically articulated human world. “Perhaps,” he writes, “the delusional self’s journey from Hobbesian terror to the Rousseauian recognition of empathy and pity mirrors the psychological developments in the maturation of the human self: the violence and indeterminacy of a Hobbesian nature precedes the emergence of the complex affective states of empathy and relatedness” (257).
13. See, for example, the discussion between Foucault and Deleuze in “Intellectuals and Power,” in a collection of Foucault’s essays called Language, Counter-memory, Practice, Donald Bouchard, ed. (Ithica, NY: Cornell UP, 1977). Though “paranoia” and “schizophrenia” are more prevalent in Anti-Oedipus, their first of the two volumes on “Capitalism and Schizophrenia,” Deleuze and Guattari’s A Thousand Plateaus is more amenable to being read as a series of exercises in this practice of generating a non-centralized, non-“paranoid” form of understanding and social manifestation.
14. In an interesting exchange in the journal Philosophy and Paranoia, William Bywater argues that “post-modernist” literary criticism (he has Stanley Fish in mind here) is a kind of paranoid discourse. This kind of

criticism — characterized by a jargon-laden opacity — is mobilized out of an “overpowering interest in control.” Because its terms are so vague and its assertions so broad and enigmatic, it effectively evades engagement in academic debate, standing only as a monument to the critic’s desire for authority. Designed to intimidate and evade rather than communicate, the rhetoric of “post-modern” literary criticism violates the principles of academic debate that ostensibly govern scholarship, erecting instead mutually hostile solipsisms more expressive of the paranoid anxiety about autonomy than of any desire to participate in scholarly exchange.

Linda Fisher responds by placing “post-modernism” in the epistemological tradition Ricoeur finds characterized by the hermeneutics of suspicion. The solipsism of postmodernist critical discourse is not simply a manifestation of paranoid anxiety on the part of the critic but the discursive form of the proliferating self-reflexivity of this moment in the tradition. “Because postmodernism is not only the latest installment in the tradition of suspicion but its continuation, its evolution into hypersuspicion,” she writes, it leads to its own destruction, not so much in terms of a strategic dismantling, but in terms of the nihilistic impasses of its incapacity to articulate” (114).

15. In “The Listening Eye: Postmodernism, Paranoia, and the Hypervisible” (*Diacritics* 26 [1996]: 90-107) Jerry Aline Flieger provides an excellent overview of the way in which paranoia is used as a trope in the (later) work of Baudrillard and Lyotard.

16. For an excellent discussion of the tendencies toward semantic stability and the counter-tendency toward semantic revitalization through the reappropriation of the figural basis of language (through the use of figurative language) see Umberto Eco’s “The Semantics of Metaphor” in *The Role of the Reader* (Bloomington, Ind: Indiana UP, 1979). For Eco, as for Nietzsche, language is based upon “dead metaphor” whose figurative origin has been effaced. When that language is reiterated in contexts that provoke a recognition of the figurative nature of the linguistic sign, it becomes again explicitly recognized as a trope, and adds semantic complexity to the semantic field.

17. As Warner reports, “films constructed around a new literalization of the heroic” (672) from *Star Wars* to *RoboCop* to the *Rambo* movies enjoyed tremendous popularity and accounted for billions of dollars of revenue around the world.

18. Sass indicates elsewhere that he is thinking in this respect, of, among others, the early Foucault (of *Madness and Civilization*), Deleuze and Guattari (though it applies far more to *Anti-Oedipus* than to *A Thousand Plateaus*), and the anti-psychiatry movement associated with R.D. Laing.

19. There are several mechanisms for measuring “self-reference” (in paranoia exaggerated into “delusions of reference”, or the fallacious sensation that one is the center of attention and all the acts of the social environment have a hidden meaning with relation to the self), all, like the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) worthy of dramatic presence in Pynchon’s *Gravity’s Rainbow*. These include the Dahlstrom, Welsh and Dahlstrom scale, Comrey’s Paranoia Factor Scale, Horn’s Paranoia Scale, Baggaley and Riedel’s Paranoid Tendency Scale, Endicott, Jortner and Abramoff’s Suspiciousness Scale, and Watson and Klett’s Paranoid Projection Scale. Fenigstein and Venable’s 1981 study of “public self-awareness” (the awareness of oneself as the object of someone else’s observation) in a non-clinical population (college students) yielded an interesting continuum of proto-paranoid responses (in response to a questionnaire asking questions conforming to classically paranoid perceptions) and a close correlation between that continuum and those developed in studies done to rate public self-awareness (when placed in front of a two way mirror, did the subjects think they were being watched, and, given the ability to freely construct a story, to what extent was the story “self-referential”).

20. The postulation that the antagonistic agent or collective is somehow trying to take advantage of the patient in a sexual manner is extremely common in paranoid delusion, and figures prominently in Schreber's memoirs. In the several hundred pages of case studies recorded in Meissner (1978), and Swanson (1968) sexuality is frequently expressed in terms of battle for control and power; it is an arena of autonomy and tends to be described in very mechanical, disembodied terms (see, esp. "Anne's" delusion, in Meissner, 320-348).

21. See, for example, Tzvetan Todorov's discussion of this problem in his The Fantastic; a structural approach to a literary genre, translated by Richard Howard. (Cleveland: Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1973).

22. Jameson pays this compliment to Frye in The Political Unconscious (12) and then goes on to use a modification of one of Frye's hermeneutic structures as the organizational framework of his own metacritical project in that book. De Man's comment occurs in his Blindness and Insight (26).

23. My discussion of Kant's role in the formation of modern consciousness is provoked by Foucault's discussion in his The Order of Things, (New York: Vintage, 1973) where Kant's ideas are fingered as the most influential source of the modernist project of self-reflection. Lest I leave the impression of any great mastery of Kant, let me disclaim that the following discussion finds its Kant in Foucault's treatment in the abovenamed book and in Gilles Deleuze's Kant's Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of the Faculties, translated by Barbara Habberjam and Hugh Tomlinson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984) and is also indebted to Louis Sass' Madness and Modernism, discussed at further length below.

24. These comments are based on M.H. Abrams observations in Natural Supernaturalism (New York: Norton, 1971), around p. 214- 222.

25. See Louis Sass (1993), 1-12.

26. "Conspiracy fiction" is structured around a modification of what we will describe as the "formal" detective story narrative configuration, and is in line with what Jerry Palmer calls the "positive" thriller, the thriller whose plot usually relates the defence of an established order through the annihilation of subversive elements. It postulates a malignant alternate reality — alternate because of class (hippies, welfare cheaters, white trash), ethnicity ("organized crime," Jewish money, black sexuality) or ideology (commies, religious cultists) — knowable only through the correct interpretation of seemingly irrelevant details. This invokes a latent heterophobia and hermeneutic hypersensitivity which is characteristically paranoid. But it exploits that paranoid tendency only for its affective force and hermeneutic impetus, asserting finally in firmly non-paranoid fashion the viability of a social unity purged of its subversive elements. An agent of "our" society who is not *of* our society (James Bond, the undercover vice cop) moves between the worlds, using the methods of both worlds to expose and destroy the conspiracy. Because he or she can understand the conspirators - this is a strategic necessity - he or she can never completely rejoin the society in which such knowledge is forbidden. This narrative configuration could not be called completely paranoid though it may be extremely satisfying to an incipiently paranoid reader. It sets up a world which is containable, integral, and inherently benign with active evil being an external threat capable of being controlled by the extraordinary mechanisms of the social whole. It presumes and assuages rather than invokes or provokes paranoia.

This "conspiracy" or adventure-comedic narrative structure is characteristic of people *associated* with a paranoid (his or her "followers") who exhibit a great deal of *suggestibility* (in David Shapiro's terms) and who are looking for a group, a leader and a story that might lend them purpose. The paranoid, on the other hand, is not suggestible at all, but projective and *biased*; he or she sees what he or she needs or wants to see and produces the

purposeful stories that others may adopt or vilify. But, significantly, the paranoid does is extremely reluctant to trust his or her followers, if there are any, because trust forms a social bond, an avenue of vulnerability in which the individual's autonomy can be compromised. Trust, the basis of social relations, is absent, and social relations themselves become understood as the medium of antagonism.

27. Louis Sass, in particular, speculates on “just which of the specific *aspects* of modern culture are likely to be causally relevant [in the generation or maintenance of individual “madness”].” “It would be impossible to enumerate them all” he notes, but considers a few avenues in “the development of the modern self” (*Madness* 369). He looks at “the disengagement an self-consciousness that was fostered by the ideas of ... Descartes, Locke and Kant” and currents associated with “romanticism and its aftermath that have tended to glorify the inner self, by implying that human fulfillment lies in discovering one’s own uniqueness and recognizing the central role of one’s own inner life” (*Madness* 369). He then touches on the development of “psychological man” that I address below, and then touches on the analyzes of the intrication of an ambiently paranoid *mentalité* with modern social order that is found in the work of Marx, Weber and Durkheim.

28. Juliet Mitchell takes issue with Beauvoir’s critique of Freud, arguing persuasively that Beauvoir imputed a consistency and systemic coherence to Freud that was lacking in the layered, changing nature of psychoanalysis as it was articulated by Freud across his career. Recognizing the validity of Mitchell’s corrective, I will examine Freudian metapsychology as it is articulated by or implicit in specific texts, and will attempt to account for the changing nature of Freudian metapsychology across his career.

29. Freud was rather unsettled by the congruence between the descriptions Schreber offers of the relations between cosmic forces in his delusional world and those intrapsychic relations of which Freud speaks, to the extent that he felt the need to have someone vouch for the independence of his thought:

[D]etails of Schreber’s delusion formation sound like endopsychic perceptions of the processes whose existence I have assumed in these pages as the basis of our explanation of paranoia. I can nevertheless call a friend and fellow-specialist to witness that I had developed my theory of paranoia before I became acquainted with the contents of Schreber’s book. (12: 79)

30. Freud’s phrase, from his “New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis” is “where the Id was, there the ego shall be” (22: 80). He goes on to speak of psycho-analysis as a “work of culture” shaping a natural phenomenon for human ends, akin to the draining of a lake for human uses. This positivist strain is certainly present in Freud and is definitely that which shares the same nineteenth-century colonialist base-narratives as those which inform the hard-boiled detective story (discussed in chapter four) and charge Schreber’s anxiety, but is most frequently qualified to accord with the interpretation I provide in the text here.

31. A closer consideration of the writings of Philip Rieff on Freud will frame the ensuing reading (based on Farrell) of Freud’s relation to modernity. In his overview of Rieff’s thought, Kenneth Piver explains that for Rieff,

Psychological man [sic], through his ‘analytic attitude’, lives by an insight aimed at a technological mastery of the self and a tolerance of ambiguities; ‘a stable life in an unstable world’. Rieff’s original contribution to cultural theory was to articulate a now common idea: the extent and significance of Freud’s influence on Western sensibility. Among countless subsequent commentators ranging from George Steiner to Jacques Derrida, there is now a general acceptance that the modalities of individual thought and public discourse in the latter half of the twentieth-century could characterize it as the “Age of

Freud." This implies at least that the modern self-understanding has become more privatized and individual; hence, when people ponder the meaning of life and, moreover, how they should act, it is likely done from a psychological perspective rather than a religious, political or communitarian one. (Pivar 195, with citations from Reiff)

Reiff's formulation of "psychological man" as an ideal type implicit in Freud is similar to that presumed by Farrell, below. The debate has largely centered around the ethico-cultural implications of the widespread identification with "psychological man." The culture that seems, in Reiff to be associated with psychological man is "the culture of the therapeutic," that which he emerged from are cultures based on "therapies of commitment." These therapies of commitment — faith structures, essentially — "are defined through their public symbolics": a system of prohibitions and permissions, in return for some assurance of salvation... These proscriptions ... enunciated by the sacral elites, are intended to be *therapeutic* by enabling the satisfactory functioning of the community and deterring the psychological decompensation of its members" (Pivar 197, ref to Reiff 1987, 36). This is a "controlling" therapeutic in which the individual is regenerated into a communal existence which claims primacy, and it is contrasted with the "reasoning" therapeutic of the psychological man which collectively exists as a "negative community" in which "self-awareness supersedes devotion to any commanded ideal of right or wrong" (Pivar, 197). He "seeks to attack received ideas, to demolish previous platitudes" (Megill in Pivar 197): the "therapeutic" is "simply informative... so profoundly informative that [it may] preclude all forms of commitment" (Pivar 197, ref. to Reiff 77). The opposition hinges, for Reiff, on the question of "whether our culture can be so reconstructed so that faith — some compelling symbolic of self integrating communal purpose — need no longer superintend the organization of personality" (Reiff 5).

Early in his career, Pivar notes, Reiff implicitly and hesitantly aligned himself with "psychological man," explaining "I, too, aspire to think without assent. This is the ultimate violence to which the modern intellectual is committed... I, too, share in the modern desire not to be deceived" (Reiff 13). Pivar points out that unlike Norman O. Brown however, for whom Freud's theory of repression provided a way to conceive of a more fully emancipated human condition via the transgression or negation of repression, and unlike even Freud's tenuous faith in a scientific subjectivity akin to Reiff's "psychological man, Reiff came to disavow the culture of the therapeutic and to recognize the cultural necessity of authority: "Authority untaught" he writes in a later work, about the educational climate that, he feels fosters the culture of the therapeutic, "is the way in which a culture commits suicide" (in Pivar 202).

For the later Reiff, the idea that casting off Oedipal restraint and the formative function of repression pave the way to some state of freedom is a romantic illusion. For Reiff it paves the way to a sterile and anxious solipsism, and replaces a communal structure of what, in this essay, we will recognize as akin to paranoia ("cultural paranoia"), with a multitude of contiguous delusional structures, each confined to its own isolated individual.

32. Some discussion of the status of knowledge in these monumental thinkers of modernity is in order.

For Marxism knowledge does not correspond to an external order, but is shaped by the expression of economic desire: capital, and capital is profoundly inhuman and resistant to narrative articulation. As Louis Althusser argues, capital operates in a diffuse and heterogenous way that cannot be apprehended by the causal forms accessible to narrative cognition. Stories need either someone or something to act upon other things (mechanical causality), or, failing that they need things to be seen as all connected as attributes of things caused by a central figure which provides coherence (expressive causality). In Althusser's reading of Marx, capital interacts with its environment in a relation of *Darstellung* or "structural causality"; things happen not because one thing or another causes them to happen or even because one intelligible thing connects everything. Rather, the incredibly complex relations formed between everything touched by capital negotiate micro responses that make things happen, but the *causes* of those things cannot be accurately tracked. If any variable in a complex system changes, the entire system changes. Those changes cannot precisely be understood as being caused by the initial change, because if the entire system is slightly different, there is no fixed structure which has been modified. The old system is gone, and a new one exists; properly speaking it does not have a history. It is what it is; it has an immanent structure, and any attempt to link it to a transcendent set of relations or to an identity which precedes

and survives isolated changes is misrepresentative. In an incredibly complex system like that erected around the flow of capital any representation which imposes the structures of history is *necessarily* misrepresentative (ideological), the inevitable result of the need to narratively articulate this complex system fundamentally alien to story forms. Plot expresses change, but expresses that change in terms of mechanical causality against a relatively stable cosmos, thus the workings of Capital cannot be plotted. The interaction of character in the story and the figure of authorial intent around the story invoke a sense of expressive causality; things have meaning in their common connection to a unified Agent capable of intention or action. Diffused through all of the parts of its system, Capital cannot be said to be a unified agent, it has no headquarters or master plan. Its causality is structural, and as such narratively inexpressible and cognitively unintelligible. That said, Marx's work was dedicated to precisely that, trying to understand and explain the workings of capital. He was dedicated to producing a misrepresentation which would articulate in terms of a certain construction of history and a certain set of rather neglected characters the workings of an artificially constrained phenomena called capital.

If the truth of capital cannot be understood, and is in fact constitutively inaccessible to understanding, some misrepresentation *called* truth must have to be produced to give the meaning which keeps society - and more importantly, the means of production which society provides and regulates - together. This meaning is provided by ideology. In the Marxist formulation of ideology, when someone interprets or makes sense of something, her interpretation only *appears* to be neutral because the relations of power which inform the production of knowledge are effaced. The sense that is made comes from a reading of meaning which has been culturally and socially given to that thing, and it has been given in such a way that it will preserve the means of production which allowed that meaning to be given in the first place. But the realer truth of the thing — the way it got there, what it should mean to a person if they could only see it clearly and bring it to the light of their own interests — is (mostly) obscured. In the most fundamental example, the *real* problem of human misery borne of inequitable wealth distribution is given an *imaginary* solution. This solution does not *seem* imaginary. On the contrary, it fundamentally seems to make sense - it makes *common sense*, sense that one does not even have to think about — because, as ideological knowledge, it is not accessible to critique within the figurations of the subject. "I" don't think up ideological knowledge, nor do "you" or even (for most people) "They" productions of ideology are transindividual and thus seem to simply emerge. They are what the subject thinks *with* rather than *about*. The thinking subject *is* ideological, in that it itself has been set up to know not the truth but the truth necessary to the furtherance of the interest of capital. Marxism insists that the body's ability to produce labour must be marshaled in a figure of understanding which enables awareness to produce knowledge necessary for the effective utilization of the body's productive capacity. But while this ideologically given figure of subjective identity allows meaning and action in the world, the possibilities of meaning and the ensuing possibilities of action are sharply curtailed, delegitimizing thought or action which might interfere with the perpetuation of the relations of production.

Marx distrusts textual surfaces and meaning in general, in an almost Gnostic way positing that the knowable world is the product of evil and must be annihilated before a new and better world can be recovered. But unlike his Romantic precursors Marx does not see any deep meaning infusing humanity as given meaning (ideology) is undermined. Rather, for Marx there are only alienating and disalienating ideologies, and the latter has to be produced to displace the former if the apocalyptic condition (in which there would seem to be little place for meaning as it is now recognized) is to be attained. In other words, the stasis and synchronic sweep of paranoid apocalypticism is replaced by a dynamic, diachronic movement toward completion: though we cannot truly *know*, we can progress toward more benign forms of knowledge. Marx disavows an expressively causal situation of providence or paranoia in which a deity or an evil conglomerate is responsible for the alienation of humanity under capitalism. But Marx still has to narratively contain the anxiety produced by the ineradicable sensation of alienation, and he does so by choosing *progress*, by placing disalienation at the inevitable end of his story. In doing so he was able to justify his recognition of a world void of human meaning without allowing that recognition to provoke the anxiety and hostility of paranoia, a response which would prevent the formation and successful operation of the collectivities necessary to conduct a revolution. As it turned out, unfortunately and inevitably perhaps, the rule of many would-be Marxists did seem to indicate that the collectivizing faith in progress was no match for the pacifying providentiality and fragmentizing paranoia that accompany the combination of a longing for order with a dogma which places that order always in another, inaccessible, time. It is very hard to live without a humanly identifiable figure of meaning, and the inevitable supply of those figures, the inevitable fall into reading one might say, coincided with the eclipse of the Marxist story.

Like Marx, Nietzsche insists that knowledge is not primarily characterized by a conformity to the innate

order of things, but that it is the result of something else, and that the knowledge and meaning accessible to ordinary humans are the mark and means of their alienation from the truth of things. For Nietzsche, people seek knowledge to hide from the enigmatic, disturbing, aleatory nature of existence. Knowledge is a refuge of the weak and the deliberately ignorant, a refuge of the Modern Western Man shaped by a slave morality and a slave mentality (see *Gay Science* 355: "Is not the instinct of fear which bids us to know? And is the jubilation of those who attain knowledge not the jubilation over the restoration of a sense of security?"). For Nietzsche the truth of things obscured in knowledge is the productive role of *will* in the formation and circulation of meaning. Things do not *have* meaning, they are *made to mean* inasmuch as they have been subject to an intervening and shaping force. Will lays meaning into things and struggles with other will to make it inhere (cf: "Whoever is incapable of laying his will into things, lacking will and strength, at least lays meaning into them, ie the faith that there is a will in them already. It is a measure of degree of strength of will to what extent one can do without meaning in things, to what extent one can endure to live in a meaningless world because one organizes a small portion of it in oneself, in *Will to Power* § 585A). Anyone who *finds* that things mean is subject to other wills than his or her own, for this person takes meaning instead of gives it. This person accepts explanations, she *understands* in terms of received meaning. She does not *interpret* which means, for Nietzsche, that she is not mobilized by a will that lays meaning *into* things: she does not interpret *actively* (cf. "Interpretation is the introduction of meaning, not explanation, which is the making of an interpretation in the mold of an old one which is incomprehensible and is now a sign," *Will to Power* § 604, or, "[t]he ascertaining of truth and untruth is fundamentally different from creative positing, from shaping, overcoming, willing. To posit a goal is to mold facts according to it; that is, active interpretation and not merely conceptual translation," from *Will* § 605).

For Nietzsche knowledge is not something which helps the subject negotiate its environments but that the subject *itself*, along with its attributes of awareness and knowledge are what happen to the individual. The subject is *produced by other wills* and is thus the *producer* of her environment only in a secondary and derivative sense; knowledge is *reproduction*. Most knowledge is what Nietzsche calls *re-active*, in that it is the product of other will upon the subject and is given to the subject in much the way that for Marxism ideology gives knowledge to the subject. But like Marx, Nietzsche holds out the possibility of an other kind of meaning, though this meaning is similarly removed from lived human reality. This other kind of meaning would support *active* knowledge borne of an unfettered will, though in its solipsism we probably would not recognize this as knowledge at all, nor in its rejection of the communicative model could we recognize its formation as a type of reading. It would not address itself to the time, space and causality of our middle zone. Rather, according to Nietzsche, it would be able to address the particularity and instancity of the here and now. For Nietzsche interpretive desire is a function of will; the subject as we know it is the product of the curtailing or containing of will, and so the will to power is also the will to the dissolution of the subject and the re-active awareness it enables.

For all of Nietzsche's exhortions to abandon narrative (with its reliance on all of those re-active forms like causality, identity, persistence and internal consistency of form), he does not hold this life out as a real "human" option. As "humans" we can *want* or *need* but we cannot purely *will*. Willing is not subject to human agency, one cannot decide what he wills. Will wills and humans form around will. The will-to-meaning is pre-"human" and its mastery is post-"human." Nietzsche quite specifically indicates that the human, and presumably the subject built around its figurations, would have to be left behind if the being who escapes from the mind-shackles of the human condition — the Overman — is to be realized. Of the interpretive relation of the Overman to the human Nietzsche indicates that the Overman will have the ability to interpret, that is, to lay in such complete and instantaneous meaning that his apprehension approaches the fluctuating nature of reality. He writes, "... inertia needs unity (monism): plurality of interpretations a sign of strength. Not to desire to deprive the world of its disturbing and enigmatic character (from *Will* § 600) and, more specifically, "The elevation of man is in the overcoming of narrower interpretations approaching an appreciation of flux. (from *Will* §588). But having said that, the subjective construction of agency is absolutely different from pure will which is inaccessible and antithetical to the re-active subject. Nietzsche leaves we humans little choice. We can do nothing to progress toward our Overhuman state, which means that we wait, and while waiting either fall back into some given meaning, some faith in a providential plan and an author who makes it all make sense. Or we personalize that providentiality and become paranoid. For Nietzsche, to be human-all-too-human *is* inevitably to partake in some imperceptibly common form of the behavioural and cognitive patterns of paranoia.

33. Simone de Beauvoir and Jean Paul Sartre acknowledge that this desire, this *want* of knowledge motivated the development of their powerful and influential brand of existentialist philosophy. Beauvoir indicates that it was her profound desire to know everything which inclined her to philosophy in the first place, as she sensed it offered the possibility of a final metanarrative, a way to understand everything. She writes,

I have always wanted to know everything; philosophy would allow me to appease this desire, for it aimed at total reality; philosophy went right to the heart of the truth and revealed to me, instead of an illusory whirlwind of facts or empirical laws, an order, a reason, a necessity in everything. (quoted in Moi, Beauvoir, 30)

Similarly, Sartre seems to have been responding to similar tendencies when developing his existentialist thought, as it presumes an *a priori* epistemological postulation of totality. In Sartre's existentialist philosophy, as Toril Moi explains,

... existence is to be theorized as a totality. The totality of our being inhabits every one of our acts. It therefore follows that our slightest gestures or most harmless habits are potentially as revealing of the whole as our most grandiose or dramatic projects. If I have a penchant for apricot cocktails, in other words, it *must* be possible to figure out, not only its existential meaning for *me*, but what it says about my existential project in general. In order to fully understand the implication of my tastes it is necessary to understand the nature of the *object* of my disgust or predilection. This is the task of 'existential psychoanalysis' which Sartre defines as 'psychoanalysis of things'.

As Sartre points out in Being and Nothingness "...even *tastes* do not remain irreducible givens, if one knows how to question them, they reveal to us the fundamental projects of the person. Down to even our alimentary preferences they all have a meaning." The fundamental project of Sartrean philosophy then is to attempt to understand *everything*, and to express this total understanding in philosophical terms. (Moi, Beauvoir 102-03)

This presumption of the need for meaning is central to the existentialist project, informing endeavours as disparate as Paul Tillich's theology and psychologist Victor Frankl's influential psychotherapeutics. As Swanson explains, for Tillich, and other existentialist theologians (including Kirkegaard),

A pragmatic approach to religiosity can begin with the presumption that a basic anxiety, the threat of nothingness, is experienced to some degree by all humans. Tillich substantiates this premise to his satisfaction through a review of the history of various cultures. In his comprehensive theory he conceives of this basic anxiety as existential and concludes that it cannot be removed. This anxiety is contrasted to fear, which has a definite object. Fear can be met by courage because its object can be faced, analyzed, attacked or endured; anxiety tends to become fear of a specific object because courage can more effectively deal with this... This anxiety to which all humans are vulnerable can be tolerated only for a brief time in pure form. It must be dealt with in some way, through courage, self-affirmation, faith sublimation or repression. In case these accepted mechanisms (variously described in theological and psychological terminology) are unavailable to the individual, he utilizes other coping mechanisms of a neurotic or psychotic nature. These convert nonspecific anxiety into fear of specific objects or situations by such mechanisms as denial, displacement and projection. Since these mechanisms are not completely effective and possibly productive of pathological anxiety in themselves, the neurotic or psychotic person will continue to experience anxiety. The abnormal personality will thus have a greater sensitivity to anxiety of nonbeing, as Tillich concluded by a different means. (419-20)

The postulation of a basic anxiety with regard to meaning and the psychotherapeutic necessity of strenuously finding or creating meaning for oneself was essential to existentialist psychoanalyst Victor Frankl. His work is most succinctly summarized in his influential Man's Search for Meaning.

34. This is, of course, the Freud of the *Ich*-rampant, explicitly thematized toward the end of "The Ego and the Id" , a posture from which, Farrell recognizes, Freud increasingly dissociated himself. But the colonization of the Id by the Ego was certainly one interpretation and therapeutic application of Freud's psycho-analysis (dominant in its North American heyday), and its pervasiveness is perhaps indicative of the hegemony of the narrative configuration in which Freud figured his early role as a scientist.

35. Farrell finds in Freud's description of the analyst a model of ascetic heroism. In his reading of Freud, "[w]hat distinguishes the scientist from his paranoid patient is not so much a superior understanding of the world as much as it is the superior awareness of his own irrationally self aggrandizing nature. It is the difference between naive and sentimental paranoia" (3). Farrell's statement is correct, as far as it goes, but it neglects to account for the attribution of *objective obscurity* to his object where the paranoid attributes *deceptive obscurity*. True, the scientist recognizes his or her own subjective limitations, but he or she seeks to know *the unknown*. The paranoid on the other hand, is less able to admit subjective projectivity because he or she seeks to know *the hidden*. The paranoid's object of knowledge is obscure because of the action of an animate agent of deception, while the scientist's object is obscure simply because of the limitations of the apparatus of knowledge, including the limitations of his or her own "self aggrandizing" subjectivity. As Slavoj Žižek explains, "it is true that the 'objective' scientist also 'penetrates through false appearance...,' but this false appearance with which he has to deal *lacks the dimension of deception* (49).

36. In his 1921 "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" Freud noted this odd combination in group dynamics. And while he felt that certain analogues were possible with his model of the individual psyche — he agreed with Le Bon's assertion that group thought conformed entirely to the unconscious (used in the descriptive rather than functional (as the product of repression) sense (104) but also noted that it was also capable of extraordinarily altruistic ethical behaviour if swayed by a persuasive group idea embodied in a powerful figure of collective identification, a charismatic leader (106) — the nature of group intelligence was derived from a different psychodynamic model than that which produced thought in the individual. Showing perhaps more than a little self-conscious discomfort over the status of his own individual thought, he writes:

As regard intellectual work it remains a fact, indeed, that great decisions in the realm of thought and momentous discoveries and solutions of problems are only possible to an individual working in solitude.... It remains an open question... how much the individual thinker or writer owes to the stimulation of the group in which he lives, and whether he does more than perfect a mental work in which the others have had a simultaneous share. (111)

The individual thinker, Freud suggests, cannot really be aware of how much of his or her individual intellectual achievement is the product of interaction with this realm of collective thought. The intellectual "stimulation" of the individual's group is, in a sense, the repressed ground of the individual's intellectual work, which allows it to emerge as an individual monument. But as such, the collective then haunts the individual work as a kind of "uncanny."

37. For Cameron, the paranoid pseudocommunity is the social environment apprehended by the paranoid's delusional narrative centered, through the characteristically paranoid delusion of reference, on his or her relation not only to the "They" figures, but including all other people as potentially antagonistic but overtly either ignorant or tenuously sympathetic. "The paranoid pseudocommunity" Cameron writes, "gives a unified and apparently logical explanation... its superstructure involves much highly organized secondary process thinking" (487). It is, in effect, a highly developed narrativization of the sensed threat in which that threat is contained and made coherent by disseminating it through a community of people whose relation to the paranoid is clearly laid out in a coherent, "logical" story. For Swanson the paranoid pseudocommunity is part of what Freud recognized as the restitutive drive of the paranoid delusion. It reconstructs a set of social relations for the paranoid which, reflecting his or her isolation and suspiciousness, are marked in terms of proportional alienation and suspicion rather than

sympathy or positive identification (315).

38. Willy Baranger notes the complex relation of the concept of narcissism to Freud's work, pointing out especially the problems raised by Freud's notion of "auto-eroticism" and its relation to narcissism. He writes that

The concept of narcissism has an exceedingly complicated history in Freud's work; the line of development it follows is not straight but broken and full of fluctuations and even changes of meaning. Originally, what was subsequently to settle out as narcissism was mingled with the concept of autoeroticism (1899). The process of settling out took place gradually between 1900 and 1914, by virtue of the need to take account of a number of phenomena including homosexual object choice and megalomania. ... Autoeroticism and narcissism then tended to become distinguished from each other. The former signified an objectless state prior to the formation of an ego and an ego and a mode of satisfaction of the libido with the subject's own body. The latter at first connoted a relation of the libido to the external choice in which it (the libido) gave up this object and turned back upon the ego itself, which recovered a former state in which it was the prototype of all the future objects. (Baranger, 114-115)

39. Freud writes.

...the animistic conception of the universe, [is] characterized by ... the subject's narcissistic overvaluation of his own mental processes; by the belief in the omnipotence of thoughts... as well as by all other creations with the help of which man, in the unrestricted narcissism of that stage of development, strove to fend off the manifest prohibitions of reality. It seems as if each one of us has been through a phase of individual development corresponding to this animistic stage in primitive man, and none of us has passed through it without preserving certain residues and traces of it which are capable of manifesting themselves... ("Uncanny" 17: 240)

It is this vestigial narcissism which accounts for the lingering superstitiousness and desire to find significance in coincidence, and which, Freud feels, accounts for that "uncanny sense [that we experience] when something seems to confirm the omnipotence of thoughts after we've abandoned those beliefs. ("Uncanny" 17: 240, also as a footnote in "Totem" 13: 86)

This omnipotence of thought is associated with "illusion" and religion by Freud in "The Future of An Illusion" [1927], and in that work Freud voices his hope that "intellect may grow to govern humanity in place of [infantile] illusion" ("Illusion" 21: 7). Qualifying his statements at the end of the Schreber case ("It remains for the future to decide if there is more delusion in my theory than I should like to admit, or whether there is more truth in Schreber's delusions than other people are as yet prepared to believe". ["Schreber" 12: 79]), Freud argues that unlike those of religion, his "illusions" - that knowledge of the world produced in accordance with the reality principle and scientific method - are capable of correction, and as such "...don't share characteristics of delusion" ("Illusion" 21:53). Though "the future" has tended, on the basis of distinctions very similar to his between science and delusion, to relegate Freud's work, if not to sheer "delusion" at least to the status of "pseudo-science" (see Popper 260, for example) the fact that Freud saw his own project in terms of a historical process of the maturity of humanity toward scientific self-understanding is significant. As we will see, Freud's association of femininity with a greater influence of vestigial or residual narcissism (with the correlate tendency to more easily understand one's own body as a participant in the circuit of desire and identificatory meaning) and of masculinity with a more "mature," less narcissistic form of self-understanding (which takes the body as a subordinate instrument in the quest for intellectualized scientific knowledge) presumes a story in which the use and apprehension of one's own body is heavily marked by a narrative logic which associates positive protagonism with the "masculine" attitude of intellectualized corporeal instrumentality rather than the immature or primitive "feminine" attitude of body as a site of sensual identification on the basis of pleasure or displeasure.

40. The relation of aggressivity to narcissism and its relation to individual or group development and relations is a complex and shifting one in Freud's work. In terms of individual development he suggests that the process of Oedipalization is accompanied by the development of a tremendous amount of aggressivity borne of the child's recognition of the inadequacy of his narcissistic identifications to grant control or effective meaning to the world. This aggressivity is channeled in the formation of the super-ego, the agency the child develops to regulate interaction with the world through a set of ego-idealizations. Freud explains:

... the creation of a superior agency within the ego is most intimately linked with the destiny of the Oedipus complex, so that the super-ego appears as the heir of that emotional attachment which is of such importance for childhood. With his abandonment of the Oedipus complex a child must, as we can see, renounce the intense object cathexes which he has deposited with his parents, and it is as a compensation for this loss of objects that there is such a strong intensification of identifications with his parents which have probably been long present in his ego. Identifications of this kind as precipitates of object-cathexes have been given up, but it is entirely in accordance with the emotional importance of this first instance of such a transformation that a special place in the ego should be found for its outcome. Close investigation has shown us, too, that the super-ego is stunted in its strength and growth if the surmounting of the Oedipus complex is only incompletely successful. ("New" 22: 64)

The aggressiveness of the super-ego is primarily directed against the self to the extent that "the more a man controls his aggressiveness, the more intense becomes his ideal's inclination to aggressiveness against his own ego." ("Ego" 19: 54).

But" remarks in section VI of "Group Psychology," that while narcissism is self-love its tendency to protect the self's narcissistic centrality is manifest also in other-directed aggressivity. This aspect of narcissism is made more explicit and central in the object-relations psychology of Melanie Klein for whom

...narcissistic object relations are characteristic of the paranoid/schizoid position. In this state the world is deeply split between good and bad objects, this splitting takes place internally and is also projected externally. The dominant anxieties are of a paranoid nature, and the defences are aimed at protecting the self and the idealized objects from the murderous objects that contain split off and projected aggression originating in the infant's self. (168)

Narcissism then, in different moments is at least in part the basis of both self-aggressivity and external aggressivity, expressed in its sexual manifestation as masochism and sadism. But, as Freud points out, sadistic aggressivity can generate narcissistic satisfaction even outside of a sexual context. He writes,

In sadism, where the death instinct twists the erotic aim in its own sense and yet at the same time fully satisfies the erotic urge, that we succeed in obtaining the clearest insight into its nature and its relation to Eros. But even where it emerges without any sexual purpose, in the blindest fury of destructiveness, we cannot fail to recognize that the satisfaction of the instinct is accompanied by an extraordinarily high degree of narcissistic enjoyment, owing to its presenting the ego with the fulfilment of the latter's old wishes for omnipotence. The instinct of destruction, moderated and tamed, and, as it were, inhibited in its aim, must, when it is directed towards objects, provide the ego with the satisfaction of its vital needs and with control over nature. ("Civilization" 21: 121)

As Freud points out in "Group Psychology," "the individual's need to cede narcissistic centrality to social position, but group formation suppresses this primary aggressivity of narcissism, or at least rechannels it. In part it becomes manifest as self-hatred, that morality of which "renunciation" is "the essence" (this is a frequent assertion of Freud's. See, for example, "Dostoevsky and Parricide" 21: 177), renunciation being the essential form, Freud believes, which "lies at basis of obedience to taboo" ("Totem" 23: 35). But in exchange for identifying with and within a group, narcissistic aggressivity can find less displaced satisfaction in what Freud calls (in "Civilization and its Discontents") "the narcissism of minor differences," the need to maintain the primacy and centrality of the group by marginalizing very similar groups.

41. This relationship between narcissism and the ego ideal (which later was superseded by the concept of "Super-ego") is explored by Freud right from his 1911 Schreber analysis, through (section III of) his 1914 "On Narcissism" and his 1920 case study of homosexuality in a woman, to a reconsideration in late works such as "Civilization and its Discontents" (1930).

42. My use of the metaphor "home in the world" derives from Freud's discussion in "The Uncanny" 17: 369) of *unheimlich* (translated as "uncanny"), the sense given by the return of the repressed or the recognition of structures which correspond to a original narcissism after that narcissism has been renounced. Freud discusses at some length the etymological connections between the sense of uncanniness and its German expression of "unhomeliness." I've used the figure of "being at home in the world" with reference to its opposite, *heimlich*, "homely," "belonging to the home," to figure the condition within which narcissism related uncanniness occurs; the condition of relatively well sublimated or renounced narcissism which comfortably supports one's orientation in the intellectual structures which make meaningful one's environment.

43. In "Totem and Taboo" Freud remarks on the ability of art to articulate idiosyncratic impressions of the world which give pleasure through their (uncanny) ability to communicate the narcissistic structure of apprehension which conforms to individual desire and anxiety rather than to "reality." He writes,

In a single field of our civilization has the direction of this [narcissistic tendency] been retained, and that is in the field of art. Only in art does it still happen that a man who is consumed by desires performs something resembling the accomplishments of those desires and that what he does in play produces emotional effects — thanks to artistic illusion — just as though it were something real." (13: 89)

A very similar understanding of the artist is elaborated in his "Creative Writers and Daydreaming" (9: 159). The "innermost secret," the "ars poetica" is a function of the artist's ability to strip away the most obstructively egoistical elements of what Freud would later associate with his narcissism. Left unmodified in the artistic work they would produce laughter and shame in a viewer, recognizing there the shapes of narcissistic desire and private fantasy, but if the artist is able to modify (through the function of aestheticization) the work to appear to communicate a non-specific, non-egoistical form, the artistic work becomes acceptable and the elicited shame and revulsion are modulated toward the recognition of an undefinable evocative, suggestive and fascinating quality in the art work.

44. For Freud, in religion renunciation is essentially egoistic (renunciation of the aggressive, "self-seeking," socially harmful impulses which are "usually not without a sexual component" 125) while in (individual) neurosis, the renunciation is exclusively sexual. ("Obsessions" 9: 125 - 127). Whether religious or neurotic, narcissism tends toward the formation of intellectual structures of environmental appropriation. Freud notes the connection between narcissism and intellectualization in its relation to individual neurosis and the various degrees of human social maturity in "Totem and Taboo":

Primitive men and neurotics, as we have seen, attach a high valuation — in our eyes and over-valuation — to psychical acts. This attitude may plausibly be brought into relation with narcissism and be regarded as an essential component of it. ... The psychological results must be the same in both cases, whether the libidinal hypercathexis of thinking is an original one or has been produced by regression, intellectual narcissism and the omnipotence of thoughts.... The animistic phase would correspond to narcissism both chronologically and in its content.... while the scientific phase would have an exact counterpart in the phase at which an individual has reached maturity, has renounced the pleasure principle, adjusted himself to reality, and turned to the external world for the objects of his desires. (13: 89)

John Farrell summarizes Freud's understanding of the relation between narcissistic renunciation and the artist, the neurotic and the scientist:

The artist plays the hero to survive in a make believe world disguised to look like the one in which we live, the paranoid retreats into a world of his own devices, and the scientist becomes a hero by renouncing imagination, narcissism, pleasure and the ideal. The scientist takes for his aim the mastery of the real world, and he, like the heroes of the past, exacts great sacrifice to further his cause. (27)

45. Distinguishing the continuities between "normal" and "degenerate" or perverse sexuality takes up a large part of Freud's "Three Essays on Sexuality." Early in the essay Freud outlines "several facts which go to show that in the legitimate sense of the word inverts cannot be considered degenerate" (7: 133), but in extremely long footnotes to page 155, added to the essays in 1910 and 1915 Freud continued to wrestle with the psychogenetic bases of homosexuality, in which it began to be articulated in terms of Oedipal development and narcissism.

46. In "Three Essays on Sexuality" (1905) Freud theorizes the predominantly male tendencies to valorize the love object, but, while later adding footnotes ascribing the opposite, narcissistic tendency to women, at the time indicates that, "The significance of the factor of sexual overvaluation can be best studied in men, for their erotic life alone has become accessible to research. That of women — partly owing to the stunting effect of civilized conditions and partly owing to their conventional secretiveness and insincerity — is still veiled in an impenetrable obscurity" (7: 63). In the 1914 essay "On Narcissism" Freud explains the narcissistic tendency, ascribes its manifestation primarily to women then makes a seemingly much more tentative case for the anaclitic or attachment tendency in men. The linking of tendencies to sex is an urge to which Freud's other work on psychosexual difference leads him, but he seems aware throughout of its tenuousness.

In his "Psychogenesis of a Case of Homosexuality in a Woman" (1920) this tenuousness is more pronounced, for the manifestation of the female analysand's homosexuality is her assumption of a male love-attitude, her overvaluation of her love object and her "renunciation of all narcissistic satisfaction" (18: 154). This makes sense in terms of one trajectory of Freud's thought, but complicates his linking of homosexuality not to the renunciation of narcissism but to its increased influence (the repression of which provokes the individual neurotic condition of paranoia), a link Freud maintained was viable in cases of female homosexuality and paranoia, even though in his 1915 "A Case of Paranoia Running Counter to the Psycho-Analytic Theory of the Disease" his maintenance of this link required almost ridiculous interpretive ingenuity (not lost on Naomi Schor in her provocative but ultimately supportive 1981 consideration of the case).

47. See Grinberg for a discussion of the elements of Freud's theory of narcissism which are considered to have retained their utility and those which have largely been discredited or are questionable.

48. In lecture XXXII of his "New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis" (22:363) Freud speaks about the possibility of prejudice in psychoanalysis and the — confused — role of women analysts in this question.

49. In "Three Essays on Sexuality..." Freud writes:

The sexuality of most male human beings contains an element of aggressiveness — a desire to subjugate: the biological significance of it seems to lie in the need for overcoming the sexual object by means other than the process of wooing. Thus sadism would correspond to an aggressive component of the sexual instinct which has become independent and exaggerated and, by displacement, has usurped the leading position. It can often be shown that masochism is nothing more than an extension of sadism turned round upon the subject's own self, which thus, to begin with, takes the place of the sexual object. (7: 161)

The modulations of narcissistic aggressivity have interested other post-Freudian theorists of paranoia. As Meissner reports: "The link between paranoia and masochism has been strongly emphasized Nydes (1963), who formulates the polarity between the masochistic and the paranoid character in the following terms: 'The masochistic character appears to renounce 'power' for the sake of 'love', and the paranoid character appears to renounce 'love' for the sake of 'power'" (*Psycho-Analysis* 99). "Power" seems to be a highly gendered term, analogous in the paranoid configuration to both autonomy and masculinity. Commenting on violent paranoid patients, Meissner observes that "Even when the violent impulses were directed toward particular objects, the violence was a form of relation to dependency conflicts, and against the threat of diminished masculinity or physical weakness. The most frequent object of attack for these men was the wife. Such men seemed quite threatened by their dependence on their wives and their unconscious need for support from them, while the wives often manifested a masochistic need for punishment which responded to the husband's sadism" (*Paranoid* 45).

50. As Toril Moi points out in her forthcoming *What is a Woman*, the sex/gender distinction currently in circulation is fairly recently developed, even more recently adopted into English, and not yet widely recognized in most European languages. Certainly this distinction was not available to Freud, and he makes it quite clear that while reproductive biology, socially sexed behaviour and erotogenicity or the questions of sexual practice and object choice are distinguishable aspects of human sexuality, genetically their *manifestations* are indistinguishably natural and cultural like the structure of the human psyche itself (see Moi, 3 and Freud, "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," 18.12).

This distinction has been the subject of almost interminable debate in contemporary criticism to the extent that the terms have had a tendency to disappear into one another. In her critique of Eve Sedgwick and Judith Butler, for example, Biddy Martin finds that Sedgwick tends to associate gender with fixed, culturally constructed and imposed binary gender roles, while associating sexuality with the polymorphous eroticism that undermines this gender-system. Judith Butler, Martin feels, articulates the complexity with which social discourses, working through the forms of representation available to the psyche, structure even the most seemingly "natural" aspects of erotic desire and sexuality. Seeking a middle path that would neither reproduce in sex and gender a nature / culture distinction while accommodating the "resistance" of the body to discursivity, Martin remarks that "if for Sedgwick gender becomes sex ... for Butler sex becomes gender" (110).

Recognizing the need to distinguish between various forms of sexed embodiment and behaviour Patricia Eliot and Katrina Roen offer the following, which synthesizes much of the debate over this terminology to date:

"we understand *gender* to encompass both an institutionalized interpretation of what it means to live as a woman or a man (including rules of belonging) and individual interpretations of what it means to live as a man or a woman. *Sexuality* we define as the way we represent and enact bodily pleasures and desires, a terms that engages concepts of the body (both real and symbolic) and concepts of gender, if only to negate them, and which is not reducible to them. *Sex* we define as the mostly anatomical features by which designations of female, male and intersexed bodies are made. (259)

51. In the late work, "Female Sexuality" (written, significantly, around the same time as his speculations on social aggressivity in "Civilization and its Discontents"), he summarizes:

... we cannot resist coming to a definite conclusion about female sexuality as a whole. We have found the same libidinal forces in it as in the male child and we have been able to convince ourselves that for a period of time each of these forces follow the same course and have the same outcome in each.

Biological factors subsequently deflect those libidinal forces [in the girl's case] from their original aims and conduct even active and in every sense masculine trends into feminine channels. (21: 243).

52. Again, Freud did not present these formulations in nearly so pat a way, frequently noting the speculative nature of his theories. In his essay "Female Sexuality" (1931) he restates his basic thesis, writing "The development of the girl is complicated by the fact that the girl has the task of giving up what was originally her

leading genital zone, the clitoris, in favour of a new zone, the vagina." But he goes on to indicate the unresolved complication arising from his theorization of the Oedipus complex, remarking that "a second change of the same sort which is no less characteristic and important for the development of the female; the exchange of her original object — her mother — for her father. The way in which the two tasks are connected with each other is not yet clear to us" (22: 371). The connection of these two "tasks," the assumption of feminine genital organization and the relation of heterosexual object choice to the Oedipus complex was clearly laid out as I have summarized them, but, again, Freud was rather equivocal in his support for this formulation.

53. Freud is very clear about the limitations of attributing masculinity and femininity, but also recognizes that these principles are unavoidable when invoking sexuality. Despite his claim that anatomy is destiny, Freud never ascribes an anatomical fixed link between female reproductive biology and feminine social behaviour, though in this instance he indicates that as biology is the threshold of analytic understanding and as the question of why females act feminine (and why men act masculine) remain unanswered and probably unanswerable, the answer may indeed lie in biology. He writes, "We often have the impression that with the wish for a penis and the masculine protest we have penetrated through all the psych strata and reached bedrock, and that thus all of our activities are at an end. This is probably true, since for the psychological field the biological does in fact play the part of the underlying bedrock" (23: 252). This is a tenuous and circumstantial connection at best, and much of Freud's other work is much more explicit in not trying to explain feminine social behaviour on anatomical difference, to the extent that he frequently struggles to define his understanding of what it means to be feminine.

In "Three Essays on Sexuality" he writes that in addition to the fact that male and female genitalia are merely poles on a continuum of genital manifestation and vestigial hermaphroditism "we are ignorant of what characterizes a feminine brain. There is neither need no justification for replacing the psychological problem with an anatomical one" (7:142). But, he explains, even discounting the arguments of biology or sociological description, there does seem to be a principle of femininity - passivity - which can be assumed to be psychogenetic if always present in variable quantities in all men and women. In this early essay he remains content to equate this passive tendency with the feminine, but in his later work he encourages this equation be abandoned. In his late "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" he declares that passivity and activity have been subsumed within a larger distinction between *Eros* and *Thanatos* which themselves are methodologically restricted forms, he claims, of Empedocles' two general tendencies in all things toward "love" or aggregation and "strife" or destructiveness (23: 246). In this context then femininity cannot be understood as true passivity, but a sort of actively and strenuously constructed passivity which is every bit as active and aggressive as masculinity, which is, in fact, a sort of distortion of male libido itself.

As late as 1920 in his "The Psychogenesis of a Case of Homosexuality in a Woman," he notes that "psychoanalysis cannot elucidate the intrinsic nature of what in conventional or in biological phraseology is termed 'masculine' or 'feminine', it simply takes over the two concepts and makes them the foundation of work. When we attempt to reduce them further, we find masculinity simply vanishing into activity and femininity into passivity, and that does not tell us enough" (18: 171). Moreover, the ego itself is constituted with relation to both activity and passivity in such a way that the masculine and feminine opposition can only be considered valid as attributes of a *developmentally gendered ego*, rather than essential psychic tendencies. Prior to the development of the ego, in the narcissistic phase, masculinity and femininity are technically inappropriate descriptive terms, whatever the sex of the individual in question. He writes:

The relation of the ego to the external world is passive insofar as it receives stimuli from it and active when it reacts to these. It is forced by its instincts into a quite special degree of activity towards the external world, so that we might bring out the essential point if we say that the ego-subject is passive in response of external stimuli but active through its own instincts. The antithesis active-passive coalesces later with the antithesis masculine-feminine, which until this has taken place, has no psychological meaning. The coupling of activity with masculinity and passivity with femininity meets us, indeed, as a biological fact: but it is by no means so invariably complete and exclusive as we are inclined to assume. ... There is a primal psychical situation in which two of them coincide. Originally, at the beginning of mental life, the ego is cathected with the instincts, and is to some extent capable of satisfying them on itself. We call this condition narcissism and this way of obtaining satisfaction 'auto-erotic' (14: 134).

In his later writings he further questions even the heuristic usefulness of forming an abstract distinction between masculinity and femininity, though he continues to consider the question of the development of feminine social and reproductive behaviour.

54. Projective identification "is the process by which a person imagines himself to be inside some object external to himself... creat[ing] the illusion of control over the object and enabl[ing] the subject to deny his powerlessness and to gain vicarious satisfaction" (Rycroft 67-68). Introjective identification is the process by which "the person imagines another to be inside of him" (Rycroft 68). Like the introjective identification with the parents that facilitates the development of the Super-Ego (in which the parents are introjected and their values and functions accepted), in introjective identification the subject *seeks* self in externality, while in projective identification the subject *thrusts* the self upon external objects.

55. I have chosen to oppose "hermeneutic" or "intellectual to "identificatory" self understanding rather than to consistently invoke similar oppositions in psychoanalytic discourse. One opposition, between projective and introjective identification is, for my purposes, too focused on the mechanism of identification rather than the thought structure of self-understanding, while the distinction between primary and secondary process thinking, though describing the opposition between a way of thinking governed by condensation and displacement with a way of thinking governed by logic and grammar that I am making, is not entirely appropriate, since it postulates the affinity of primary process thought with the pleasure principle and secondary process thought with the reality principle. Paranoid thought is a mixture of the two, being motivated by primal desire and anxiety (narcissistic libido), but articulating those drives within the *forms* of secondary process thought. This opposition seemed, like the earlier one, to invite more confusion than clarity, so I chose to stick with the rather crude opposition between *intellectualized or hermeneutic self understanding* and *identificatory or empathetic self-understanding*.

56. This lack of proper feminization is also linked in Freud to homosexuality, which Freud maintained was central to the development of (it turns out, persecutory) paranoia, though, as we have seen, his imposition of the narcissistic theory of paranoia and homosexuality required an almost acrobatic analytical ingenuity, and Freud's confidence about its applicability to women was far more qualified. See, for example, Freud's analysis of improperly feminized women in his "A Case of Paranoia Running Counter to the Psychoanalytic theory of the Disease" (1915) and "The Psychogenesis of a Case of Homosexuality in a Woman" (1919). Based on his work in the 1950's David Shapiro notes a similar kind of confusion emerging when the "gender" of paranoia conflicts with the sex of the paranoid subject. He writes:

It is interesting to note that, in the case of the female, the paranoid condition is also associated with undoubtedly homosexual tendencies. But that it is not the homosexual, that is, masculine, inclination that is repudiated, but, as in the case of the man, the passive feminine temptations to surrender that are repudiated, as it were, from a masculine point of view. (162)

57. In "On Narcissism" Freud indicated that the progression from auto-eroticism to infantile or original narcissism was a function of the extension of the narcissistic libido to include or identify with and incorporate with objects of the world. This "original libidinal cathexis of the ego ... fundamentally persists and is related to object-cathexes much as the body of an amoeba is related to the pseudopodia which it puts out" (11: 70). As the source and object of auto-erotic libido, it is the primal image of the body which extends "like an amoeba" in infantile narcissism to identify with the world, and, eventually, to know the objects of the world through these objects of the world through the object-cathexes of the ego. This understanding of the body's relation to the ego was modified, and nine years later Freud presented a much more concise and physiologically based version of the body's imagistic relation to the ego, through the mechanism of projection based on affective sensation of body parts: He writes,

A person's own body, and above all its surface, is a place from which both external and internal projections may spring. It is *seen* like any other object, but to the *touch* it yields two kinds of sensations, one of which may be equivalent to an internal projection. Psycho-physiology has fully discussed the manner in which a person's own body attains its special position among other objects in the world of perception. Pain, too, seems to play a part in the process, and the way in which we gain new knowledge of our organs during painful illnesses is perhaps a model of the way in which in general we arrive at the idea of our body.

The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity, but is itself the projection of a surface. ("Ego" 14: 19-20)

58. In The Second Sex Simone de Beauvoir described the experience of femininity in modern (early twentieth-century) Western culture in a way that conforms to this division between an intellectually articulated active self in a fundamentally alien world, and an empathetic passive (feminine) self in a fundamentally harmonious universe. Her existentialist feminism, based on the assumption that the world *is* alien and that the individual must struggle alone to determine one's relation to it, forms the basis of her condemnation of this kind of femininity and the framework for a positive alternative to it. She writes:

Rejecting the Cartesian separation of mind and world, the woman is at home in a naturalism like that of the stoics or the Neoplatonists of the sixteenth-century. Woman has a profound need to be ontologically optimistic, she must believe that the nature of things generally tends to be good. The moralities of action do not suit her, for she is not allowed to act, she is therefore subject to the given, and the given, then, must be the Good; but a good which, like that of Spinoza, is recognized by reasoning, or, like that of Leibnitz, by calculation, cannot concern her.... She craves a good that is a living Harmony in the midst of which she is placed simply by virtue of being alive. The concept of Harmony is one of the keys to the feminine universe, it implies a stationary perfection, the immediate justification of each element depending on the whole and on its passive participation in the totality. In a harmonious world, woman thus attains what man will seek through action, she meshes with the world, she is necessary to it, she co operates in the triumph of the Good. The moments that woman regard as revelations are those in which they discover accord with a static and self sufficient reality. The joy that lies in the free surge of liberty is reserved for man, the woman knows the quiet sense of smiling plenitude... From the fact that she is passive, woman experiences more passionately, more movingly the reality in which she is submerged than does the individual absorbed in ambition or a profession. she has the leisure and the inclination to abandon herself to her emotions, to study her sensations and unravel their meaning. When her imagination is not lost in empty dreams, she is all sympathy, she tries to understand others as individuals and identify them with herself. (620-26)

59. R. Borsch-Jacobsen comments, that "

[b]y the strangest and yet the most logical of paradoxes, with Freud the attention devoted to the ego's narcissism led to the question of the Other, of others... This is obviously why the great texts on the secondary topography are an inextricable mix of 'ego-analysis' and analysis of culture or the social tie: the other is not longer an object, an *Objekt*, whence the need to pay attention to the non-erotic, 'social' relationships, to others, and, inversely, the ego is no longer a subject, whence the need to inscribe this 'sociality' in the ego itself, in the form of superego." (quoted in Rose 3).

60. Though Freud locates psychotic potential at both ends of the Romantic axis of individual narrative subjectivity, Michel Foucault, in his Madness and Civilization points out that the cultural understanding and social response to madness is historically variable. He notes, for example, that in Neo-classical society, with its emphasis on the recognition of external order accessible (potentially) through rationality and scientific method, the "moment of pure subjectivity," the Quixotic interpretation of the world in conformity with the eccentricities of the individual

mind, was the figure of madness (175). In the European Renaissance, on the other hand, madness had been the signifier of pure human alterity or bestiality, the marker of an unfortunate and frightening exile from the realm of humanity, a kind of living *memento mori*. Significantly, for Frye, madness here is narratively comprehended on a tragic-comic rather than romantic axis for it is not understood in terms of an individual's quest for identity or proper life, but is seen in terms of that individual's fated exclusion from a presumed organically integral sphere of humanity.

61. Frye explains,

It is quite true that if there is no sense that the mythological universe is a human creation, man can never get free of servile anxieties and superstitions, never surpass himself, in Nietzsche's phrase. But if there is no sense that it is also something uncreated, something coming from elsewhere, man remains a Narcissus staring at his own reflection, equally unable to surpass himself. (Secular 60-61)

62. The existentialist tone of the language here betrays the elided presence of Simone de Beauvoir who until the final edit was to have been the subject of a chapter following the discussion of Freud and Schreber. In Beauvoir's The Second Sex this was the structural condition of feminine narcissism, so prevalent it was practically a character type. And this kind of narcissism, as Toril Moi points out, was practically the figure for alienation in general, the search for identity within an image of the self given by the Other. In the (female) narcissist there is an aggressive search for identity (authenticity of existence) based on a sense of non-accordance with images of social integration ("I am not like other people: they are deceived about the world"), but the image of non-conformity is actually an exaggerated Type, an elaboration of what the subject senses is the type most able to attract attention and social approbation. It is an image of the self constructed in conformance with the desire of the Other, and as such makes the would be subject and incipient authentic existant an object of the Other's desire.

63. This vision of the animate body giving almost imperceptible form to the structures of narrative and thought has a long and persistent pedigree. Certainly Aristotle in the Poetics indicated that the human body should be the model for organizing tragic narrative, while Plato in The Phaedrus used the body to trope the ideal organization of "any discourse." A thorough modern treatment is, again, in Frye. Using William Blake as his model he finds the forms and figures of the human body at the horizons of cultural figuration.

64. As late as 1929, for example, Dashiell Hammett could write Red Harvest, in which his private eye — the Continental Op — would go to a corrupt Western city and catalyze the bloody mutual destruction of the corrupt gangs that run it. In this novel the now relatively stable generic boundaries between crime or gangster fiction, detective fiction and Western fiction are imperceptible.

65. Miss Marple's power comes from her ability to analyze *the ordinary* on its own terms. The wild improbabilities and esoteric explanations others put forward are undermined by Miss Marple's clear, insightful, self-deprecating and stubbornly *everyday* solution, which also turns out to be correct. Miss Marple is figured in an almost exaggerated opposition to the flamboyant, eccentric, Bohemian, masculine figures of Holmes and Dupin. A white-haired old lady sitting with her knitting, prone to expressions of sympathy and horror for the victims (and often the criminals), her ability to solve crimes is a function of her "knowing a little something about life" (34), that is, her ability to find insight through the analysis of the simplest and most everyday attributes of the crime and the criminal. In The Tuesday Club Murders, for example, others are stumped by the allusion to "hundreds and thousands" found on the suspected murderer's blotter: most think it an allusion to the financial benefit the murder would bring him; he explains that it is a part of a letter telling his brother, in denial of a request for financial help, the number of people who are in similarly dire straits. Miss Marple however, knows that it is the clue to the

method of murder: the murderer had had the candy sprinkles — called "Hundreds and Thousands" — laced with arsenic placed in a trifle. It is Miss Marple's knowledge of the everyday and her acutely commonsensical use of ordinary knowledge that make her such a contrast to the romantic configuration of a Holmes or a Dupin (and their progeny who are foiled in her stories).

66. To distinguish between the detective, who is operating with extraordinary insight, and those who produce similar sounding stories but who are actually operating in conformance with the pressures of its desires and prejudices and the shaping pressure of literary convention Edgar Allen Poe has his detective, Auguste Dupin, condemn "*romantic busy-bodyism*" (Poe 241). Dupin refers to a character speculating on the solution to the crime at hand as a "*busy-body* with much of romance and little of wit" (Poe, "Marie Roget" 241). To be a "*busy-body*" implies intervening in the process of events, as opposed to Dupin, who observes and analyses, presumably with "wit." And to be "*romantic*" implies constructing an explanatory narrative for the crime which conforms too much to one's own desires and prejudices and to the conventional forms of literary representation (perhaps, but not necessarily associated with the conventions of the high Romantic period of late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century aesthetics). This distinction between true analysis and the possibility of bias on the part of the hypothesizer and suggestibility on the part of the interpreter is pointed out again when Dupin comments that public opinion very often cuts through romantic representations of real events, but that there is a possibility that they may be seduced to the romantic busy-body's colourful version. "[I]t is important," he insists, "that we find no traces of suggestion" (249), in the publically accepted version of events; if so, he explains, it is imperative upon the detective to solve the crime, less in the interest of any kind of public morality, and more in the service of correcting faulty (romantic) thinking.

67. Barzun decries the attempts made to elevate the hard-boiled detective novel and its progeny into the realm of art based on its claim to represent a particularly unpleasant and therefore particularly "true" version of reality. Barzun writes that

[t]he justification for this self-conscious and self-righteous effort to elevate a genre was the syllogism that literature deals with reality and that the sign of reality is horror and squalor, and hence that a tale impregnated with these flavours would — other things equal — be literature. ... The 'soft' genteel story in which a corpse is found by a butler may be a period piece but it is neither truer nor falser than a story set in a back alley... Nor is habitual vulgarity of speech more 'real' than civil talk among educated people. (160)

68. Chapter 21.

69. As Watson relates after one late case, after Holmes outlines an explanatory narrative and then backs it up, with a flourish, by producing the stolen black pearl of the Borgias,

Lestrade and I sat silent for a moment, and then with a spontaneous impulse we both broke out clapping as at the well-wrought crisis of a play. ... [Holmes] bowed to us like the master dramatist who receives the homage of his audience. It was at such moments that for an instant he ceased to be a reasoning machine, and betrayed his human love for admiration and applause. (Doyle 118)

70. This sympathetic identification, as Steven Knight notes, is far from universal. Unlike Mickey Spillane who immediately sold in the millions, Chandler's readership remained fairly small, and, Knight suggests, plausibly though without verification, largely male. In fact, Knight feels that Chandler's ideal reader would be the well-educated but rather self-pitying male, finding in Marlowe a kind of moral vindication of his position (163-66).

71. This association is almost axiomatic to the academic discipline of cultural studies and has been articulated in many different ways and with many different interpretations in the work of — among others — British cultural criticism (often associated with scholarship from the Birmingham Center for Cultural Studies or The Open University), Frankfurt school theorists like Marcuse and Horkheimer, French theorists such as Baudrillard and Lyotard and a tradition of North American scholarship including Canadians such as Marshall McLuhan and J.K. Galbraith. An interesting recent overview of cultural studies perspectives on suburbia — much of which addresses this association in critique or in support — can be found in R. Silverstone (ed) Visions of Suburbia (London: Routledge, 1997).

72. The relation of this cosmological narrative to contemporary American self-understanding has fascinated several American novelists. In his Gravity's Rainbow, Thomas Pynchon considers contemporary America as a kind of false-Garden, an illusory surface of technological utopia and cultural euphoria which is itself the medium of alienation within an inhuman, demonic condition of techno-industrial organization. In Paul Auster's City of Glass, a (tentatively) demented scholar concludes that America is the place of the realization of the Garden, except that humans had brought the wasteland with them from Europe in the form of their culture and consciousness. He therefore isolates his infant son from all cultural contact for sixteen years, in an attempt to have the child open to learning "the language of God," and realizing the Garden "in himself." Both Pynchon and Auster invoke and then discard the hard-boiled detective story conventions, as their narratives pose the questions "Who is guilty?" and "What happened?," before recognizing that the investigative structure of the narrative corroborates and mimics the paranoid structure of the source of evil in both cases. In both cases a kind of idealism produced a delusional structure that enabled the production of a condition of horror and inhumanity. More so than in Chandler's The Long Goodbye the detective story convention is largely abandoned, and with it the conditions of subjective certainty and effective agency. This "fading" of the detective protagonist, in both cases, is implicitly a form of resistance against the centralizing, paranoid structures that pervade American culture.

73. This is Chandler's metaphor, though his use is slightly different. His detective is "a catalyst, not a Casanova" ("Simple" 10), i.e. the detective is neither interested in the power of the conquest, nor in the commitment of the romantic relationship. Rather, he is the agent foreign to relationships as such (sexual, in this case) which, by that token, is able to provoke their rupture and, in their decomposition, enable the emergence of their elided or hidden conditions.

74. Two of the most monumental figures in the discursive history of transsexuality are unfortunately only marginally addressed in this study and they are psychiatrist Robert Stoller, who provided arguably the most influential articulation of the transsexual phenomenon as it became manifest in medical discourses, and Judith Butler, whose work on the psycho-social dynamics of gender occupy the absolute center of contemporary discussions of in this field. Their elision is not a function of the irrelevance of their work: quite the contrary. I have read their challenging and often difficult work closely and have gained tremendous insight into the phenomenon of gender and sexuality. However, for two reasons, both due to what I perceive to be the area of my contribution to the debate around transsexuality, I have not chosen to give their work prominent attention. The first reason has to do with redundancy: Stoller and Butler have been well engaged elsewhere. Almost every serious discussion of the history of transsexuality has to take some account of Stoller's work, and I hope I have accurately represented the range of critical opinion in my attention to Stoller in this portion of the main text. Butler's work has been exhaustively appropriated by scholars of gender theory, but in Second Skins Jay Prosser names Judith Butler as the ground of this extended critical meditation on the phenomenology of transsexual self-understanding. Prosser's work is indeed formidable, and I have little to contribute except to express my admiration. The second reason has to do with focus. Though this project necessarily touches on psychiatry and gender theory, it is meant to be primarily a work of narratology: its object is neither mind nor the lived experience

of sex or sex-change, but the stories with which mind and sex find their articulation within concepts of masculinity and femininity. Prosser's work touches on the narrative problems of transsexual autobiography, but it tends to subordinate properly narratological concerns to the phenomenological concerns of his argument. His work finds in narrative evidence of how transsexuals feel and understand their bodies. My work reverses the relation between phenomenology and narrative, showing that the understanding of "body" is historically variable and filtered through culturally hegemonic and already gendered structures of narrative self-understanding.

75. At this point it might be useful here to distinguish the narrative configuration of *shame* or humiliation from that of paranoia, and this distinction springs from Joe Adamson's "Shame and Paranoia in Dostoevsky's The Idiot," delivered in a colloquium at McMaster University, Nov. 1999. Like paranoiac anxiety, shame is a response to a perception of exposure to an external gaze, to a powerful social agency that sees the self in its nakedness. In shame, however, the guilt attributed by the other is internalized, the self accepts the Other's judgement and turns hatefully back upon itself. Shame does not consistently attribute a *deceptiveness* to the Other. The figure of the Other *seen looking* is the scene of its power; fear and insecurity turn to shame when the self sees itself *being seen*. The shame-filled subject is not a *resistant* subject like the paranoid.

Narratively, this is played out in the relation of the individual to the social environment. To feel real shame, the subject accepts the legitimacy or at least the authority of the judging mechanism. It is a model of subjectivity more likely to be inscribed in a legitimately hierarchical model because, to a large extent, the legitimacy of judgment and contempt is mechanism inherent to hierarchy (and what we will call the "organic society model") for punishing lack of conformity to order. Paranoid subjectivity, characterized by the placing of a figure of radical individuality against hierarchy and collectivity (Lacan's *Unghlauben*), is more likely to construe the hierarchy which would legitimate the shaming gaze as illegitimate, and would respond to the contempt filled apprehension of the subject by the hierarchy with anger rather than a feeling of guilt (though, of course, psychogenetic accounts of paranoia usually locate the resistant response as a displaced manifestation of repressed guilt... but we are dealing with narrative at this moment, rather than psychoanalysis), and will resist rather than submit. His or her protagonistic agency will be Other-directed rather than Other-inflected and self-directed.

The narrative mode of representation proper to shame is the ironic, in that primacy of identification, even for the protagonist, is with "the world at large," and that character is represented, even to himself as something lower than the world, lower even than his place in the world. Paranoia, as we will establish in this essay, is a mixed form which mobilizes a model of protagonism borrowed from the low-mimetic assimilation of romantic convention in a world that is thoroughly ironic. It comes down to what Slavoj Žižek calls the key aspect of cosmic deception: if the world of the story reveals itself to be bifurcated, with a false appearance legitimating an oppressive hierarchy and a truth accessible to penetrating individual agency, then this is a paranoid narrative configuration. If the world reveals itself to be homoplanous and vertically integrated (within a legitimate hierarchy), then it is a shame based narrative.

76. In his analysis of the Schreber case, Freud notoriously limits these fantasies to those of a homoerotic nature, due to the presumably narcissistic basis of the homosexual pathology. See "Psychoanalytic Notes Upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides) (1911)" S.E. 12, 3-79.

77. In her HorSexe, Catherine Millot devotes considerable attention to ritual castration and the historical formation of communities of castrati. She places this consideration within a general overview of the mythological liminality of the "outsidesexed," before folding this into a consideration of the psychological drama of transsexuality, concluding that both the horror or disgust and the awe or sacredness of the transsexual or ritually genitally altered is part of that subject's unreality. Transsexuality is unreal in that it is a psychotic refusal to recognize the law of the symbolic that makes us subjects; and it is this lawlessness, for Millot, which makes the transsexual unreadable and either abject or sacred. Needless to say Millot joins the pantheon of villains for those in the transgender community (like Kate Bornstein, for example) seeking to depathologize, de-clinicize and de-objectify the condition and the experience of transgender.

Julia Kristeva's discussion of the sacred from her own post-Freudian perspective, however, provocatively

complements this idea Millot extrapolates from Lacan. She writes:

Could the sacred be, whatever its variants, a two-sided formation? One side made up of murder [of the (primal) father] and the social bond made up of murder's guilt ridden atonement, and another aspect, like a lining, more secret still and invisible, non-representable, oriented toward those uncertain spaces of unstable identity, toward the fragility — both threatening and fusional — of the archaic dyad, toward the non-separation of the subject/object, on which language has no hold but one woven of fright and repulsion. One aspect [murder of father] is defensive and socializing, the other [incest with mother] shows fear and indifferenciation. (57-58)

Kristeva's conception of a double zone of sacredness bounding either side of the patricidal order is fascinating in its implications for transsexuality, for it suggests that the implicit castration of a figure such as the Catholic priest allows him, literally, to *be* the Father, to assume authority. More pertinently, it suggests that the "outsexing" of the male-to-female transsexual removes the figure from the economy of the phallus, but it is not simply this act (which Millot reads as the root of the transsexual psychosis) that provokes fascination and horror, it is the fact that this act is not just unreal, it is abject, provoking recognition of primal incest with the mother. This primal incest figures a state of indifferenciation that is the repressed ground against which subjectivity emerges and is thus the figure of all that subjects cannot tolerate at the most visceral level; it is the figure of abjection, and in the paranoid with his notorious "intolerance for ambiguity" the field of the abject could be said to expand powerfully until the subject internalizes and reproduces another defensive, socialized order comprised only of himself, "Them" and an postulated apocalyptic community. This hypothesis would go some way toward explaining Schreber's revulsion at his own perceived sexual indeterminacy, and would account for the stratification of his experience into strikingly "gendered" alternative modes. Suggestive as it (and much of Kristeva's work) is, this study cannot address psychoanalytic theory with the depth and expertise needed to treat it adequately, and will maintain its methodological focus on the narrative aspects of selfhood as articulated in various texts.

78. Elizabeth Grosz provides a neat summary of the various intersexual conditions, these involving several combinations of male and female external genitalia. Over the past decade a movement, most associated with intersexual Cheryl Chase, has been working with some success toward having the practice of pediatric "regularization" of intersexed children stopped and the condition of intersexuality recognized as a variant, rather than aberrant, sexual organization.

79. Further to Bornstein's observation, Richard Tewksbury asserts that female impersonators or "drag-queens" modify their gender in order, he argues, to position themselves and gain status (to be "stars") within certain gay communities. In his interviews they tended to distance themselves both from transvestites and transsexuals. The former, who exploit cross dressing for sexual pleasure rather than social recognition, are "perverts" and "deviant" (138). The latter are different in that their primary goal is to "pass," to "be" women, while the drag-queen's goal is to "*beat* women at the glamour game" (141): though the success of their performance is measured, in part, by their ability to "pass," they do not see themselves as women but as female *impersonators* (142). These distinctions are examined in more detail in Duchow, 1980.

80. Though there is a tremendous amount of work out relating to autobiography, I found Elizabeth Bruss' Autobiographical Acts: The Changing Situation of a Literary Genre (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1976) to be a very thorough and nuanced consideration of the problems of life writing in a cultural situation in which genre conventions are becoming increasingly fluid. Linda Peterson's "Gender and the Autobiographical Essay: Research Perspectives, Pedagogical Practices" (College Composition and Communication, 42 (1995). 171-193) addresses (from within a concern for pedagogical inclusiveness) the different initial relation of masculine and feminine to the act and condition of life writing in a way that broadly informed this study.

81. The surgeon, Dr. Kreutz, is, we are told, affiliated with “Dr. Hardenfeld’s” Institute, and it is Dr. Hardenfeld and his assistants that subject Andreas to his pre-operative examinations. “Hardenfeld,” Meyerowitz argues, “provides thinly veiled cover for Magnus Hirschfeld” (162), the director of the abovementioned “Institute for Sexual Science” in Berlin.

82. As Meyerowitz points out, this discovery of complete but hidden hermaphroditism “is hard to believe.” “By the late 1930’s” Meyerowitz writes, “the reigning expert in the field, Hugh Hampton Young, found only twenty medically confirmed cases of hermaphroditism; not one of them had, as the story of Lili Elbe suggested, two ovaries in the pelvis and two testes in the scrotum” (181).

83. See Susan Stryker, “Christine Jorgensen’s Atom Bomb: Mapping the Emergence of Postmodernity through Transsexuality,” in *Reproductive Technologies: Gender, Culture, and Politics*, ed. E. Ann Kaplan and Susan Squier (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1999).

84. The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association (HBIGDA).

85. The Health Law Committee of the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy (ICTLEP).

86. Where Bornstein associates Schwarzenegger’s self-built body with masculine “drag”, Cecile Lindsay theorizes bodybuilding as part of a postmodern notion of corporeal malleability that — like Bornstein’s transsexual — allows them to transcend, conflate and confound not only notions of masculinity and femininity but “the category of the human” itself (365).

87. As Claudine Griggs points out, the “passivity” of male-to-female transsexuals may have more to do with prudence and a sense of vulnerability than with some reification of “the female stereotype”:

I know that I was compulsively passive early in my sex change, and the aim was conscious and specific — to be perceived as a woman. I was afraid to relax the sugar-and-spice boundary, because I feared public ridicule, violence, or arrest if I failed to establish a feminine attributed gender. ... In the initial stages, “passing” is of utmost concern; I was terrified of being read. (115)

This terror of being “read,” of being known and subject to abuse or violation by a hostile world, is more akin to the guarded isolation of Marlowe’s masculine hard-boiled detective than it is to Morris’ socially extended femininity.

88. See, for example, the graphically illustrated guide to sex-reassignment surgical procedures in Walters and Ross, eds, *Transsexualism and Sex Reassignment* (Melbourne: Oxford UP, 1986) 96-113.