

TOWARD A THEORY OF POST-ANARCHIST FEMINISM

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This is dedicated to my partner, Rueben,
as well as my family, my friends,
and my fellow GAs
for all their support
throughout this project.

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ABSTRACT

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by Michelle M. Campbell

This thesis develops a theory of post-anarchist feminism (PAF) by analyzing the work of feminist North American science fiction (SF) writers Margaret Atwood and Octavia E. Butler. SF is a particularly apt genre for post-anarchist feminism because the genre provides the best adapted tropes for exploring and representing socio-political concerns of identity, particularly in terms of gender, sex, and sexuality. Using the *Xenogenesis* trilogy and the *MaddAddam* trilogy as proof-texts, I bring anarchist, post-anarchist, postmodern, anarcha-feminist, feminist, and queer anarchist theories to bear on the alternative worlds that these authors create.

Both texts by Butler and Atwood examine postapocalyptic worlds in which main characters learn to navigate oppression and forge new identities. Butler's post-nuclear earth is repopulated by human-alien hybrids, which brings to light questions of human nature. Atwood's earth, which careens into economic and environmental apocalypse after an engineered disease kills most of the population, examines socio-economic practices and human nature. The narratives of the texts help us to consider challenges and opportunities for radical change such as power relations, hierarchy, commodification, informed consent, and reproduction as it relates to constructions of gender.

Where feminist inquiry tends to examine gender relations in these postapocalyptic societies, and a class-based analysis explores the capitalistic attitudes that made the apocalyptic scenario possible, PAF provides a more nuanced and thorough critique. The crux of this thesis rests in an augmented inquiry of gender, sex, and sexuality, to which anarchism and postanarchism bring new theoretical frameworks in a largely feminist-dominated area of critique.

As such, PAF helps us to consider gender, sex, and sexuality as possibilities for revolution, resistance, subversion, and other radical actions.

Key Words: post-anarchist feminism, anarchism, revolution, resistance, subversion, science fiction

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
	Genre Conventions and SF	2
	Utopian and Dystopian SF	5
	Postapocalyptic SF	8
	The Texts	9
	Classical Anarchisms	16
	Classical Anarcha-Feminisms	25
	Anarchism and First and Second-Wave Feminisms	29
II.	POST-ANARCHIST FEMINISM DEFINED.....	33
	Socialist Feminism	33
	Post-Feminism	36
	Pre-Cursors to PAF: Post-Anarchism and Queer Anarchism	39
	Metaphors of Subversion and Inversion	47
	Post-Anarchist Feminism (PAF)	55
III.	POST-ANARCHIST FEMINISM AND BUTLER'S <i>XENOGENESIS</i>	
	<i>TRILOGY</i>	57
	Lilith and Sexuality	60
	Akin and Productive Power	68
	Jodahs the Shapeshifter	72
	Contributions of <i>Xenogenesis</i> to PAF	79
IV.	POST-ANARCHIST FEMINISM AND ATWOOD'S <i>MADDADDAM</i>	
	<i>TRILOGY</i>	80
	Commodification, Gender, and the End of the World	83
	Productive Power: No Headaches and New Faces	88
	Revolution and Collapse: Simulation and Symbolic Exchange	97
	Contributions of <i>MaddAddam</i> to PAF	103
V.	CONCLUSION.....	105
VI.	REFERENCES.....	111

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This project explores the convergence of three philosophical and theoretical approaches to develop a new theory called post-anarchist feminism (PAF). In exploring this convergence, I will trace feminism, or the philosophical principles underpinning feminism, in classical anarchist, anarcha-feminist, and postanarchist thought. Then, after an examination of contemporary theories ranging from post-feminism to queer anarchism, I will explore the possibilities of a post-anarchist feminist theory. This theory will be used in later chapters to examine the ways in which contemporary North American science fiction (SF) can illustrate, complicate, and further such a theoretical approach. North American SF literature is used as a spring-board off of which I will form and explore PAF. In particular, I will look at Octavia Butler's *Xenogenesis* trilogy and Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy because they explore themes of gender, sex, sexuality, and power in a speculative context.

In this introduction, I will review the literature concerning the genre of North American SF, Butler's and Atwood's place within the genre, and background for their texts. I will also review the works that underpin postanarchism, anarcha-feminism, and feminism, particularly classical anarchist writings and first and second-wave feminist texts in order to explore the connections of each to construct a theory of PAF. While Chapters I and II investigate classical anarchism, feminisms, postanarchism, third-wave feminism, queer anarchism, and post-feminism to build a foundation for PAF, Chapters III and IV test the framework of PAF against Butler's *Xenogenesis* trilogy and Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy. Testing and revising the theory against these two works will help to provide a context to the development of an otherwise abstract theoretical approach. Chapter V will review the project and make tentative recommendations for

post-anarchist feminist discourse in terms of this burgeoning theoretical approach. Each section of my project builds, questions, and explores PAF in an effort to thoroughly develop a new, multidisciplinary theoretical approach using the field of literary theory and criticism.

Genre Conventions and SF

It is important to situate both Butler's and Atwood's texts in the genre history of SF as well as in contemporary SF. Darren Harris-Fain, in his book *Understanding Contemporary Science Fiction: The Age of Maturity 1970-2000*, provides an overview of the genre of SF and some of the unique features the genre can support. Traditionally, SF includes fantastical elements, but Harris-Fain is careful to explain the differences between SF and fantasy: "It is here that we are able to make our first real distinction. In noting that science fiction is not realistic, in the sense that it includes elements that neither exist in the present nor have existed in the past, science fiction is not an example of realism (either contemporary or historical) but of the fantastic" (3-4). He continues to explain that we should think of the fantastic as the major genre, which then encapsulates the subgenres of both fantasy and SF, respectively. This is because "Both are nonrealistic forms of fiction, but apart from their shared fantastic natures, the two are significantly different" (Harris-Fain 4). To this end, Harris-Fain contends, "By contrast, science fiction includes elements that do not exist and have not existed in the past, but that plausibly could exist in the future (or even, in cases as alien-contact or disaster stories, in the present) or could have existed in the past if the direction of history had been altered" (4). This distinction is important to note because it means that SF is grounded in events that could happen or in a realistic extension of events as they currently are, rather than in things that defy existing realities. For example, while Butler and Atwood write of cataclysmic disasters (nuclear war and environmental degradation), which are certainly fantastic, nowhere in their two trilogies are

elements of fantasy, such as magic or mythical creatures. But SF's unique features are not just in its contradistinction to fantasy.

Harris-Fain argues that SF's strengths lie in that it utilizes both the conventions of fiction as well as other genre-specific tools, such as scientific fact, extrapolation, and imagination (6). Writers in the genre are able to employ these methods to engage with sociological, historical and psychological factors within their texts. One result of these methods is a text that is at the same time historical fiction and SF. Extrapolation and imagination, Harris-Fain contends, "[have] led writers to explore the manifold ways in which the future might develop (which also helps to explain the abundance of futures to be found in science fiction, including contradictory visions)" (6-7). With such techniques used in conjunction with alternate history, "this extrapolation takes place using historical events, and with science fiction stories set in the present, writers imagine how the intrusion of some possible or at least plausible event might change the world as we now know it" (Harris-Fain 7). SF has the ability to create a simulation of what could happen or what could have happened if only certain factors or events had turned out differently, whether that difference is slight or significant.

This assessment of the genre of SF is similar to that of Robert Scholes, who argues in *Speculations on Speculation: Theories of Science Fiction* that SF changes with the concerns of society. Scholes explains, "In works of structural fabulation the tradition of speculative fiction is modified by an awareness of the nature of the universe as a system of systems, a structure of structures, and the insights of the past century of science are accepted as fictional points of departure" (214). At the same time, however, "structural fabulation is neither scientific in its methods nor a substitute for actual science. It is a fictional exploration of human situations made perceptible by the implications of recent science" (Scholes 214). As we see with the works of

Butler and Atwood, “its favorite themes involve the impact of developments or revelations derived from the human or physical sciences up on the people who must live with those revelations or developments” (Scholes 214). This is especially true of Atwood’s *MaddAddam* trilogy, which explores the personal impact of new scientific innovations paired with a likely scenario of environmental degradation and the corporatization of careers, schools, communities, and relationships.

Butler’s and Atwood’s texts engage with this idea of an alternate history (or alternate present), depending on when readers read the novels. While Butler’s texts presumably take place approximately two hundred years in the future, they could be possibly construed as an alternate present. Likewise, Atwood’s texts are disorientating; they could be a recent alternate past, the reader’s present, or a distant future. Butler’s trilogy allows us to experience a future based upon two significant events: nuclear holocaust and alien salvation. Atwood’s texts attribute an extraordinary future to more minute details that add up: capitalism, experimentation, global climate change, evangelical extremism, back-to-the-earth or organic living, ramped up sexualization of women, corporatization of individuals and their work, and the list goes on. For Atwood, it’s not one or two extraordinary events or elements which create an alternative present or future; rather, it’s a slight exaggeration (or continuation of a trend without limitations) that creates Atwood’s SF setting.

As a final point in regards to the uniqueness of using the genre conventions of SF in general and why it is particularly useful to my project, it is important to note the impact of creating alternative histories, presents, and futures in an attempt to effectively promote radical thought. Harris-Fain argues the radicalizing aspect of the subgenre of alternative historical fiction is important because “like other forms of science fiction, it provides a response to the

question, What if?” (107). Specifically, “this question [in SF] concerns some matter in the present or usually in the future that touches in some way upon scientific or technological factors, or at any rate upon the notion of radical change” (Harris-Fain 107). Science fiction, as a genre, is particularly apt at describing and portraying radical change. This is certainly because the genre conventions, unlike regular fiction, do not require the author to stay within the realm of what has happened; rather, the author is able to branch out into what could have happened in the past or what could happen in the future. Thus, SF is perfect for experimenting with social conventions and constrictions, for questioning the way things are and the way they could or should be. Moreover, this experimentation with radical change, in terms of sociology, psychology, history, and other relational concerns, is particularly marked in utopic/dystopic and postapocalyptic sub-genres of science fiction.

Utopian and Dystopian SF

The *Xenogenesis* and *MaddAddam* trilogies are both utopian and dystopian SF works. In her recent critical work *In Other Worlds*, Margaret Atwood coins the term “Ustopian,” referring to the intersection of utopian and dystopian literature. She writes, “*Ustopia* is a word I made up by combining utopia and dystopia—the imagined perfect society and its opposite—because, in my view, each contains a latent version of the other” (*In Other Worlds* 66). Atwood explains that utopias are thought to be “good” places and no places, possibilities that may never exist; on the other hand, dystopias are thought to be “bad” places. Although utopias and dystopias are different sides of the same coin, they are, as Atwood argues, latent versions of each other. Utopias are places or worlds where everything has become perfect, or at least as perfect as possible. But whose perfect world? Utopias, when looked at from other positions or points of view, transform into dystopias. It could be argued that the general population in *Brave New*

World was experiencing an unrestrained and drug-induced utopia, whereas, for the reader and the “other,” the world depicted was a horrific dystopia. The intersection of utopian and dystopian literature shows that the line between the two merely rests on a subject position: it depends on where the subject is and what s/he believes to be particularly good rather than what actually is universally good, if such an abstract quality could even be defined.

As utopian/dystopian visionaries of the future, both Butler and Atwood imagine and venture into new societies organized by other means than previously found in the history of civilization in their texts. Dunja Mohr, author of *Worlds Apart? Dualism and Transgression in Contemporary Female Dystopias* contends, “Feminist utopias significantly differ in terms of narrative content from male utopias. Thematically, feminist utopias shift the focus to female reality and to everyday life; they restructure the distribution of power within society *and* family and reject sex-segregated labor” (24). This is especially true of these two trilogies because Butler’s work is centered on Lilith’s family and her place within the community. Moreover, Atwood’s works center around Toby and Ren, women who have been demeaned and diminished, particularly by the sexualization of women, who in turn become survivors of the plague and environmental degradation. Mohr offers that feminist utopias “particularly emphasize gender equality, communitarian goals, decentralization, consensual decision-making, cooperation, education, and ecological issues, and they discard the classical utopian notion of growth and the domination of nature. These non-aggressive, non-hierarchical, and hence classless future societies challenge patriarchy” (24). These aspects of feminist utopias are seen in the way Atwood’s *God’s Gardeners* operate before the apocalypse (in an attempt to train members for the coming of “the flood”) as well as the way in which Butler’s alien Oankali operate through sensory/chemical attachment to make decisions and strengthen communal as well as familial

bonds. The end result of these radical practices is the creation of societies in which the protagonists put the health of the community before the wealth of the individual. Although the texts are utopian in regards to cooperation and strong communal bonds that emphasize the equalization of power, they also have dystopian elements.

The differences between utopian and dystopian narratives are marked. Mohr points out: "...dystopia reverses, mistrusts, and parodies the ideal of a perfectly regulated utopian state, often unintentionally inclined towards totalitarianism. Where utopia uplifts the reader, dystopia holds up a hellish mirror and describes the worst of all possible futures" (27). In other words, while dystopias highlight the continuation of the worst realities, utopias uplifts the reader by showing the positive possibilities for the future. Although utopias and dystopias have dissimilar methods, their endgame, Mohr argues, is the same: "Using opposed strategies, both utopia and dystopia, however, share the same objective: sociopolitical change by means of the aesthetic representation of a paradigm shift" (28). *Xenogenesis* and *MaddAddam* depict hellish as well as ideal conditions. In both trilogies, autonomy and freedom are compromised in favor of safety and security. In the end, however, both storylines leave the characters and readers with uncertainty. What happens, as in Butler's works, when humanity exists only as part of the genetic make up of a new alien species, or as in Atwood's works, when the environment and socio-economic structures have been obliterated, leaving the survivors in chaos? These representations of the two sides of the utopian/dystopian coin allow the authors to complicate the possible futures that could extend from the present. Not only do both Butler and Atwood use utopian (both utopian and dystopian) genre conventions in an attempt to show how current sociopolitical conditions can shape the future of earth, they also use postapocalyptic genre conventions to highlight the concept detailing opportunities to start over after everything has seemingly been lost.

Postapocalyptic SF

The use of postapocalyptic genre conventions in these two bodies of work is important because it sets up a fictional simulation in which new communities develop. This is important to developing a theory of PAF because it allows us to imagine the limitations of society and social relations and new lines of flight, which could offer possibilities of resistance, subversion, or escape.¹ In short, these works allow us to explore gender and social politics in an effort to see what happens when we try to start over. Author of *Postapocalyptic Fiction and the Social Contract: We'll Not Go Home Again*, Claire P. Curtis argues, "Postapocalyptic fiction provides flesh to the usual hypothetical imaginings of the state of nature and postapocalyptic fiction is written with an eye not to the academy but to the life of the ordinary reader" (4). Curtis focuses on the social contract, and on thinkers such as Hobbes, to explicate the interaction between socio-psychology and postapocalyptic genre conventions. I argue that there are two reasons to use postapocalyptic genre conventions in fiction, and Curtis details these two reasons:

First, it works out the imaginative hypothetical of social contract thinkers in rich detail, although with little analysis. While fictional, postapocalyptic novels fill in the details of the state of nature scenario. Hobbes describes what the consequences of living in the state of nature are, but he does not fully describe who lives there or what the details are of their lives. [...]. The second advantage to using postapocalyptic fiction to think through the social contract is that it is

¹ "Lines of flight" is a term borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* used to describe an assemblage, such as a text. Lines of flight for Deleuze and Guattari mean the "movements of deterritorialization and destratification" (3). By lines of flight, I mean the possibilities of deconstructing realities, possibilities, and alternatives to determine what has happened and what could happen in the future. Butler's and Atwood's SF does just this in order to show a different view of the way things could have occurred; this, too, is a goal of PAF when it comes to the constructions of gender, sex, and sexuality.

written with an eye to the reader—the life of an ordinary person on the ground. Postapocalyptic fiction is not written for an academic audience assessing the character of the state of nature and the potential contract that might emerge from it. It is written for a variety of reasons, not least of which might well be to sell books, but as a particular niche of fiction postapocalyptic fiction is often grounded in the day to day. (4-5)

This distinction between science fiction and postapocalyptic fiction as a subgenre of SF is important to developing a theory of PAF because such a theory would involve a detailed look at the constraints and allowances of the social contract. Insofar as postapocalyptic fiction is not written for an academic audience, using it to develop a theory of PAF allows the theory to echo a non-hierarchical ethic: because the theory is developed from literature written for a general audience, the theory, in part, will be rooted in the quotidian rather than in academia, which would be important for a theory dealing in the questioning of hierarchies, established conventions, and power structures. Now that I have reviewed the genre conventions working within the SF texts I use to develop PAF, it is important to explicate Butler and Atwood's particular texts and explain some of the theoretical structures I will use in later chapters.

The Texts

Octavia E. Butler's *Xenogenesis* trilogy, published in the late 1980s, concerns an alien resuscitation of the human race after a nuclear holocaust. The first book, *Dawn*, follows the journey of Lilith Iyapo, a black woman who has been awakened on an alien ship two hundred years after the nuclear war that destroyed the world.² She learns about the Oankali, an alien race

² It is important to note that much of critical and secondary literature concerning the *Xenogenesis* trilogy centers around issues of race, ethnicity, and slave narratives. Although I acknowledge that

that seeks to “trade” with the humans; in return for the human’s genetic material, they save what is left of the human race, cure diseases such as cancer, and intend to breed out their “contradiction.” This contradiction, according to the aliens, is that humans possess both intelligence and an innate need for hierarchical social organization. It is the interaction of these two drives that have, according to the Oankali, led to the self-destruction of the human race and will lead to self-destruction again unless it is bred out. Once awoken, Lilith is trained to become the mother of the new race of Oankali-human constructs,³ but first she is tasked with awakening many other humans who have been saved from earth. These humans are trained to live in a newly altered and healed earth, an earth that has been regenerated with many new species of plants and animals after the nuclear holocaust by the Oankali. They are eventually going to be the foremothers and forefathers of a new race of Oankali-human beings. The Oankali, Lilith learns, are an advanced communal society whose space-ship is a living creature. The Oankali live in discreet family units, but are connected through the living ship; they can communicate through the ship’s neural network. The Oankali have a special epidermic skin chemical that allows them to grow or reduce the ship (create door-ways, sleeping platforms, etc.), and thus they exist in a symbiotic relationship with each other and their vehicle. At the end of the first book, Lilith’s partner, Joseph, has been killed by other humans, and Lilith’s third-sexed ooloi impregnates her against her will with Joseph’s child.

these are critical areas of importance and that Butler’s texts are rich ground for these types of analyses, this paper’s scope is informed but not directed by this aspect of race; instead, I focus on the sexual and familial interactions between the alien other and humans. This paper *does* focus on post-anarchist feminism, which involves different but overlapping issues of agency, freedom, sexuality, and reproduction.

³ These Oankali-human constructs are the hybrid species resulting from the mating of the Oankali and humans, which involve a five person family: a female human, a male human, a female Oankali, a male Oankali, and a third-sexed Oankali called an ooloi.

Book two, *Adulthood Rites*, follows Lilith's Oankali-human construct child, Akin. As a child, Akin, who looks human, is kidnapped by the Resisters—people who have chosen to live on earth without the Oankali. Because the Resisters do not want to take part in the formation of a new species, they are sterilized. Akin grows up with the Resisters, but he also misses very important bonding time with his paired sibling and the rest of his family—hindering his maturation as an adult. As Akin matures, he begins to see the injustices perpetrated against the humans, especially the Resisters, on the part of the Oankali. Akin advocates to the Oankali for the construction of a colony on Mars where the humans who do not want to breed with the Oankali can live and reproduce. Although the Oankali (through a consensus-based decision process) allow Akin to begin the Mars colony, they warn him that he is only killing the human race again because, with its contradiction, it is inevitable that the human race will once again destroy itself.

The third book, *Imago*, details the life of Jodahs, an Oankali-human construct ooloi. The ooloi are the Oankali's third-sex population, which has some very special talents. Jodahs is able to heal both humans and Oankali, and, when it matures, it is able to store vast amounts of genetic information from which it can draw to create new life.⁴ Unlike other ooloi, Jodahs discovers that its form is unstable once it begins to mature. It is truly a gender and species shape-shifter. Luckily, it finds human mates, but its sibling is not so lucky. The human mates and the ooloi siblings travel to a Resister outpost where the people are still fertile, but have awful genetic diseases. The ooloi siblings are able to find fertile humans, and after being held captive and healing the people, are eventually trusted by them. At the end of the trilogy, the two ooloi and

⁴ I refer to the ooloi, or third-sex beings, as “it” because they do not fit with a heterosexual human gender binary. Additionally, Butler uses “it” in her text, and thus I also use it for the purpose of consistency.

many of the fertile Resisters decide to stay on the earth, plant a new home, and become the ancestors of a full-fledged, new Oankali-human race.

This trilogy is rich with themes, issues, and tropes that may be of particular interest to PAF. The characters, relations, and tropes used by Butler in *Xenogenesis* expose conflicts within the matrices of a post-anarchist theory, and each of these three aspects are in some way affected by gender or sexuality. For example, the character of Lilith is depicted, at first, as being a powerless captive, akin to an animal kept for breeding; however, as the narrative continues, Lilith gains more power and agency over herself, her Oankali family, and the future of the human race. Likewise, her son, Akin, problematizes the ethics of productive power when he is granted a colony on Mars for the human resisters who do not want to participate in the Oankali-human trade. Tropes, like that of the shapeshifter, as embodied by the Oankali-human construct and third-sexed character of Jodahs, represent an exploration of post-anarchist's *anarchy of the subject* through an *anarchy of becoming*, specifically in terms of the way in which gender or sex is constructed for purely reproductive means.⁵ Because *Xenogenesis* presents a range of challenges and problems with reference to both post-anarchism and feminism (including queer theory), it is fecund material against which to test a post-anarchist feminist theory. Butler's work will also help to complicate the theory in an effort to provide avenues for reconsideration, reevaluation, and revision.

Like Butler's *Xenogenesis*, Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy is especially well-suited to developing a theory of PAF. Atwood explores the events leading up to and the results of two cataclysmic events: the annihilation of the human race and environmental degradation. The

⁵ In his book *Postmodern Anarchism* (2002), Lewis Call uses these philosophical concepts to develop his theory of postmodern anarchism. A further discussion of these terms and their applicability to PAF is explored in the following chapters of this project.

trilogy's first book, *Oryx and Crake*, follows Snowman (a.k.a. Jimmy), a man who has survived cataclysmic events. He believes he may be the only human left on earth besides the genetically engineered humans, named Crakers, with whom he has been charged with the task of caretaking. In a series of flashbacks of Snowman's childhood and adult experiences, the reader learns he lived at the Healthwyzer compound, a corporation enclosure that houses the corporate facilities, the homes, and the schools of the employees and their children. There, he meets Glenn, and they become best friends. In their free time, they like to play an online game called *Extinctathon*, and each take the code name of an extinct species: Jimmy is Thickney and Glenn is Crake.

After high school, Jimmy attends an ill-reputed college for the humanities while Crake, the smartest in his class, attends a prestigious university for science. After graduation, Crake hires Jimmy to help him with his project: Crake is crafting a new human-like species, the Crakers, who are represented as a new people signifying a peaceful return to nature and the land after multinational corporations have degraded the environment and devolved social relations into a capitalistic, fascist tyranny. To help teach the Crakers and service the two friend's sexual needs, Crake hires a girl named Oryx, who looks like a girl they saw on a child pornography website when they were teenagers. All the while, Crake develops a pill called BlyssPlus. It's marketed as a prophylactic as well as an enhancement supplement: it prevents pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, and it gives the user the best sex s/he has ever had. Embedded within the pill, however, is a pandemic, which, once activated by Crake, eradicates most of human life on earth. Although Crake and Oryx die by Crake's hands, Jimmy promises to look after the new species of humans, and he is left in the facility with the Crakers. When supplies run out, Jimmy leads the Crakers out into the desolate, post-apocalyptic city, and settles them near the seashore where he battles blazing sun during the day and tornadic weather each afternoon as

a result of global climate change. Near the end of this first book, we find Jimmy wandering by the seashore, sick with infection after going on a mission to gather supplies in the city.

Atwood's second book, *The Year of the Flood*, plays out during the same narrative time as the first. The narrative is told through two main first-person voices: Toby and Ren. Toby has been rescued by an environmentally-friendly religious sect called the God's Gardeners. The Gardeners' main purpose is to prepare for the End, or the imminent flood, by learning how to live without the help of multinational corporations. They grow their own food on roof tops, keep bees, and salvage their clothing, furniture, and personal items from dumpsters. They also squat in abandoned buildings. The leadership of the sect, the Adams and the Eves, help to rescue Toby from an abusive life working at the fast-food restaurant SecretBurger. Toby joins them, and although she is not sure of her devotion to the sect's principles, she abides by them and becomes skilled in many trades, thus earning the title of Eve 6. There, Toby meets Ren, one of the God's Gardeners' children.

Ren is a child who grew up in the God's Gardeners and decided to leave for the thrill of money and corporate life. When Crake's engineered destruction of the human race hits, she is locked up in isolation after being injured at the night club where she works, Scales and Tails. In her flashbacks, Ren takes the reader through the everyday life of the God's Gardeners, from the festivals they celebrate, to their environmental and salvaging practices to the education provided to God's Gardeners children. It is due to the privation and "otherness" of the group that Ren eventually decides to leave as a teenager. After being freed from isolation by two of her childhood God Gardeners friends, Ren joins Toby and others to seek out a place on postapocalyptic earth where safety, social relations, and survival are a day-to-day concern.

Unlike Butler's *Xenogenesis* trilogy, *MaddAddam* does not follow a chronological order. Rather than the works acting as sequels or prequels, they represent different experiences or viewpoints in the same timeline. As Atwood writes in *In Other Worlds*, "*The Year of the Flood* explores the world of *Oryx and Crake* from a different perspective. Whereas Jimmy/Snowman, the protagonist of *Oryx and Crake*, has grown up within a privileged though barricaded enclave, *The Year of the Flood* takes place in the space outside such enclaves, at the very bottom of the social heap" (92). Atwood describes these two works as like "chapters of the same book," both of which have "a utopia embedded within a dystopia" (93). The third book in the *MaddAddam* trilogy will not be published until well after my project has been finished, but it will also probably follow this same timeline because the other two books end at the same point in the narrative. *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood* leave off at the same point with a confrontation between Toby and violent renegades who have captured a woman. At the same time, Snowman happens onto the scene in delirium, which is the result of an infection. A third book would hopefully also resolve this tension in the plot between the survivors of the apocalypse as well as give the reader some insight into the future of the Crakers.

Like Butler's works, *MaddAddam* is particularly well-suited to developing PAF. The first two books of the trilogy examine the intricacies of sexuality and gender in a corporatized society. Jimmy's mother, who escapes from the Helthwyzer compound, the Eves, Toby, and Ren, are all very different women representing the ways in which sexualization can occur through commoditization. Furthermore, the agent that destroyed the human race is facilitated by a pill that takes advantage of a societal need for outstanding sexual relations without consequences. Almost every human on earth is murdered because they cannot "keep it in their pants." The implications of this genocide of the human race is precipitated on the assumption (and truth in

the narrative) that humans are obsessed with sex, especially when it can be experienced without consequence. As with Butler's character Akin, productive power is problematized when Crake engineers a new species of humans to replace those he has extinguished through genocide. Finally, themes and characters in the book align with postanarchist theory, especially in terms of a positing a transsemiotic revolution.⁶ In engaging with a transsemiotic revolution by questioning existing terminals of power, Atwood deconstructs the totalitarian metanarratives which have allowed Western society to perform justifiable actions of violence within the last two centuries, which then result in the postapocalyptic future in the trilogy. In order to understand how I will use these texts to develop PAF, I need to explain the tradition from which it emerges.

Classical Anarchisms

In this section, I will review major anarchist thinkers in the classical period: late eighteenth century to World War II. These individuals represent classical anarchist thought mostly in the western world. Many of these individuals were from Europe, and many lived or spent some time in the United States. All of these thinkers have had an impact on Western thought, and some had a large impact in United States history and politics. Most contemporary anarchist thinkers agree that classical anarchist thought begins with William Godwin's *Enquiry Concerning Political Justices and its Influence on the Morals and Happiness*. First published in 1793, over fifty years before the first self-identified anarchist, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Godwin

⁶ Lewis Call argues that postmodern anarchism helps to detail the possibility of a transsemiotic revolution grounded in radical symbolic theory. Because we operate in a simulated world (the internet, television, etc.) of signs, power manifests itself through those signs. Call believes that it is at the level of symbolic exchange that any meaningful or successful revolution must take place. Like May 1968, Call argues for a contemporary revolutionary process that "consistently positions itself outside the real" in an attempt to create a void of symbolic exchange to interrupt the power structures of the state and capital (104). It is not enough to engage a revolution with guns and bombs; rather, any revolutionary action must be taken in the simulated world, where the most powerful hegemony of the state and capital now reside.

critiques power structures such as government, legislative discourse, and morality in an attempt to incite change toward a more equal, democratic form of social organization. Godwin's main argument is that society results from nurture because human nature is not fixed; therefore, the power of rational thought will allow humankind to perpetually revise itself in a linear progression toward perfection. Godwin sees a clear connection between the ability of humans to change themselves and the pursuit of perfection; because humans have mutable natures, they then have the ability to strive for social perfection through education and reformation. Although Godwin's writings focus more on the divide between the opportunities afforded to the rich versus the poor, his same philosophical precepts are applicable to a foundational basis of anarchism as well as feminism.

Throughout Chapter IV: "The Characters of Men Originate in their External Circumstances," Godwin argues that virtues and morality are merely a set of rules imposed by certain men on other men. Godwin's argument accounts for the nature-versus-nurture debate because he proves that virtues and morality are not imbued by nature, but rather learned through nurture. On his side of the debate, nature bestows upon men only the ability to reason, and it only allows differences in terms of the grasp of intellect and the elements of the "animal frame," a term he uses to refer to corporeal abilities. Godwin argues that, since morality is generally regulated by the state, the state is to blame for the errors of man. Under a flawed government, Godwin argues, people "will see intrepid virtue proscribed, and a servile and corrupt spirit uniformly encouraged. But morality itself is nothing but a calculation of consequences" (38). Furthermore, Godwin argues that the erroneous morality generated by the state (in self-servitude to the state) is practiced universally in a type of brain-washing of the public. In other words, the state brainwashes children through institutions like the educational system by promoting a

certain morality that has obvious benefits for the state but not for the public at large. He queries: “What strange confusion will the spectacle of that knavery which is universally practised through all the existing classes of society produce in the mind?” (Godwin 38). Not only does Godwin view the promulgation of morality through the state apparatus as an illegitimate act that has poisoned the people in order to place the state and upper classes in a position of power over the general public, but he also views education supported by the state as an avenue through which generations of children are “infected” with the “disease” of state morality (38). Godwin explains:

As long as parents and teachers in general shall fall under the established rule, it is clear that politics and modes of government will educate and infect us all. They poison our minds before we can resist, or so much as suspect their malignity. Like the barbarous directors of the Eastern seraglios, they deprive us of our virility, and fit us for their despicable employment from the cradle. So false is the opinion that has too generally prevailed that politics is an affair with which ordinary men have little concern. (37)

Essentially, Godwin is advocating for a mode of education not indebted to politics or governments because such an ideology “infects” children and unsuspectingly molds their skills, intellect, and identities into whatever position benefits the state.

Godwin’s analysis of citizens and how they are shaped is important for the intersection of anarchism and feminism for two reasons. First, Godwin writes that it is absurd to think that men have inherent principles, virtues, or morals;⁷ thus, he points to nurture, not nature, as the driving force of humanity. To be clear, this means that humans can change, and there is a distinct possibility that socio-political relations will improve for the vast majority of people who make up

⁷ Although Godwin was extremely forward-thinking for his time, it is unclear if he uses “men” to refer only to males or to humankind in general.

the base of the socio-economic hierarchical pyramid.⁸ Second, Godwin points out that the “nurture” creating such a socio-economic hierarchy rests in the hands of the state, which illegitimately uses avenues, such as the institution of education, to indoctrinate the hearts and minds of children into believing ideology that benefits not the public at large, but those at the top of the hierarchy. Therefore, Godwin concludes that, through a state-mandated morality, children are molded into their socio-economic position that underpins the authority of the hierarchy and violates individual liberty. The precept of the mutability of humans in regard to their nature is closely aligned with those expressions of feminism that suggest there is no innate difference between people of different sexes, genders, and sexualities—theories arguing that these differences are performed rather than inherent.⁹ The theory that the state uses oppressive power through sanctioned institutions such as education to further its authoritarian agenda is a critique many anarchists employ as a way of tracing paths of authority that curtail liberty and solidarity. This critique is also similar to a feminist critique of patriarchy in that patriarchy utilizes institutions, such as marriage, to further its authoritarian agenda.

In his book *The Conquest of Bread*, Peter Kropotkin, a foundational anarchist theorist, also advocates for the equality of humankind. Kropotkin wrote *The Conquest of Bread* after Bakunin and Godwin’s works, but he contributes to a similar conversation, namely in that he advocates for equality and mutual aid for a fair and just society. Unlike Godwin, Kropotkin was a well-known federalist anarchist. Kropotkin represents a different view of anarchism—one in

⁸ By socio-economic hierarchal pyramid, I mean the arrangement of Godwin’s class system that intertwines both royal class status and economic success. While the two do not necessarily go hand in hand, the most powerful individuals in Godwin’s time were both rich and had royal blood or titles. This hierarchy is facilitated by the government; for example, the House of Lords in England, which puts the ranking socialites in positions of governmental power.

⁹ For more on performing gender, sex, and sexuality, see Judith Butler’s 1990 work *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*.

which governments are arranged locally with major alliances for major projects by the idea of mutual aid. For Kropotkin, mutual aid is the human desire to help other people, especially when that help is often reciprocated. Many of the first anarchists were federalist anarchists, believing in self-rule of cities or villages with a small unifying federal government to aid in larger, intra-community projects. The anarchist federal government may, for example, help to build a cross-national railroad; however, the vast majority of power and control would remain local. There are some similarities between some founding visions of the United States of America (e.g. state's rights) and a federalist-anarchist organizational structure because Kropotkin's view of anarchism was quite individualistic. Individualist anarchism makes up one of the major strands of anarchist thought, which later influenced anarcho-feminists like Voltairine de Cleyre.

In *The Conquest of Bread*, Kropotkin critiques the state of government and socio-economic equality of his time while also outlining his anarchist theory of federalism spurred by cooperation and mutual aid. Kropotkin's focus is on the organizational and economic factors of development a federalist anarchist society, such as the creation of communal kitchens and the right of every person to learn an occupation through apprenticeship-style education. A strong theme throughout his work is the idea that technology, or the advancement of ideas, will enable a federalist anarchist society to exist. Furthermore, Kropotkin comments on the status of women, and he reasons that women must be emancipated under any true anarchist project because anarchist virtues—such as liberty and solidarity—mean nothing if half of the human race is still enslaved under the rule of men (143).

Kropotkin has a unique view of and unique solution to the “woman question.” He takes up the question of the equality of women while many of his anarchist counterparts, like

Proudhon,¹⁰ were heavily involved in retaining the subservience of women. Kropotkin points out:

Why has woman's work never been of any account? Why in every family are the mother and three or four servants obliged to spend so much time at what pertains to cooking? Because those who want to emancipate mankind have not included woman in their dream of emancipation, and consider it beneath their superior masculine dignity to think 'of those kitchen arrangements', which they have put on the shoulders of that drudge—woman." (143)

He goes on to contend that "To emancipate woman, is not only to open the gates of the university, the law courts, or the parliaments to her, for the 'emancipated' woman will always throw domestic toil on to another woman" (Kropotkin 143-144). Here, Kropotkin explains that even women are not innocent of creating hierarchical power structures when it is to their advantage. A contemporary example of this hypothesis is third-world domestic workers and the way first-world women use their cheap labor in tasks such as housekeeping and childcare. For Kropotkin, emancipation is not simply an issue of women's subjugation, but rather an intersection of sex/gender and poverty. Thus, allowing women opportunities open to men still does not free all women, but only those who have the ability or intellect to take advantage of such opportunities. He furthers his argument by adding, "[t]o emancipate woman is to free her from the brutalizing toil of kitchen and washhouse; it is to organize your household in such a way as to enable her to rear her children, if she be so minded, while still retaining sufficient leisure to take her share of social life" (Kropotkin 143-144). Kropotkin insists that opening

¹⁰ Proudhon (1809-1865) is often referred to as the first self-described anarchist. Proudhon was a French politician and was an influential figure in early anarchist thought. I have decided not to include him here because of his anti-woman sentiments and the fact that the classical anarchists discussed herein cover many of his approaches to anarchist thought.

avenues of opportunity for women is not enough; only when the entire social organization chaining women to the house and the rearing of children has been radically altered can women hope to achieve any semblance of life outside of the private sphere. Furthermore, Kropotkin admits that not all women want to have and rear children, and that it should be up to the woman “if she be so minded” to engage in reproductive activities. Finally, he argues that any anarchist philosophy needs to take into account women because “a revolution, intoxicated with the beautiful words, Liberty, Equality, Solidarity, would not be a revolution if it maintained slavery at home. Half humanity subjected to the slavery of the hearth would still have to rebel against the other half” (Kropotkin 144). Interestingly, Kropotkin’s emancipation of women relies heavily on technology, and, if read in a certain light, Kropotkin seems to be saying that women should be emancipated so that they do not later have their own feminist revolution, thus disrupting the anarchist movement with a feminist revolution. Kropotkin is not clear as to why this would necessarily sidetrack an anarchist revolution. In other words, one can interpret Kropotkin’s statements for the emancipation of women as self-interested (for practical reasons, not ideologically feminist reasons): it is insurance against a later women’s revolution against an anarchist organizational structure. Strategically, this is an especially smart move on Kropotkin’s part, but it does leave questions as to his sincerity regarding the “woman question.”

While Kropotkin devotes several pages to questions of equality between the sexes, Mikhail Bakunin, Russian radical and leader of the International Working Men’s Association, integrates equalizing measures for many differences throughout his writings. More than simply advocating the emancipation of women, Bakunin’s brand of anarchism actually provides for and includes women and their reproductive choices in his charter for a new anarchist society. In his “Principles and Organization of the International Brotherhood,” Bakunin makes a point to be

clear that the charter's edicts apply to both men *and women*. Bakunin outlines the precepts of a working social organization to grow out of the International through his theory of anarchism, a theory popular in both Europe and the United States at the time.¹¹ His "Principles and Organization" outlines the aims of the society, including the rights of children, the structure of labor and schooling, and the duties expected of society members.

Undoubtedly, Bakunin's embrace of multifariousness marks him as one of the most radical men of his time. He asserts in his document that "[e]quality does not mean the levelling down of individual differences, nor intellectual, moral and physical uniformity among individuals. This diversity of ability and strength, and these differences of race, nation, sex, age and character, far from being a social evil, constitute the treasure-house of mankind" (76). As a foundation to his organizing principles, Bakunin recognizes that diversity is not a hindrance to society; rather, the more diversity within a society, the more valuable it becomes. Furthermore, he indicates that equality is not achieved by robbing others to get ahead when he states: "Nor do economic and social equality mean the levelling down of individual fortunes, in so far as these are products of the ability, productive energy and thrift of an individual" (Bakunin 76). Unlike his contemporary, the communist Karl Marx, Bakunin's ideal society does not take from the rich to give to the poor. Bakunin advocates for success as long as it is based upon the ideals of a meritocracy, not nepotism or aristocracy. These assertions are almost startling for a man writing and thinking at the time of the industrial revolution, a man whose thoughts are more radical than many of his feminist (anarchist or otherwise) contemporaries. Many radicals saw inequality in

¹¹ The First International (Working Men's Association) was a movement founded in London in 1864 of working-class men out of which both anarchism and Marxism were born. For more on the First International and Bakunin, Kropotkin's and Marx's role in it, please see Schmidt and Van der Walt's section "Starting Again: Socialism, Bakunin, and the First International" in *Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism* (2009).

the public sphere in terms of socio-economic inequality between men, but it is rare to find a radical of this time who so outwardly proclaimed such an equalizing platform between the sexes. Furthermore, many first-wave feminists participated in morality enforcement among women in order to seem less threatening while trying to gain suffrage. Bakunin does not simply tolerate difference but welcomes it as strength and boon to societal organization.

In line with his valuation of difference, Bakunin sets aside a separate line of the declaration simply to make sure a reader looking to participate in his new society has no doubts about his beliefs in universal suffrage. Bakunin writes that there will be “*[a]bolition of class, rank, privilege and distinction in all its forms. Complete equality of political rights for all men and all women; universal suffrage*” (66; italics in original). There is no question concerning Bakunin’s allegiance to equality across the sex/gender divide. He unreservedly supports difference and equality, and even later in the declaration he asserts that no woman shall have to rear a child if she is not so inclined. Additionally, he dissolves the legal institution of marriage in favor of temporal relations for the purpose of raising families if individuals so desire. As a final note, although Bakunin values difference, he leaves out any difference concerning sexuality. Although he does not advocate for marriage (he makes it clear that temporary unions are perfectly valid), there is no mention of any relations beyond normative heterosexuality.

It is clear that precursors to anarcha-feminist thought can be found in the writings of Godwin, Kropotkin, and Bakunin. From laying the groundwork for a feminist fight for equality to identifying women’s enslavement to making way for women as full citizens in a new anarchist society, each theorist contributes to the makings of a theory of anarcha-feminism. While Godwin did not overtly voice support for the emancipation of women, the articulation of an artificial and illegitimate state-regulated morality benefits anarcha-feminist thought in that it denaturalizes

normative behaviors in favor of behaviors that help to achieve equality and equal opportunity. Moreover, Kropotkin and Bakunin comment directly on that state of women as second-class citizens. Kropotkin constructs a carefully nuanced observation that women's emancipation needs to start with radical social organization, rather than simply allowing women into previously men's-only institutions; consequently, Bakunin actually constructs that radical social organization to which Kropotkin's theory gestures, thus creating a space valuing difference and equality. Although all three classical anarchists gesture toward an anarcha-feminist philosophy, it is the anarcha-feminists, like Voltairine de Cleyre and Emma Goldman, who delve deeply into the social issues affecting the women of their time. Gender and sexuality are at the core of de Cleyre and Goldman's organizing principles.

Classical Anarcha-Feminisms

Although there were many women and men who advocated for women's emancipation both within the general public and within anarchist circles, the two activists and theorists who stand out today for their radical stances are Voltairine de Cleyre and Emma Goldman. Unlike other anarchist thinkers or women of the time, these women lived anarchist ideals and had active lives in the public sphere. Both wrote and toured the United States giving speeches on anarchism; however, they lived very different lives, although they crossed paths with their strong commitment as anarchists to "the woman question."

I define anarcha-feminism as a subsection of both anarchist and feminist thought that gives rise to feminist inquiry of the anarchist movement or anarchist inquiry of the feminist movement. Although throughout this project I refer to many different types of feminism (anarcha-feminism, first and second-wave feminism, post-feminism, and PAF), I define feminism in a broad sense as a method of inquiry or set of values that places importance on the

equality of a range of sexes, genders, and sexualities. Many classic anarcha-feminists, such as Voltairine de Cleyre and Emma Goldman, investigated the interaction of sex, gender, and sexuality in regards to the state and religious institutions. They also commented on the sexism that existed within the anarchist movement as well as the limitations and ethical quandaries of the feminist movement's attempts to infiltrate the government. This is supported by Sharon Presley, a Voltairine de Cleyre scholar and editor of the introduction to the de Cleyre anthology *Exquisite Rebel: The Essays of Voltairine de Cleyre—Anarchist, Feminist, Genius*. Presley explains that “Voltairine and the anarchist feminists did not just question the unfair nature of marriage laws of that time, they repudiated institutional marriage and the conventional family structure, seeing in these institutions the same authoritarian oppression as they saw in the institution of the State” (192). While many anarchists looked for revolution in the public sphere, in both business and government, anarcha-feminists looked toward practices at home. These practices often involved issues of sex, sexuality, and gender, especially when it came to institutions such as marriage, childhood education, and child-rearing.

Voltairine de Cleyre and Emma Goldman show similar veins of thought when it comes to economic emancipation and the institution of marriage. While de Cleyre writes of women's emancipation coming through the availability of economic opportunity (i.e. the only way for a woman not to be beholden to a man), Goldman asserts that a paradigm shift in the consciousness of the society at large is the only catalyst for economic equality. Both de Cleyre and Goldman agree that marriage is an institution that subordinates women by making them dependent. For de Cleyre, marriage is an institution that restricts the growth of the individual, whether man or woman. For Goldman, it is an excuse for forced reproduction that restricts the happiness of both mother and children. Each agrees, however, that both women and children would be best served

living without the institution of marriage. Although both de Cleyre and Goldman are comparative in terms of women's economic freedom and marriage, Goldman is advanced compared to her peers when she writes about homosexuality.

In the memoir *Living My Life*, Goldman briefly details lecturing on the topic of homosexuality and the people she met after the lecture. Goldman relates that even fellow anarchists disapproved of her lectures about homosexuality, considering the topic “unnatural,” and not wanting to “add to the misconceptions [of anarchism] by taking up perverted sex-forms” (556). She describes how she was not deterred by her “censors” and goes on to depict a woman's intimations after one such lecture. The woman could not face marriage, and thought herself ill until she heard Goldman's lecture. Goldman explains in her autobiography that the woman, “had never met anyone, she told me, who suffered from a similar affliction, nor had she ever read books dealing with the subject. My lecture had set her free; I had given her back her self-respect” (556). The lack of public discourse surrounding homosexuality, especially lesbianism in the early 20th Century had left women like the one Goldman talks about here bereft of any guidance.

Goldman offers:

This woman was only one of the many who sought me out. Their pitiful stories made the social ostracism of the invert seem more dreadful than I had ever realized before. To me anarchism was not a mere theory for a distant future; it was a living influence to free us from inhibitions, internal no less than external, and from the destructive barriers that separate man from man. (556)

For Goldman, sanctions against different sexualities are just as socially constructed as institutions such as marriage. For her, anarchism has a duty to break down these artificial barriers that prevent liberty and solidarity.

Goldman continues to argue against the imposition of heteronormativity¹² in a letter concerning French anarcho-feminist Louise Michel. Louise Michel was a staunch anarcho-feminist and school teacher who became politically active and fought in the National Guard during the Paris Commune (1871). She became a notable rebel and political figure, and was later exiled to New Caledonia, a chain of islands of the coast of Australia.¹³ In this letter, Emma Goldman refutes Herr von Levetzow's assertion that Louise Michel was a lesbian and argues Michel's identity is irrelevant to her qualifications. Goldman argues that Michel's sexual habits in no way demean or diminish her social works. In fact, Goldman outlines that homosexuality is actually quite prevalent and is in no way abnormal or found among unintelligent peoples. She states that von Levetzow's view of women is antiquated, and, because he could not fit Louise Michel into the stereotypical box of mother and sex mate, that she was somehow deficient as a person. Goldman concludes by reiterating that Michel was an extraordinary person and was a complete woman. Michel was the vision of the new woman because she was free from the prejudices and traditions that "held women in chains and degraded them to household slaves and objects of sexual lust" (Goldman 114).

Goldman's commentary concerning sexuality undoubtedly sets her apart from any other notable anarchist of her time. Not only did Goldman lecture on homosexuality, but she defended her topical choice against other anarchist's views that free discussion of homosexuality should be censored because it represented anarchists in a bad light. Regardless, Goldman contended that

¹² What I mean by heteronormativity is the prevailing attitude that heterosexuality (or intimate and sexual relations between peoples of different genders and sexes) is natural as well as morally, ethically, and religiously correct. Heteronormativity enforces strict codes of gender/sex binaries and heterosexuality.

¹³ For more about Louise Michel, please see the anthology *Louise Michel* (2004, Ocean Press).

resistance to non-normative sexualities is a barrier preventing solidarity—an important precept to anarchism.

Anarchism and First and Second-Wave Feminisms

Anarchist thought was, and still is, important to feminist thought. PAF builds upon a rich tradition of the coupling of anarchist and feminist thought. Although it is tempting to idealize and stereotype first-wave feminists in the United States and Britain, the movement for women's rights and emancipation was quite diverse. According to Shelia Rowbotham, "The potpourri of rebels and reformers dreaming of a new day did not comprise a cohesive group or even a 'tendency'. Their revolt arose from disparate sources: they were driven by fear of moral and social disintegration, by anger against injustice, by visions of utopia and by a resolve to improve everyday living and relating" (3). Moreover, the participants of the movement had different foci: "Some aspired to alter existing culture, others to transform the world; some wished to regulate and improve, others to release and liberate" (Rowbotham 3). These women came from what Rowbotham defines as "opposing political cultures"; almost all participants in the movement hailed from multifarious socio-political origins such as "free thinkers, anarchists, socialists, feminists, communists, moral and social reformers, liberals, progressives, labour movement women, bohemians, sexual radicals or eugenic enthusiasts" (3). Even among the anarcho-feminists, there was debate as to the best course of action for emancipation and equality within the public and private spheres. While some first-wave feminists, such as Voltairine de Cleyre advocated for individualism, others looked to collectivism as the solution. This distinction between individualism and collectivism, which appeared in feminist inquiry as identity politics, was a divisive issue between radical first-wave feminists. This continues to be seen in PAF in terms of the questioning of a gynocentric identity politics.

Second-wave feminism had less interaction with anarchism in name. While it can certainly be argued that the radicalism of second-wave feminism parallels some of the projects of anarchism, anarchist thought was not as popular during second-wave feminism as it was during first-wave feminism. Anarchism experienced a lag in growth and development between the Second World War and the mid 1970s in much of the United States and Europe. Anarchism began experiencing a healthy resurgence with what appeared to be late capitalism in the 1980s, and out of this resurgence came postmodernism and the formulations of postmodern anarchist theory. Todd May's *The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism* (1994), Hakim Bey's "Post-Anarchism Anarchy" (1987), and works by Murray Bookchin and Noam Chomsky all contributed to the resurgences of a political and philosophical interest in anarchism; however, a vibrant and renewed interest in the intersection of feminism and anarchism did not follow in the same time period.

Hailed by many as a second-wave anarchy-feminism manifesto, Valerie Solanas' *SCUM Manifesto* can be interpreted two very different ways. Either her text is a serious account of a radical "feminist" backlash against patriarchy, or it is a satiric reversal of patriarchy taken to its logical conclusions. In the latter reading, her pronouncements against men ironically mirror the arguments made about women for centuries. Although these two very different readings are both valid interpretations, Solanas' radical second-wave "feminist" text, the *SCUM Manifesto*, is held up by critics of feminism as evidence that feminists are inherently evil and up to no good.

In the *SCUM* (Society for Cutting Up Men) *Manifesto*, Solanas both deconstructs heteropatriarchal hegemonic power structures¹⁴ and offers a solution to the problems it has

¹⁴ I use the term hetero-patriarchal hegemonic power structures to refer to the interplay that occurs between the expectations that heterosexuality is the normal and only acceptable sexuality for humans; the institution of patriarchy, which seeks to keep men in positions of authority and

caused. For example, Solanas shifts the paradigm that Simone de Beauvoir depicts in *The Second Sex*. In her work, de Beauvoir explains that “History has shown that men have always held all the concrete powers; from patriarchy’s earliest times they have deemed it useful to keep woman in a state of dependence; their codes were set up against her; she was thus concretely established as the Other” (159). For de Beauvoir, men are seen as human while women are seen as something other than human. Solanas takes this dichotomy and reverses it in the *SCUM Manifesto* when she argues that men are psychotic, weak beings who have no right to control, or, for many, the right to exist. Solanas recommends a genuine social revolution of love between females where males and “natural” reproduction are eliminated; moreover, she finally suggests in a nihilistic turn, eventually the human race will cease to exist as well.

It should be noted that I do not consider Solanas’ text a feminist text. I do, however, consider it an anarchist text because the function of her critique is to break down boundaries, and some elements of her critique involve identifying oppressive power relations from both the state and from patriarchy. In a very satiric interpretation of her *Manifesto*, an argument could be made that it embodies a multitude of frustrations and proposed solutions championed by second-wave feminists, but the end result of Solanas’ critique would be the inequality of the genders and the possible annihilation of the human race. This is not in the cards for either an anarchist or feminist, as both rest on the belief in equality and the successful, healthy continuance of humanity.

There are many diverse and moving parts comprising this project. Butler’s and Atwood’s texts are particularly suited to the development of PAF because of their unique situation as both

marginalize women; hegemony, which is the theory of indirect influence or authority over others; and power structures, which are the relations that facilitate the function of power. All of these work together to form a network of direct and indirect power that influences the way we view gender, sex, sexuality, and the social and governmental institutions that regulate them.

SF and postapocalyptic texts dealing with issues of sex, gender, and sexuality. Classical anarchism, anarchy-feminism, and radical feminism are precursors that provide historical and theoretical context for PAF. The review of these aspects allow me to explore the ways in which PAF bridges the gap between the public and private, the site of the intersection of gender, sex, and sexuality, and investigate the power structures PAF may address.

CHAPTER II

POST-ANARCHIST FEMINISM DEFINED

As we will come to see, post-anarchist feminism (PAF) is a philosophical theory that questions the interplay of gender, sex, and sexuality in regards to the construction of identity and subjectivity. Because texts are constructions, or representations of constructions, PAF primarily recognizes these constructions as stable points of inquiry that could allow subversion or diversion in an interest of overcoming or competing with dominant power structures. I use Butler's *Xenogenesis* trilogy and Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy as cultural artifacts and proof texts against which I will build a theory of PAF. Before I can work with these texts, however, I need to review the contemporary literature and theory that allows me to build a theory of PAF. Beginning with socialist feminism and post-feminism, I argue that PAF is different, mainly in that it does not adhere to a stable identity politics as a means for social revolution. A discussion of postanarchism and queer anarchism provides foundations for PAF as well as insight into socio-governmental constructions of subjectivity perpetrated by anarchist theory itself. Using the *cyborg* and the *dildo* as examples, I give an overview of a few metaphors of subversion and inversion that could be helpful in thinking about PAF. Finally, I articulate some specific questions of use to investigating the theory of PAF against SF literature that emerge as a result of its theoretical underpinnings.

Socialist Feminism

In "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism," Heidi Hartmann analyzes the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy. Hartmann argues that the same focus socialists place on destabilizing capitalistic relations should be placed on patriarchy if women ever have a

hope of achieving gender equality. Men have a stake in the preservation of patriarchy, Hartmann explains; therefore, it is up to women to liberate themselves from both patriarchy and capitalism. Interestingly, Hartmann contends that patriarchy does not require a society structured by capitalism, although the two reinforce the same agenda of hierarchy;¹⁵ rather, patriarchy can exist under multiple other economic systems, like Marxism. She also argues that feminist revolutionaries need to consider the fact that “While men have long struggled *against* capital, women know what to struggle *for*. As a general rule, men’s position in patriarchy and capitalism prevents them from recognizing both human needs for nurturance, sharing, and growth, and the potential for meeting those needs in a nonhierarchical, nonpatriarchal society” (222). Hartmann’s essentialist argument concerning identity politics concludes that only women are able to understand the plight of women; it is only through a gynocentric revolution¹⁶ that women can hope to achieve equality. Moreover, Hartmann contends “[E]ven if we raise their consciousness, men might assess the potential gains against the potential losses and choose the status quo. Men have more to lose than their chains” (222). In short, Hartmann believes that socialist feminists should not rely on men or on the socialist movement to take their interests into consideration. It is the socialist feminist position, according to Hartmann, to fight not only against capitalism, but also to struggle against patriarchy (222).

¹⁵ By this, I mean that capitalism thrives on a hierarchy of class fueled by monetary or capital gain whereas patriarchy flourishes by a hierarchy of gender and sexuality. Together, the two reinforce a hierarchical model where heterosexual men are at the top of both hierarchies. Of course, other factors such as race, ethnicity, and religion play into these hierarchies when viewed with other theoretical models.

¹⁶ A gynocentric revolution is one that places women or a feminist point of view at the center. While men may be a part of a gynocentric revolution, many who ascribe to identity politics argue that any feminist revolution should be exclusively carried out by females.

While Hartmann's analysis is certainly acute, she assumes the solution to current injustices rests with identity politics.¹⁷ Her argument precludes that fact that there exist ethical men who have more of an interest in seeing women achieve equality than they do in preserving the status quo. Because Hartmann's argument views men and women in essentialist terms broken down by sex, she is also guilty of sexism against men, portraying them as unethical and sexist individuals out to dominate (either explicitly or implicitly) all women. She assumes that women are more ethical and nurturing when it comes to revolution, which is also a stereotypical view of women. While it may seem counterintuitive, many self-proclaimed revolutionaries have fought to preserve the status quo when it comes to gender relations. At the same time, other "revolutionaries" inadvertently preserve the status quo simply by not thinking critically about issues related to gender. Both instances are true of female and male revolutionaries. Moreover, it is inappropriate to prescribe that the only solution is for women to join in their own collective interests and create their own equality when it comes to revolution because many women could benefit from the preservation of the status quo. Hartmann does not acknowledge the fact that she is advocating for an identity politics that asks women to construct an identity around an ethically questionable subject position, a subject position that positions women in a binary paradigm against men, which is grounded in sex rather than beliefs, values, or actions. PAF questions the

¹⁷ I define identity politics as a collective struggle (usually for equality) based upon a primary facet of an individual's identity. Here, Hartmann uses identity politics to argue that only women are able to understand and look out for the best interests of women simply because they are women. This also assumes that all women have had similar experiences throughout life, other than just possessing similar body parts, and these experiences somehow make women more adept at understanding the struggles of other women.

use of identity politics in this manner, especially when we inquire about who would benefit from such an identity politics, and who would be left out of this revolutionary circle.¹⁸

Post-Feminism

The term “post-feminism” first appeared in the media in the late 20th century among a storm of capitalism. Post-feminism, authors declared, meant that the work of feminism was finished, but whether or not feminism achieved its goals or not was unclear. At the same time post feminism ravaged popular culture’s notions of women “having it all,” or at least pinning the problems of “having it all” on second wave feminism, a third wave was emerging, especially in academia. Although emerging at the same time, post feminism and third wave feminism are very different.

Post-feminism is a term first appearing in the media in the 1980s that connotes that the work of feminism is done (Aronson 904, Hall and Rodriguez 878, Holmlund 116). In their book *Interrogating Post-Feminism: Gender and the Politics of Popular Culture*, Yvonne Tasker and Diane Negra define and look at the construction of post-feminist rhetoric. They write, “Post-feminism broadly encompasses a set of assumptions, widely disseminated within popular media forms, have to do with the ‘pastness’ of feminism, whether that supposed pastness is merely noted, mourned, or celebrated” (1). Thus, as a construction of the media, post-feminism is the portrayal of a culture, which is created through consumption, individuality, and the illusion of choice. These ideas of consumerism are connected to capitalism, which also states that

¹⁸ For example, those usually left out, of revolutions, or those who are asked to take a back seat tend to be minorities, members of the LGBTQIA community, and people with disabilities, just to name a few. Here, I have chosen the acronym “LGBTQIA” to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, question, intersex, and androgenous individuals, although a January 2013 *New York Times* article titled “Generation LGBTQIA” by Michale Schulman may be of particular interest to those curious about the history, development, and current usage of the lengthy acronym.

individuality is created through the consumption of goods and services: individuals are not people; rather, individuality rests in the capacity of the individual to be a “good” consumer. Although the consumer is only able to choose a certain range of goods and services through which to create her individuality, she is confronted with the illusion of choice. While she is able to choose between shoe styles X, Y, and Z, the choice is a definitive reflection of her individuality fueled by consumption.

Furthermore, this disconnect between person and consumer caused by the desire for individuality through consumption serves to increase consumption, thus fueling a capitalist economics. Tasker and Negra explain that “[p]ost-feminist culture’s centralization of an affluent elite certainly entails an emphatic individualism, but this formation tends to confuse self-interest with individuality and elevates consumption as a strategy for healing those dissatisfactions that might alternatively be understood in terms of social ills and discontents” (2). When individuals, particularly women in the case of post-feminism, confuse self-interest with individuality, the socially acceptable solution is to consume more goods and services rather than to look at the situation and attempt healing through other means. For example, it is socially acceptable for an unhappy woman to go shopping or have an expensive spa day (i.e. “retail therapy”) to make herself “feel better,” but it is less socially acceptable for her to turn to non-consumptive solutions, like prayer, meditation, or psychological counseling. But this solution is only temporary according to the rhetoric of post-feminism: because she never understands her unhappiness in the first place, a woman’s unhappiness is only temporarily allayed by these shopping trips; when the unhappiness returns, she will again follow the route of being a good consumer by staving off her unhappiness with the consumptive act of retail therapy.

But it is also because post-feminism is centered on an “affluent elite” that consumption, camouflaged as choice, becomes a strategy through which one proves her individuality and femininity. Interestingly, post-feminism cannibalizes parts of feminism, but through a rhetoric of consumption and commodification: “Post-feminist culture works in part to incorporate, assume, or naturalize aspects of feminism; crucially, it also works to commodify feminism via the figure of the woman as an empowered consumer” (Tasker and Negra 2). The implication here is that women are only as real as what they are able to purchase. Femininity is constructed through items like clothing and jewelry; the nurturance associated with the feminine is shown with gifts and services to others. This is identity politics, but fueled through the consumption of goods and services: a woman is only a real woman if she dresses or presents herself (with purchased and self-selected items) in a particular way. A popular example of this is the representation of femininity with the high-heeled shoe. The high-heeled shoe is often seen as a gateway to womanhood—a girl can only have this type of shoe once she is “old enough.” Moreover, the type and height of the heel is indicative of the woman’s identity. A low heel (such as pump) reveals a working woman or an older woman, a high heel shows a feminine and classy woman, and an extremely high heel with a platform is usually indicative of a sexually promiscuous woman. Thus a woman’s identity is tied up with the type of footwear she decides to purchase, not what she believes or what she values.¹⁹

¹⁹ In her 1996 *New Statesman* article “Sex and the Stiletto,” Suzanne Moore expresses similar sentiments about the identity of women wrapped up in the type of shoe they choose to wear. She writes of Manolo Blahnik shoes: “Madonna says they are better than sex and Suzy Menkes marvels at the way no one but Manolo can build so much sexual arousal into a sliver of suede. You wear Manolos like a man might carry a loaded gun, says the *Vogue* journalist Julia Reed. These are sex shoes, limousine shoes, power shoes—‘They are gestures, stories, full of possibility.’” Later in the article, she asserts that “The dream life of women is inscribed in their shoes. I still remember certain shoes I once wore in far greater detail than men I once wore out. Blahnik’s sculptural objects speak of another life from the one that most of us know, a life in

I argue that post-feminism is simply the maintenance of the construction of patriarchal femininity through capitalism. Since feminism has attempted to question both the constructions of the feminine woman (or female), and with it the patriarchal interaction of capitalism and gender inequality that also takes aim as commodification and classism, this competing construct of post-feminism is in direct competition with feminism. Regardless, both socialist feminism and post-feminism are class-based constructed subjectivities centered on an identity politics that confer a fixed or stable identity, which is problematic because it does not account for the flexibility needed for genuine resistance and change. PAF questions the construction of these identities, how they were constructed, and for what purpose.

Pre-Cursors to PAF: Post-anarchism and Queer Anarchism

Both post-anarchism and queer anarchism are relatively new to the study of radical anarchism. Following the *nouvel anarchism* of 1968 in France, post-structuralist theory emerged as another way to understand political philosophy, but parts of post-structuralist theory was not necessarily new. As Nathan Jun argues in “Reconsidering Post-Structuralism and Anarchism,” post-structuralism is an anarchism, “one that consciously or unconsciously borrows several key ideas from ‘classical anarchism’ and proceeds to reaffirm, elaborate and ultimately ‘improve’ these ideas” (231). Jun also argues that even though post-structuralism owes some of its key ideas to classical anarchism, we can also “view post-structuralist ideas as potential ingredients for the development of new anarchist recipes” (231). This is of particular interest to the development of PAF because, while it is based upon many of the key ideas of post-structuralism,

which walking is a tiny and challenging interruption to a whirl of lunches and taxis and Martinis and openings.”

postmodern anarchism, anarchism, and feminism, post-structuralism has the potential to integrate and expand upon these theories into uncharted philosophical and theoretical territory.

One of the most important texts in the development of PAF is Lewis Call's 2002 work *Postmodern Anarchism*. In this landmark text, Call outlines a theory of postmodern anarchism, going beyond Todd May's 1994 book *The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism* in that Call explains the implications of the idea that power is productive (instead of always repressive). Productive power is important because it provides multiple avenues for resistance: anywhere power resides, resistance is also possible.

By rejecting classical anarchism's top-down conceptualization of power, postmodern anarchism examines Foucault's idea of "capillaries of power" as a more advanced version of power.²⁰ Call explains that a Foucauldian concept of power recognizes the flaws of classical anarchism in that it is focused on the visible aspects of power rather than in the recognition that power relations exist more extensively (79). Call employs Foucault's concept that power runs through capillaries, and that terminal forms of power are only the endpoints of power networks in his multiple works. Therefore, Call argues, the actual project of the postmodern anarchist is to support a conceptualization of power that likens these relations to capillaries in the body rather than support a conceptualization of power that shows power being held in the hands of the capitalists or the state (79).

Beyond this idea of productive power, Call also introduces two important concepts related to subjectivity he borrows from Nietzschean philosophy. The first is the idea of an

²⁰ More about Foucault's conceptualization of power can be found in *The History of Sexuality: Volume I An Introduction* in Part Four, Chapter Two. Foucault writes that "[t]he omnipresence of power: not because it has the privilege of consolidating everything under its invincible unity, but because it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another. Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (93).

anarchy of the subject. According to Call, *anarchy of the subject* can be described in terms of the postmodern subject who is and “must remain multiple, dispersed, and schizophrenic” (22). Call asserts that “This *anarchy of the subject* encourages the preservation and cultivation of difference and Otherness within the postmodern project” (Italics in original, 22). Due to the fact that the *anarchy of subject* creates “multiple strands of subjectivity within a single ‘person,’ this anarchy of the subject precludes the possibility of a totalitarian subjectivity” (Call 22). The second important concept is *anarchy of becoming*. Call states, “A postmodern anarchist in the Nietzschean mode must engage in a perpetual project of self-overcoming. By constantly rereadicalizing the subject, by constantly immersing the ‘self’ in the river of becoming, the Nietzschean anarchist evades the possibility that her subjectivity will recrystallize in a totalizing fashion” (22). Therefore, it is the *anarchy of becoming* that makes the *anarchy of the subject* a possibility. By engaging in the perpetual overcoming of the self, one is always to remain “multiple, dispersed, and schizophrenic,” thereby truly living out the project of postmodernism and anarchism in that difference is preserved and, as Call explains, “totalitarian subjectivity” is thwarted due to its inherently anti-humanist stance.²¹ This *anarchy of the subject* through an *anarchy of becoming* is integral to a project of post-anarchism, postmodernism, and feminism because it shows us another path of resistance and revolution not grounded in identity politics.

As Call points out, postmodern feminism and post-anarchism are invested in similar projects. Call writes that both feminism and post-anarchism are “concerned with articulating

²¹ By totalitarian subjectivity, I mean the micro-fascism that develops on an individual level to enable state fascism to overtake a political structure. As Calls describes this totalitarian subjectivity when he explains how it functions: “At the microscopic level, fascism is able to divert many of the supposedly liberating streams of personal becoming, sucking them down into the seemingly irresistible gravity-well of an ethical-political black hole” (52). An *anarchy of becoming* is the antidote to a static, non-flexible totalitarian subjectivity, which is also the basis of identity politics.

strategies for the subversion of the Law as a psychological, linguistic, and epistemological category. Such strategies appear to require the rejection of any fixed or static concept of human subjectivity and the simultaneous deployment of fluid, flexible postmodern subjectivities” (5). This shows us that PAF cannot have an identity politics because identity politics requires a definition of the represented subjectivity (i.e. women, gay men, etc.), thus creating a static and inflexible subjectivity prone to micro-fascism. Therefore, PAF would need to enact a theoretical approach to subjectivity similar to Call’s *anarchy of the subject*. This is important because the only manner in which boundaries and barriers of sex, gender, and sexuality are able to be inverted and subverted are through the fluidity and multiplicity of the subject.

Like postmodern anarchism, queer anarchism is an important precursor of PAF. Until the Gay Liberation movement in the second half of the twentieth century, even radical anarchists were averse to issues of sexuality. While many, including Voltairine de Cleyre, Lucy Parsons, Louise Michel, and Mother Jones, were vocal about the rights of women, safe sex (including prophalactics), birth control, and other social issues stemming from sexuality, few approached the actual act of sex as a topic for radical action. In one of the only instances of forthright acknowledgement of homosexuality, Emma Goldman in her autobiography describes lecturing on the subject and the political implications within the anarchist movement.²² Although Goldman was certainly ahead of her time, particularly concerning sexuality, it is not surprising that an anarchist philosophy would later engage with questions of sex, gender, and sexuality. Especially after the explosion of third-wave feminism in response to postmodernism, these identity-based politics have risen to the forefront of many philosophical and theoretical areas of study.

²² For a further description and analysis of this anecdote, please see the section concerning Emma Goldman under the section heading of “Classical Anarcha-Feminisms” in the Introduction of this text.

Queer anarchism is a branch of contemporary anarchist thought dealing with the often ignored aspects of sex, gender, and sexuality. Theorists in this field investigate how these differences are informed by anarchist thought as well as serve as a regulator for the anarchist movement itself. Much like Emma Goldman's refusal to obey her anarchist "censors," queer anarchism demands differences integral to identity (and thus to postmodern subjectivity) be thrust in the forefront of contemporary anarchist theory and practice, lest they be ignored. Although a fairly recent theoretical field, queer anarchism (as a field) has become more prevalent in the past decade or so. Authors who I discuss in the following pages, such as Jamie Heckert, Laura Portwood-Stacer, Breanne Fahs, and others, have wrestled with the connections between sexuality, anarchism, and power.

Jamie Heckert, in "Sexuality as a State Form," explores the intersection between queer anarchism and poststructuralist articulations of power and biopolitics. He establishes the connections between sexuality and institutions when he writes. "I've come to see orientation less as a compass point where everyone has their own magnetic North and more in the sense used by institutions to orient new students or workers to a particular way of being. Orientation is not a truth, it is a process" (Heckert 203). Rather than thinking of sexuality and sexual orientation as having a default setting (to heterosexual monogamy, for example, which contemporary Western morality sees as the correct or natural default of sexual relations), Heckert's queer anarchism views sexuality as a becoming; one has to grow into the own individual sexuality, which may be similar or completely different than the normative sexuality in a culture. Heckert explains:

Sexual orientation can be understood as a set of state forms in that a wide variety of practices (including sexual, romantic and gendered) are defined and judged in terms of their capacity to be categorized within, or association with, one of three boxes. Nomadic

sexualities are rendered incomprehensible, deviant, dangerous. The maintenance of sexual orientation as a comprehensible social category, in the face of much greater sexual diversity, is linked to the state apparatus through a wide variety of mechanisms. Obvious examples include marriage, sex education and clearly discriminatory laws. Other prime examples are found in sexual-orientation-identity rights movements. (203)

In other words, Heckert explains that the state regulates the morality of sexual relations via his connection of institutions like marriage and laws that regulate specific constructions, such as heterosexual monogamy.²³ Here, Heckert explains that the state regulates sexuality, and, indeed, that the state apparatus creates categories of sexuality in order to regulate sexual acts. Nomadic sexualities (an allusion to Deleuze and Guattari's theoretical nomad) are similar to Call's *anarchy of the subject* through an *anarchy of becoming*.²⁴ This is significant because queer anarchism aligns with the postmodern anarchist conceptualization of subjectivity. A sexual nomad must be "multiple, dispersed, and schizophrenic" in that such an individual's sexual choices or sexual identities defy categorization, thus subverting barriers of normative sexual practices (Call 22). The idea of the sexual nomad is helpful when exploring the purpose and construction of a sexual anarchonormativity as well as other subversive sexual practices, such as

²³ This is similar to Godwin's argument that children are molded into their socio-economic position that underpins the authority of the hierarchy and violates individual liberty, an argument I discussed in the Introduction under the section "Classical Anarchisms." This is important to note because the critique that institutions regulate morality is present in the earliest strains of anarchist thought, and these critiques carry on to contemporary offshoots of classical anarchism.

²⁴ Rosi Braidotti has a particularly useful conceptualization of a nomadic body: "A nomadic vision of the body defines it as multifunctional and complex, as a transformer of flows and energies, affects, desires, and imaginings" (25). Thus, a nomadic sexuality would be one that is never static; rather, it, too is multifunctional, complex, and pays acute attention to desire. In Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, they conceptualize the ability of a nomad, especially a sexual nomad, to remain in a state of flux, capable of rhizomatic becoming. Braidotti's above definition comes from Deleuze and Guattari's dense philosophical text, and her definition is sufficient for my argument because it supplies us with the idea that a nomadic sexuality goes beyond a stable or fixed sexual identity or orientation.

asexuality, because the sexual nomad is not restricted to any particular set of sexualities;²⁵ rather, thinking about the sexual nomad enables us to think about how to employ an *anarchy of the subject* in an array of issues concerning sex, gender, and sexuality.

In her article “Constructing Anarchist Sexuality: Queer Identity, Culture, and Politics in the Anarchist Movement,” Laura Portwood-Stacer uses interviews of contemporary North American Anarchists to explore how queer critiques are used within anarchist circles and communities. Her goal is to invest in an authentic identity that resists dominate sexual norms as a strategy for anarchist political projects. From her ethnographic evidence, Portwood-Stacer concludes that there are several pitfalls in attempting to create a queer anarchonormativity. The author also concludes that sexual identity politics, when performed collectively, are a useful tool for fighting against social norms; however, the power used to enforce such a sexuality within anarchist communities needs to be wielded in a way that “maximize[s] those effect[s] that contribute to emancipatory political projects, and minimize those that do not” (Portwood-Stacer 491). Although questioning others’ sexual acts can be beneficial, it can also be problematic when it creates new (normative) forms of repression in the name of solidarity.

While Portwood-Stacer argues for an anarchonormative sexual identity politics that rejects sexual dominant norms in order to enact change, Breanne Fahs argues that asexuality is a practice that aligns with anarchist values that may help dismantle the institution of sex. Fahs connects radical feminist politics and anarchist threads of thought through the practice of

²⁵ I define “anarchonormativity” as the desire to create a normative paradigm within the anarchist movement; however, the term “anarchonormativity” is extremely problematic. Portwood-Stacer argues that anarchonormative sexuality would encompass difference and the subversion of barriers through intimate and sexual acts. It is debatable as to the interaction between the two parts (“anarcho” and “normativity”). Does “anarcho” express a special kind of “normativity?” Does it express the totality of what “anarcho” and “normativity” reveal (i.e. a fusion of both terms to form a new concept)? Do both parts represent different descriptions for the same referent (i.e. a person or a sexual act that is both subversive and normal at the same time)?

asexuality in her article “Radical Refusals: On the Anarchist Politics of Women Choosing Asexuality.” She indicates that asexuality has been a lifestyle and political maneuver for sexual and gender equality that has long been forgotten. She reviews the history of the “sexual liberation” of women during second-wave feminism in order to detail the problems of both sexual repression and sexual “freedom” in a system of state and patriarchal control. Fahs argues that sexually liberated women are still participating in a system of repression when engaging in acts with multiple partners and sex without consequences because women are expected to be sexual. This expectation strips women of the agency to decide their own sexual wants and needs. Fahs argues that asexuality may be helpful in a quest “to dismantle the entire institution of sex” (451). By refusing to participate in any sexual activity, Fahs explains, women are able to rob the institution of its power over bodies and relationships.²⁶ A theory of PAF, although interested in the value of resistance asexuality has to offer, would not necessarily embrace asexuality over any other sexuality. Such an idealization of one type of sexuality or sexual orientation would expound an illegitimate authority whose prefigurative politics contradict the philosophical underpinnings of such a theory.

Both Portwood-Stacer and Fahs advocate for practices that critique and subvert dominant normative sexual relations. While Portwood-Stacer argues that an established anarchonormativity, which serves to defy sexual norms, is imperative to keep anarchists’ practices in line with their beliefs of breaking down boundaries and barriers, Fahs explains that complete absolution from the system entirely could destroy the system of oppression (the

²⁶ Curiously, Fahs only explores sexual relations with others, and not with self. For example, there is no explicit mention of masturbation. Would an asexual post-anarchist feminist masturbate? On one hand, masturbation renders impossible the creation of a power dynamic between individuals based upon sexual relations; however, masturbation is often based upon pornography and sexual fantasies, which then re-inscribe the power relations inherent in the hetero-patriarchal institutionalism of sexual relations.

institution of sex) that Portwood-Stacer is simply attempting to mutate. Both approaches to sexuality and sexual orientation are problematic for PAF. Because the arguments of Portwood-Stacer and Fahs each reveal a fixed sexuality or sexual orientation, they preclude the possibility of the sexual nomad. On the other hand, if asexuality is viewed as one possibility in a range of sexualities between which an individual can oscillate if they choose to do so, asexuality is an important choice to consider. Fahs has legitimate critiques, and asexuality is a legitimate solution to subvert the system of oppression, but this is only true when asexuality is one option for the sexual nomad, not the forced option. Anarchonoromative sexual relations are also a problematic concept because social pressure, arguably an illegitimate form of authority, places a particular value and importance on certain relations over others. This valuation creates a hierarchical structure of approved sexuality and sexual orientations, thus creating an alternate system of sexual oppression very similar to the system of sexual oppression the anarchists are attempting to resist.

Metaphors of Subversion and Inversion

As a precursor to my later exploration of PAF through North American Science Fiction literature, it is helpful to explore two metaphors that occupy spaces at the intersections of anarchism, feminism, queer theory, and postmodernism: the *cyborg* and the *dildo*. Donna Haraway's *cyborg* is a metaphorical ontology commonly referenced when exploring the ways in which postmodernism and feminism deconstruct dualisms of sex, sexuality, and gender. The *cyborg* deconstructs these dualisms while also looking into the ways in which a posthuman subjectivity may be constructed. In short, Haraway's *cyborg* gives us the ability to look at how sex, sexuality, and gender are constructed in a (Western) cultural context, and it gives us the tools to investigate how those constructions function in a society as well in individuals. The

cyborg is one embodiment, or one possibility, of the ways we can reconstruct ourselves independent of the Western constructions of sex, sexuality, and gender. It is because the *cyborg* is not deferent to traditions of the Western world, although it is produced by Western technology, that it is able to operate within a discourse critical of it as well as a discourse that moves beyond such a tradition in order to imagine the *ways things could be* instead of the *way things are*.

Haraway writes:

The cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world; it has no truck with bisexuality, pre-oedipal symbiosis, unalienated labour, or other seductions to organic wholeness through a final appropriation of all the powers of the parts into a higher unity. In a sense, the cyborg has no origin story in the Western sense—a ‘final’ irony since the cyborg is also the awful apocalyptic *telos* of the ‘West’s’ escalating dominations of abstract individuation, an ultimate self untied at last from all dependency, a man in space. (150-151)

Because the *cyborg* does not have an origin—something virtually unknown in the sense of Western traditions—it does not have to defer to the past nor does it have responsibility toward conserving practices for a coming future. Furthermore, because the *cyborg* is not caught up in the dualisms of gender, it is also not deferent to the same “organic wholeness” other dualisms are required to complete. The *cyborg* is, in every sense, independent, although it is constructed. In this capacity, this metaphor is especially helpful in queer anarchism as well as in developing a theory of PAF because it enables a way to imagine a posthuman subject independent of the social constructions traditionally found in Western thought.

If, as many feminists and queer anarchists argue, identity is the site of political power, the *cyborg* is a metaphor of enabling a conceptualization of identity that extends beyond what is

available in the normative world. Haraway explains that “the cyborg is a kind of disassembled and reassembled, postmodern collective and personal self. This is the self feminists must code” (163). This could be a solution to the problems of identity politics because, as a nomadic subjectivity that is multiple (as both human and machine, but not quite either), the *cyborg* cannot be defined or pinned down as a static subject. Because the *cyborg* is a posthuman, post-gendered (singular and plural) self, it embodies both human and machine, but it takes with it none of the origins or limitations of either. Rather, Haraway argues:

There are several consequences to taking seriously the imagery of cyborgs as other than our enemies. Our bodies, ourselves; bodies are maps of power and identity. Cyborgs are no exception. A cyborg body is not innocent; it was not born in a garden; it does not seek unitary identity and so generate antagonistic dualisms without end (or until the world ends); it takes irony for granted. One is too few, and two is only one possibility. Intense pleasure in skill, machine skill, ceases to be a sin, but an aspect of embodiment. The machine is not an it to be animated, worshipped, and dominated. The machine is us, our processes, an aspect of our embodiment. We can be responsible for machines; *they* do not dominate or threaten us. We are responsible for boundaries; we are they. (180)

The *cyborg* is another way to map power and identity—and in this mapping, *cyborgs*, rather than origins or Fathers or Gardens—are responsible for the boundaries created to rule a posthuman subjectivity. The *cyborg* does not look to produce a totalizing theory, but rather, it has “an intimate experience of boundaries, their construction and deconstruction. There is a myth system waiting to become a political language to ground on way of looking at science and technology and challenging the informatics of domination—in order to act potently” (Haraway

181). Through the act of lived experience with boundaries, and the acts of both constructing and deconstructing boundaries, the *cyborg* is able to shirk the veil of tradition and create *per own* veil, or perhaps, fail to create one at all.²⁷ In other words, the *cyborg* is able see and then step outside of culturally constructed normative behavior. For Haraway, “Cyborg imagery can suggest a way out of the maze of dualisms in which we have explained our bodies and our tools to ourselves. This is a dream not of a common language, but of a powerful infidel heteroglossia. [...]. It means both building and destroying machines, identities, categories, relationships, space stories” (181). Therefore, through the creation of a new gender or, perhaps, by breaking the boundaries to migrate between all genders possible and imagined, the *cyborg* is a posthuman feminist tool to examine, to move past, and to move through a mapping of power and identity bestowed by the Father to a mapping of power and identity created by *perself*.

Another useful metaphor for exploring the possibilities of PAF is the *dildo*. Lena Eckert connects the metaphor of the *dildo* from Beatriz Preciado’s *Contrasexual Manifesto* with that of Haraway’s *cyborg*. Eckert explains “One of the preconditions is that we have to accept the *cyborg* as our ontology; the *cyborg* is a means by which we can study our existence, just as the *dildo* is the means by which we can interrogate our desires. The *cyborg* is genealogy as is the *dildo*” (italics in original 84). It is when the *cyborg* needs to interrogate not simply gender, but also sexuality, that the metaphor of the *dildo* as an enabling device of contrasexuality is precise in delving into the possibilities of breaking dualisms, social constructions, and performativity in search of desire and pleasure. In short, according to Eckert, “The *cyborg* is the *contrasexual*

²⁷ The pronouns *per own* and *perself* are used here as androgynous pronouns to describe a person of no gender or any gender. *Per* is short for “person,” rather than a gendered her/him or s/he. These are useful for counteracting the problematic nonexistence of neutered pronoun (other than the grammatically contentious singular “they”).

citizen, which becomes its own genealogy” (84). But what can the metaphor of the *dildo* add to the development of a theory of PAF?

The *dildo* is the marker of the deconstruction and reconstruction of the boundaries and barriers of sexuality, pleasure, and desire. Previously, the boundaries of pleasure and desire in terms of sexual acts were ruled by the phallus, or the penis. The *dildo*, Eckert argues, comes before the penis; thus, “The invention of the *dildo* is the end of the penis as a marker of sexual difference—everything can become *dildo*! The subversive repetition of the quotation of the *dildo* on any kind of body part proves and represents its performativity” (78-79). Because “everything can become *dildo*!” the phallus is unseated from its position within a hierarchy of desire, thereby removing the power of the phallus and replacing it with the power of the *dildo*, a noun that can literally be any *thing* or any *one*. It is the *dildo* that translates an anarchist project of creating a rhizomatic network of productive erotic power simply because the *dildo* has become a “multiple, dispersed, and schizophrenic” object of perceived pleasure or desire by a posthuman subjectivity.^{28 29}

Additionally, Eckert explains that the *dildo* is effective in undermining “hegemonic structures of desire, pleasure and bodies when applied as a subversive quotation. Quoting the *dildo* on any body part (or the entirety of the body) means to question the body as a sexual contest; it questions the possibility of framing or defining the context” (81). By quoting, Eckert means mapping the *dildo* on any part of the body, in effect showing anything really can become *dildo*. The “non-coherent narrative” of the *dildo* stems from it “being non-organic, detached from

²⁸ A rhizomatic network of productive erotic power is a system of sexual power relations without hierarchy or origin. The metaphor of the *dildo*, which anything can become, shatters any hierarchy (including that of the phallus), thus creating a rhizome of equalized sexual relations.

²⁹ By “posthuman subjectivity,” I mean the subject perceived as a posthuman. A posthuman is no longer tied to the ideals of humanism and is able to go beyond the standard limitations of what it means to be “human.” The quintessential example of a posthuman subject is Haraway’s *cyborg*.

the body, but at the same time as being able to become any part of the body or the body in its entirety” (Eckert 81). Because it can be mapped on the body in a plethora of ways, the *dildo* is versatile and difficult to pin down. The *dildo* is an effective metaphor to explore the possibilities of subverting a discourse of hierarchy and boundaries about desire and pleasure because it allows us to explore nomadic sexualities. If everything can become *dildo*, then the metaphor can help us think about a range of sexualities, like those noted by Heckert, Portwood-Stacer, and Fahs; however, the metaphor of the *dildo* can be problematic, too. Because the *dildo* is a representation of the phallus, there is some hesitation to using the metaphor to think about the possibilities of sex, gender, and sexuality. This hesitation stems from a concern of the power of the phallus in Western culture, a concept which could contaminate the playful perversity of using the *dildo* as a metaphor to explore sexualities beyond those controlled by the hierarchy of patriarchy—or the rule of the phallus. But why are the *cyborg* and the *dildo* important metaphors to consider for an anarchist politics, specifically a post-anarchist feminist politics?

The deconstruction of “naturalized” practices acts as a catalyst to explore a nomadic sexuality are important for PAF because this deconstruction allows for sex, gender, and sexuality to avoid remaining static and fixed. The instability of sex, gender, and sexuality is key to PAF because, as Eckert writes, “The reclaiming of the body as a non-hierarchical structure might enable us to re-figure body parts with equal functions or characteristics in relation to erotogenicity, desire and pleasure” (88.) Not only could the *dildo* enable a restructuring of the boundaries of erotogenicity, desire, and pleasure, but as Eckert suggests, “The discourses which are linked to a heterosexualised/gendered and naturalized hegemonic position are substantial [...]. But in rewriting their history we might be able to reconstruct a materializing discourse which does not rely on identitarian, naturalizing narratives of subjectivities, bodies and desires”

(88). Reconstructing this materializing discourse is important to PAF because it opens up the possibilities suggested by the metaphor of the *dildo* as well as a range of different sexualities and sexual acts that thwart the hierarchical stabilization of sexuality and sex. By using the metaphor of the *dildo* to explore the possibilities of sexuality, we may be able to enact a revolution that allows subjects to go beyond static or fixed ways of practicing sexuality. This is significant because the metaphor of the *dildo* may be the concept that helps the postmodern individual reject a fixed or static subjectivity in favor of a multiple and dispersed nomadic sexuality. This would be one of the goals of PAF because it rejects the concept of identity politics in favor of radically revolutionizing our ontologies instead of simply shifting the paradigm of the structures under which we operate.

Additionally, Eckert links this deconstruction of a naturalized sexuality and naturalized sexual acts with the *cyborg* when she argues that the *cyborg* within *Dildotopia* could have important consequences for an anarchist politics. Eckert argues that “[t]he subject of the *cyborg* might be situated in *dildotopia*, where *per* could develop a bodily ego and a bodily materialization that is not hierarchically organized. The *cyborg* might be able to create a non-hierarchical relationship within *perself* but also in relation with other *cyborg* subjects/bodies: an anarchi[z]ed way of living might be slowly activated and achieved by the *cyborg*” (88). Here, Eckert adds to Haraway’s theory by explaining that it is not enough for the *cyborg* to simply deconstruct and reconstruct sex, sexuality, and gender. The *cyborg* must also consider the way any sex, sexuality, or gender creates hierarchical boundaries in the body, and the way those hierarchical structures relate to others. Therefore, it is through the relationship of the *cyborg* and the *dildo* that a theory of PAF emerges.

The relationship between the two metaphors generates a space for non-naturalized, non-originated sexualized acts and activities ruled by discourse created by (instead of about) a poly- or non-gendered *cyborg* posthuman.³⁰ This relationship is significant because the *cyborg* is both gender queer and sexual queer;³¹ as a sexual nomad who embodies the *anarchy of the subject*, the *cyborg* can be read as post-anarchist queer. The *cyborg*, because of the enactment of the *dildo*, is both sexualized and nonsexualized because there is no hierarchy of sexuality. The *dildo* makes everything sexual; it makes everything *contrasexual*: because everything is sexualized, and the distinction between sexual and non-sexual is destroyed, everything is anti-sexual at the same time. Perhaps the *cyborg* is asexual simply because “s_he,” as Fahs argues, cannot and/or refuses to take part in sexual activity that re-inscribes the power relations inherent in the hetero-patriarchal institutionalism of sexual relations.³² The *cyborg* is, in one line of flight, sexualized to the point of enacting an identity of other-than-sexual. It is this interaction of pleasure, desire, productively erotic rhizomatic power, and *contrasexual*, asexual, other-than-sexual liminalities

³⁰ By non-naturalized, non-originated sexualized acts and activities, I mean acts and activities outside the realm of condoned sexual behavior. Currently condoned sexual acts mainly center on monogamous, heterosexual sexual acts, but these metaphors make room for other kinds of sexualized acts beyond this scope.

³¹ When I use “gender queer,” I mean a subject who enacts a gender of difference, either choosing to embody multiple gender constructions at once, as a non-gendered subject, or as a subject that does not identify with any particular gender currently recognized in society. “Sexual queer” is a similar term that refers to a subject who enacts a sexuality of difference, either choosing to employ several sexualities at once, to be asexual, or a subject who does not identify with any particular sexuality recognized in contemporary society. By the hetero-patriarchal institutionalism of sexual relations, I mean the way in which sexual relations are institutionalized to benefit heterosexual and patriarchal systems of power. A common example of this is the traditional concept of marriage, which is defined as between a man and woman, where the man is the provider and the woman stays in the home to bear and the rear the children. This institution preserves heterosexuality and the power of men to be the head of the family (as economic power means sexual power in a capitalistic society) as well as the fate of women, who are expected to have children (a presumed “endgame” of sexuality) to fulfill their institutional role.

³² As Fahs uses in her article, I use “s_he” as a pronoun where the “_” provides a space within the text for those who do not identify will or fall within the normative gender binaries.

that creates and constructs the questions of PAF. For example, PAF might ask questions concerned with the connection between sex, gender, sexuality and subjectivity focused through an anarchist sensibility. The connective tissues between these concepts include the sexual nomad and the metaphors of the *cyborg* and the *dildo*.

Post-Anarchist Feminism (PAF)

Now that we have explored the veins of thought leading to the articulation of a theory of post-anarchist feminism (PAF) as well as some contemporary practices that may be considered the formation of such a theoretical approach, it is imperative to identify some precepts or areas that such a theoretical approach would explore. These are some areas of inquiry or questions with which PAF might engage:

1. PAF recognizes that the Foucauldian notion of power can be damaging (as in authoritarian power) as well as productive, and, at the same time, any presence of power creates the opportunity for resistance. PAF establishes that sexuality is not exempt from the reaches of authoritarian power because sexuality, like many other things, is constructed. PAF examines not only the role of productive power, but also the role of productive erotic power, especially in identity formation. This means that a PAF approach looks at the ways in which erotic power or eros constructs and deconstructs identities/subjectivities and becomings important to the formation of a postmodern subjectivity and possibilities for resistance.
2. In the tradition of the practice of the metaphor of the *dildo*, a PAF theory queers and sexualizes all body parts and all objects, thoughts, and events to deconstruct sexual hierarchies (e.g. of phallus and womb, clitoris and vagina, penetration and masturbation) as subjectivities or possibilities for radical identity construction. Like the *dildo* and

cyborg, PAF subverts the sacredness of body parts through an equalizing politics. This subversion is performed by the recognition that sacredness is created only through a socially constructed performative hierarchy (such as sexualization or desexualization of everything to denature the hierarchy of the phallus), which is deconstructed through the metaphor of the *dildo*.

3. Similar to Lewis Call's multiple, dispersed, and schizophrenic postmodern anarchist subject, PAF explores how sex/gender identity and expression can become an *anarchy of sexuality* through an *anarchy of becoming* in an effort to reject constructed subjectivities and identity politics.
4. A PAF theory is ironic, playful, and self reflexive. It recognizes itself to be both limitless and limited. Therefore, PAF also explores the limitations and inaccessible avenues of its own theory or critique; in other words, it might ask: In what manner could a PAF critique be insufficient? As a self-reflexive approach, PAF critiques representations and acts of sex within anarchist communities, as I explained earlier in light of anarchonormative sexual relations. Unlike classical anarcha-feminists such as de Cleyre and Goldman, PAF delves into issues of place, method, practice, and individual relationships as socio-political representations that subvert and invert the boundaries and barriers of normative behavior and practice.

CHAPTER III

POST-ANARCHIST FEMINISM AND BUTLER'S *XENOGENESIS* TRILOGY

Using American science fiction (SF), and especially Butler's *Xenogenesis* trilogy, to develop a theory of post-anarchist feminism (PAF) is important to cultural studies because it shows an intimate relation between developing socio-political theory and art. Because Butler's science fiction (SF) texts are pieces of art I view as cultural artifacts, they reveal preoccupations and contemporary explorations of societal values. There is more than a twenty-year span between when Octavia E. Butler wrote the *Xenogenesis* trilogy and when post-anarchist theory became visible, with Butler's texts appearing in the 1980s and post-anarchist theory coming on the scene as a popular mode of inquiry in the 2000s. Curiously, that means that post-anarchist and post-anarchist feminist thought may have existed in art—and probably in the general consciousness—well before a theory of it was articulated in any depth because Butler's texts are consistent with the interests of PAF. Butler's *Xenogenesis* trilogy is an important text against which to test, and complicate, a theory of PAF. As I discussed in the Introduction of this project, SF literature is particularly useful to develop a theory concerned with social issues, such as power, gender, sex, and sexuality, because it allow us to explore and experiment with different ways of living. Patricia Melzer, in her work "Beyond Binary Gender: Queer Identities and Intersexed Bodies in Octavia E. Butler's *Wild Seed* and *Imago* and Melissa Scott's *Shadow Man*," argues that SF literature is unique in that it offers other ways of looking at sexual identities and gender politics (220). Specifically, Melzer looks at Butler's queering of sexual politics through third sex and shapeshifter tropes in *Xenogenesis*, arguing that "Butler's ambiguous representations of the sex/gender/sexuality relationship destabilize power that relies

on a naturalized heteronormativity” (241). This makes Butler’s trilogy especially fertile ground for post-anarchist feminist theory.

At heart, the *Xenogenesis* trilogy is about the erasure of one civilization to ensure the survival of another. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines “xenogenesis” as the “(supposed) production of offspring permanently unlike the parent.” This is in contradistinction to the term heterogenesis, which is the production of offspring similar to the parent. Broken down into its component parts, “genesis” as a component of a word is defined as “forming nouns with the sense ‘origin or development (of the thing or a kind specified by the first element)’” (“Xenogenesis”). “Xeno,” as a prefix, can mean foreign, strange, or dissimilar; thus, while the term “xenogenesis” can mean the production of offspring dissimilar to the parent, it can also mean the origin or development of a foreign or strange species. Both definitions are accurate for Butler’s trilogy, as Lilith’s children are both permanently unlike her and the origin of a foreign species.

This term may have come from the hard SF Butler read while a budding writer. The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives the known first usages of the word “xenobiologist.” All three usages come from SF texts Butler probably read, or at least knew about, and the *Oxford English Dictionary* traces the early usages of this term. The first is Heinlein’s 1954 usage in the *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, the second is Pohl’s 1979 usage in *Jem*, and then in Asimov’s 1984 *Banquets of Black Widowers*. All three use the term xenobiologist to describe the study of other life, life dissimilar or foreign to their own characters’ lives. As an author, Butler is giving the reader the role of xenobiologist in her *Xenogenesis* trilogy, where we study not only foreign life, but foreign ways of living and interacting with other sentient beings. It is this experiment with foreign life and foreign ideas that gives us the perfect breeding ground to

inspect our own naturalized conceptions, as well as seemingly foreign ideas (such as the offshoots of anarchism), within a controlled environment.

The setting for this experiment takes us to two worlds very different than our own: the Oankali Mothership and the Oankali-human colony on the restored earth. After she is rescued by the Oankali, Lilith becomes familiar with their culture aboard the Mothership. After the Oankali teach her how to train other humans to live with the Oankali on the restored but altered Earth, she starts a blended family, which produces Akin and Jodahs, both Oankali-human constructs who explore different avenues of power, humanity, alienness, and sexuality. As Lilith discovers when she is awakened on the Oankali Mothership, it is nothing like she has ever seen before. The ship is alive, and the Oankali and the ship have a symbiotic relationship. As Jdahya, the Oankali who awakes Lilith, explains, “There is an affinity, but it’s biological—a strong, symbiotic relationship. We serve the ship’s needs and it serves ours. It would die without us and we would be planetbound without it” (*Dawn* 28, 33). To Lilith, the ship outside of her room looks like a huge tree. When she emerges out of Jdahya’s home on the Mothership, she sees that the rest of the ship looks like a huge tree whose limbs are heavy with fruit. The ship, Lilith discovers from Jdahya, that the food produced from the tree meets the Oankali’s (and Lilith’s) nutritional needs (*Dawn* 29). As she and Jdahya navigate the ship, Lilith sees doorways open and close with the touch of Jdahya’s tentacles; she asks if the ship is intelligent, and she finds that the ship does have intelligence, but that part is dormant now; however, it can be chemically induced to perform certain functions, like growing openings, platforms, and rooms (*Dawn* 33).

When Lilith is sent to earth with the other humans and her Oankali family, her housing is an immature ship planted by the Oankali. When Tino, Lilith’s eventual mate, finds her gathering food in the forest, she takes him back to her village. There, Tino berates Lilith and the others for

living as primitive savages, but he does not realize that their primitive dwellings are actually an Oankali construct, similar to the Mothership. Lilith explains to Tino that their village is “a kind of larval version of the ship. A neotenic larva. It can reproduce without growing up. It can also get a lot bigger without maturing sexually” (*Adulthood Rites* 34). Like the mothership, the people of the village are able to control the walls of the houses. Eventually, in Butler’s last book of the trilogy, *Imago*, we learn that these larval versions of the ship will one day grow into Motherships to take a new species of Oankali-human constructs to the stars—but only after ravaging earth to provide resources for growth and maturity. It is in these two major settings that Butler depicts the experiment of creating and navigating a new species and a new culture—a Xenogenesis.

Lilith and Sexuality

The character of Lilith is interesting to examine using post-anarchist feminist theory. Through Lilith, a post-anarchist feminist reading establishes that sexuality is not exempt from the reaches of authoritarian power. This is especially easy to detect in the interactions between Lilith and the Oankali. When Lilith first becomes aware of her imprisonment on the Oankali ship, Butler compares Lilith to an “experimental animal”: “She was intended to live and reproduce, not to die. Experimental animal, parent to domestic animals? Or...nearly extinct animal, part of a captive breeding program?” (*Dawn* 58). The Oankali explain that the “trade” (of new genetic material for the Oankali in exchange for saving the human race) will make both species stronger and better; however, the Oankali have bred out of humans the thing that almost annihilated them the first time, which the Oankali consider to be their tragic downfall, namely the need for hierarchy. In this process, the Oankali have “fixed” the humans (which the Oankali consider an improvement) they rescued from postapocalyptic earth: the Oankali cure diseases and

deformities and have extended the lifespan of the humans. For Lilith, this means curing her cancer at a genetic level to ensure it never reappears.

Lilith's sexuality and reproductive functions are beyond her control in this environment because she is controlled by the Oankali. Lilith first meets Nikanj when Jdahya brings her to his living space aboard the Mothership from her confinement in another part of the ship. Nikanj is a child ooloi when they first meet—a child who is close to reproductive age and who needs to find a mate to bond with. At first, Lilith does not understand this, but as she spends more time with Nikanj, they grow closer and intimate, sleeping together on the same bed platform and connecting with Nikanj's sensory tentacles. This intimacy is not necessarily consensual, and it is very possible that Lilith is suffering from a type of Stockholm syndrome, where she begins to see her captors as friends instead of adversaries. I address the implications of this later when considering issues of authority and power regarding intimacy, reproduction, and sexual acts.

As an ooloi, Nikanj is able to take DNA from different partners and intentionally “mix” the genetic formation of a fetus. The ooloi then implants the fertilized material into a female (either human or Oankali) to grow. Not only does Lilith become intimate with Nikanj without total autonomy or consent, for she is little aware of the impact or meaning of such a contract, but she has little reproductive choice or control when Nikanj impregnates Lilith without her consent. At the end of the first book, *Dawn*, Lilith's lover Joseph dies at the hand of humans who hate Lilith, but when Lilith reflects on his death, Nikanj explains that *it* has made her pregnant. Joseph was a man who was rescued from earth and awakened on the ship. Joseph and Lilith banded together as friends, and then as lovers, when the other humans had been awakened. When Nikanj confides in Lilith that *it* has made her pregnant, Lilith exclaims “I am not ready! I will

never be ready!” (*Dawn* 246).³³ *It* explains to her that she is ready to have a child, but Lilith is still horrified by the idea, and the concept that the child she will have will not be human, that “it will be a thing. A monster” (*Dawn* 246). Lilith is horrified at the idea of having a construct child (a child of both Oankali and human genetic make-up), and Nikanj’s act of impregnating Lilith without her knowledge can be read as rape. While Nikanj insists that, although Lilith could not have voiced her desire for the child, she does want it—but the reader never hears that from Lilith, voiding any clear indication of consent. Lilith is forced to reproduce without her consent, thus showing that sexuality and reproduction, too, can be regulated by authoritarian power.

The familial, sexual, and reproductive assemblages Lilith finds in the Oankali community of which she becomes a part of falls in line with what I would call a post-anarchist feminist critique of representations and acts of sex within anarchist communities. A PAF theory explores issues of socio-political representations that subvert and invert the boundaries and barriers of normative behavior and practice. The Oankali, in many ways, are representational of an anarchist community, and their society can be read as a representation of radical politics. According to Hoda Zaki, “Among the Oankali, true consensus, non-hierarchical communitarianism, and truthful communication can be found” (242-243). The Oankali are only able to arrive at a decision through consensus-based decision making, they all live together without apparent hierarchy on the Mothership, and their communication using biology and chemicals instead of vocalized communication inhibits deception. For many anarchist theorists, these are markers of a radical anarchist society: one that values the input of all the members of the society and does its

³³ To avoid ambiguity and confusion, I have put the third person non-gendered “it” in italics as it refers to the ooloi.

best to promote harmony and avoid coercion.³⁴ Furthermore, Zaki explains that “[a]dults communicate non-verbally by way of their tentacles, a mode of communication which does not allow for deceit for ambiguity; and they achieve consensus by totally coalescing with one another, after which they resume their separate individualities” (242-243). Zaki’s analysis of the Oankali society is significant because it shows us that it is the Oankali’s ability to communicate with each other like bees in a hive (without deception or ambiguity) that leads to a non-hierarchical, communitarian society that can be read as radical and anarchist. Practical anarchist tactics used today include non-hierarchical consensus building and, in some strains of anarchism, communitarianism, where the needs of the community are usually put before the needs of the individual. Additionally, although the Oankali originally destine the resisters to live a long, unfertile life on earth, through consensus, they allow Akin to learn about the humans as a child. Then, the Oankali acquiesce to his decision to create a Mars colony and restore reproductive function (without the Oankali) to the resisters. As a consequence of such an integrated society, however, the humans are left only with a representational politics rested squarely on the shoulders of Akin, who is “a kin” to humans but also part Oankali. It is from this consensus-based, internally non-hierarchical society in which Lilith is thrust as she is awoken from her stasis.

After Lilith becomes somewhat accustomed to the Oankali environment, she learns about the Oankali family structure. The Oankali have a tripartite family structure: male, female, and

³⁴ An example of a communal or collectivist anarchist is Mikhail Bakunin and his creation of the First International discussed in the introduction of my work. He asserts in his document that “[e]quality does not mean the levelling down of individual differences, nor intellectual, moral and physical uniformity among individuals. This diversity of ability and strength, and these differences of race, nation, sex, age and character, far from being a social evil, constitute the treasure-house of mankind” (Bakunin 76). In fact, the members of Bakunin’s new society, regardless of difference, had the right to provide consensus and direction in the community.

ooloi. The familial structure to create new human race includes five: Oankali male, Oankali female, ooloi, human male, and human female. The ooloi is extremely important when it comes to reproduction. Males and females, whether they are Oankali or human, succumb to the material of the ooloi, thus rendering the heterosexual pairs repulsive to touching each other. Lilith first experiences a tri-sexual union when she is mated with Joseph. The ooloi, Nikanj, lies between the male and female, merging with their central nervous systems. The narrator describes the sexual experience as delightful: “They moved together, sustaining an impossible intensity, both of them tireless, perfectly matched, ablaze in sensation, lost in one another. They seemed to rush upward. A long time later, they seemed to drift down slowly, gradually, savoring a few more moments wholly together” (163). During this sexual act, the ooloi is able to heal as well as abscond with genetic material in order to form a fertilized embryo for implantation in either an Oankali female or a human female. Lilith is aware of this when she is first impregnated by Nikanj, but she thought they had an understanding that she would only become pregnant when she was ready to do so. The Oankali-human fashion of reproduction requires trust and faith that the ooloi will not impregnate the female when she does not want to be—and this would seem to coincide with the Oankali’s inability to deceive; however, as we see with Lilith, Nikanj impregnates her when it thinks she is ready, not when she voices consent. While this is not necessarily deceptive, it is coercive and defies a mutual understanding of informed consent and autonomy. Nikanj’s decision and act of impregnating Lilith also suggests that the ooloi knows Lilith better than she knows herself.

Butler’s creation of these familial structures and sexual assemblages are at the core of a PAF critique of sexual representation. While the family structure seems foreign because of the ooloi third-sex as well as the alien and human mating pairs, there is still an outstanding level of

normativity both within the human relations as well as within the Oankali relations. As such, although the family and sexual relations of these pairings subvert some boundaries, they also create an anarchonormativity—meaning these relations are normative, albeit within a subversive context. For example, although a three or five member reproductive community is strange in terms of both human and Oankali practice, both pairs of humans and Oankali are heterosexual. There is little room for non-heteronormative sexual relations within the subversive structure, save for the third-sexed ooloi. Furthermore, the families are in a committed polyamorous relationship. Once an ooloi has mated with a pair of humans or Oankali, they are chemically bound to each other—and the ooloi suffers, and could even die, from lack of contact with its mates. This is an interesting invention, as it prevents the degradation of the family structure. These are family bonds that certainly cannot be broken without dire consequences. Although the family structure is subversive because it incorporates more than two people and more than two sexes or genders, the normative structure of a committed family with defined social and sexual interactions is still a requirement of such relations. While PAF theory is helpful for examining the imposition of reproduction, familial, and sexual structures in the text, Butler's texts contain marked challenges to some of the precepts of PAF that I established earlier concerning issues of agency, manipulation, and the influence of traditions from modern Western thought within the text.

Lilith encounters several problematic situations whereby manipulation is used to inhibit her agency. One example is when Lilith is told by Nikanj that she must undergo a procedure to alter her brain chemistry so she will remember things better. Lilith is already a prisoner on the living ship, but she is allowed some freedoms. Nikanj gives her a choice, and somewhat respects her agency, although the assumption is that the choice should be easy to make: through violation,

Lilith will become a more perfect being. Nikanj gives Lilith the illusion of choice, although she knows that the procedure will happen eventually, and, according to Nikanj, it will modify her brain chemistry (*Dawn* 74). This is significant because the alteration of her brain chemistry makes Lilith less human and more like the Oankali; in a way, Lilith is becoming a *cyborg*—a fusion of human DNA improved with alien technology. Lilith forces herself to make the decision, and she allows Nikanj to perform the procedure on her (*Dawn* 78). The problem is that Lilith did not have a choice, and, although the procedure was for the “betterment” of her life, it was done through unethical means, which the Oankali do not seem to find problematic in their nonhierarchical and powerfully acquisitive society (Butler 39). Other examples include the mating Lilith undergoes with Nikanj, not understanding the full implications when *it* would inject substances in her body that would biologically link them together for the rest of their lives. Lilith is unable to make an informed decision about the procedure because she was not aware of the full implications; it is not until after the procedure that she begins to realize what Nikanj failed (or perhaps was not able to) reveal, namely that she and *it* would be biologically linked until death. Agency is also a problem when Nikanj impregnates Lilith without her knowledge and explicit consent, even though Nikanj argues that Lilith really did want to carry Joseph’s child. It is through manipulation, and the illusion of choice, that Lilith’s agency is compromised.

Butler purposefully uses the name Lilith for her main female character in this trilogy, and it is a name that comes with the weight of tradition and several implications. The archetype of and allusion to the name “Lilith” has a long-standing history in the western tradition. According to Michele Osherow in “The Dawn of a New Lilith: Revisionary Mythmaking in Women’s Science Fiction,” the Lilith archetype is an allusion to the first wife of Adam in Judaic biblical tradition. Osherow argues that the archetype of Lilith often oscillates between “images of wicked

temptress and fond mother,” but also that, through Lilith, “women’s science fiction presents a new feminine image, one reflecting a diversification of women’s roles in contemporary culture” (68). As Adam’s first wife, Lilith was created from the earth and refused to be unequal to Adam. Because Lilith valued “independence above male companionship,” she left “Adam and Eden” (Osherow 70). While Lilith is often depicted as evil because, as legend states, she “joined forces with Satan and gave birth to armies of devil children,” Osherow argues that Lilith takes the form of an alien archetype because she is “immortal, powerful, strong, feared, [and] sexual” (Osherow 70-71). Osherow explains that representations of Lilith, especially in SF literature, help to create a more complex female character. She writes:

The Liliths we meet in [SF] works are not ideal as mothers, lovers, or alien others. Instead, they demonstrate women’s ambition and ability to support others without sacrificing or disempowering themselves. These new myths move Lilith into a respected and essential category of female representations that is difficult to dismiss [.....] Thus, the myth of Lilith continues to indicate the history of the age in which it is given shape. For the first time, however, Lilith depicts an era of women who are ambitious yet human, independent yet social, and by and large, splendidly complex. (81)

In other words, authors like Butler uses revisions of archetypes imbedded in traditional Western thought in order to subvert or invert the boundaries concerning gender expectations. It is by engaging with the demonized “Lilith” archetype that Butler can show another way of becoming a woman enmeshed within a strange, but familiar, network of manipulative power relations that hinder agency. Furthermore, the symbolic weight the archetype of “Lilith” brings to the table allows Butler to leave many things unsaid. Although the Oankali want Lilith to be the mother of

a new race and to retrain humans to live in a rehabilitated earth, she finds it difficult to live up to the Oankali's expectations for her to take on the roles of nurturance and leadership. In addition, she finds that her efforts to help the human survivors adjust to their new lives often create resentment and anger toward her. Her best advice to her fellow humans is to "learn and run," something she finds difficult to do herself, just as the archetypal Lilith ran from Adam and Eden (*Dawn* 248). It is not until the later books that Lilith seems to be somewhat accustomed to her living arrangements with her Oankali-human family, but Butler never really returns to Lilith's point of view for the reader to be able to determine if Lilith has accepted her role as mother and sex-mate, or if she has simply acquiesced to the role due to lack of choice.

Akin and Productive Power

Similar to the character of Lilith, the character of her Oankali-Human construct son Akin helps us think about PAF. The character of Akin demonstrates two veins of a post-anarchist feminist theory: the reaches of authoritarian power in sexuality and an *anarchy of sexuality* through an *anarchy of becoming*. Akin realizes the reaches of authoritarian power into the sexual lives of the human resisters after he is left to live with them for many years during his childhood. Tate, a resister, explains to Akin why their worlds have fallen into violence after the Oankali "rescue." She suggests that "[t]hey got sick of one pointless, endless existence and chose another," and Akin responds, "Pointless because resisters can't have children?" (*Adulthood Rites* 157-158). Tate confirms this when she replies, "That's it. It means a lot more than I could ever explain to you. We don't get old. We don't have kids, and nothing we do means shit" (*Adulthood Rites* 158). For the human resisters who have been sterilized by the Oankali, not having children gives them no future and nothing to look forward to unlike their "Trade-Village" human counterparts, who live with the Oankali and raise construct children. After this exchange, Akin

realizes the Oankali have sterilized the human resisters to prevent another holocaust. The Oankali solution to the problem of the human resisters, to sterilize them so they cannot continue having children that will one day destroy themselves, is cruel. Butler writes:

Who among the Oankali was speaking for the interests of resister Humans? Who had seriously considered that it might not be enough to let Humans choose either union with the Oankali or sterile lives free of the Oankali? Trade-village Humans said it, but they were so flawed, so genetically contradictory that they were often not listened to. [Akin] did not have their flaw. He had been assembled within the body of an ooloi. He was Oankali enough to be listened to by other Oankali and Human enough to know that resister Humans were being treated with cruelty and condescension. (*Adulthood Rites* 159)

Akin's realization that the humans are being treated inhumanely is the catalyst for his request to create a Mars colony where humankind could start over. His request is granted through a consensus-based decision making process with the Oankali Mothership. Now, humans have a choice to live and mate with the Oankali or live on the Mars colony, which will leave them free to reproduce, but will be a hard life with no promises. These life choices for the humans are regulated purely through sexuality and reproduction—do they want to have construct children or human children? This is significant because the humans continue to have little agency after the Mars colony is created. Instead of having more choice, it is only the illusion of choice that is expanded for them. And it is through this choice that the authoritarian Oankali use their power to regulate the lives, sexuality, and reproductive choices of the human race. What remains problematic for people in this position is the role of responsibility, guilt, and free-will. Does the illusion of choice negate guilt of a restrictive authoritarian regime? Is responsibility for an

individual's well-being shifted back to the individual, or does it remain vested with the authoritarian regime?

Akin also represents an *anarchy of becoming* through an *anarchy of sexuality*. Although Akin is male, he is also a construct—a combination of both Oankali and Human genetics. An ooloi subadult explains to him: “You’re more Oankali than you think, Akin—and far more Oankali than you look. Yet you’re very Human. You skirt as close to the Contradiction as anyone has dared to go. You’re as much of them as you can be and as much of us as your ooa dared make you. That leaves you with your own contradiction” (*Adulthood Rites* 233).^{35 36}

Akin is one of the first male constructs who grew up with human looks, and his time with the human resisters helped him to become more sympathetic to humans than he would have growing up with his family composed of humans and Oankalis. The ooloi continues to tell Akin, “You aren’t flawed. I noticed even before I went to my parents that there was a wholeness to you—a strong wholeness. I don’t know whether you’ll be what your parents wanted you to be, but whatever you become, you’ll be complete. You’ll have within yourself everything you need to content yourself. Just follow what seems right to you” (*Adulthood Rites* 223). Akin is unsure of his place and his identity, but the ooloi reassures him that these things are inconsequential: he has everything he needs to become a full-functioning adult. His uncertainties stem from his multiplicity, because he is both alien and human, but not exactly either. Akin represents an *anarchy of becoming* because he is one of the first male Oankali-human construct children to be

³⁵ A subadult is an Oankali, or an Oankali-human construct, that has gone through the first phase of metamorphosis, but not the second. Although some characters in the book compare this stage to human adolescence, others counter that it is not entirely accurate as a subadult cannot reproduce like a human adolescent can.

³⁶ In the Oankali family structure, an ooa is the ooloi parent. The ooloi is responsible for assembling the genetic make-up of the children before it is implanted in a female body to develop into a fetus.

born and grow up. Furthermore, because of his time spent in captivity with the human resisters, he struggles to find himself between his Oankali and human composition. This translates into an *anarchy of sexuality* when he learns that, because of his development of becoming something different than either his Oankali or human parents, he no longer needs to fit into an Oankali familial relation to survive. Akin is a loner; he literally can survive on his own. This is unheard of for the Oankali, who have a very normative stance on how sexuality should operate within a structure of family relations. Akin's *anarchy of sexuality* through an apparent asexuality (or at the very least the ability to be asexual, which other Oankali appear not to be able to engage with), allows Akin to subvert the normative Oankali behaviors of sexual relations within family structures.³⁷ By asexuality, I mean that Akin is able to live his life without finding a mate with whom to bond, and he is not genetically driven to reproduce or exercise his sexuality in any manner. Arguably, Akin's ability to be sexually anarchic affords him extreme agency not normally found in an Oankali society; therefore, he is able to administer productive power that allows the human resisters to live as ethically as possible on the Mars colony, albeit within the constraints of the Oankali authoritarian regime.

Akin problematizes an ethics of productive power, resistance, and an Oankali-produced ontology of the human race when he is granted the ability to construct a colony on Mars for the human resisters who do not want to participate in the Oankali-human trade. Because of Akin's use of productive power to aid in human resistance to the Oankali authoritarian regime and

³⁷ In terms of anarchist theory, this split between communal sexuality and asexuality mirrors two different strains of anarchist theory. The first, communal anarchy, requires that the individual consent to the legitimate authority of the community, and she or he abides by communal decisions, often putting the community's needs before the needs of the individual. The second, individualist anarchism, heralds the authority of the individual before all others. In Akin's case, he is able to survive outside of the community, making him an individualist anarchist, and is able to put his individuality before that of any community or familial group.

subvert Oankali ontology of the Contradiction, Akin shows the connections between power and sexuality. I argue that the basis of the Oankali's authoritarianism rests in the fact that they have totalizing control over the humans' reproduction, although Butler makes it clear that that the Oankali do not feel what they are doing is coercive. By creating the Mars colony, Akin subverts the ontology of the Contradiction and restores the choice of human reproduction to the colonizers in a creative act of making them fertile again. This restoration of fertility embraces resistance and subversion of oppression. By examining the character of Akin, we can see that his character can give us some ideas to flesh out and complicate PAF, like his innovative resistance against the hegemonic force of the Oankali collective. PAF needs to encompass issues of productive power, resistance, and ontology within its framework because they are critical to understanding sex, gender, and sexuality.

Jodahs the Shapeshifter

Arguably, the character of Jodahs, from the third book *Imago*, has the most to offer a theory of PAF. Like Lilith and Akin, Jodahs experiences the reaches of authoritarian power into the realm of sexuality because of the threat of exile to the Mothership of the Oankali upon the realization that *it* would grow up to be an ooloi construct. As an Oankali-human construct, Jodahs realizes that it is the first ooloi construct to be born. Before Jodahs, the other Oankali-human constructs developed into either females or males. Jodahs, however, will develop into a third-sexed individual like Nikanj. Because *it* is the first third-sex construct, *its* metamorphosis is unknown, and, because ooloi have powers to heal through radically changing body chemistry, the Oankali fear that Jodahs could be dangerous. Metamorphosis for the construct children is like going through adolescence: they mature and develop sexually. Jodahs could be dangerous after *it* experiences metamorphosis because *it* will have additional powers that could be used to hurt

others. Because Jodahs could be dangerous, they want to send *it* to the Mothership before it experiences metamorphosis. There, the Oankali can ensure *its* safety as well as the safety of those around *it*. Jodahs explains, “If, someday, Nikanj saw that I needed mates more than I needed my family, Nikanj would send me to the ship no matter what I said” (*Imago* 32). The danger represented by Jodahs’s sexual development trumps its autonomy. Still, Jodahs does not want to leave earth: “It was only the thought of going to Chkahichdahk [the Mothership], and being kept there, that made me feel caged and frantic” (*Imago* 91). Curiously, Jodahs is not being exiled from earth for any other reason than *it* represents a dangerous sexuality, a sexuality that, until *it* has been proven that it can operate successfully within the established societal organization, must be contained and guarded. It is Jodahs’s non-normative sexuality as a third-sex Oankali-human construct that exemplifies the ways in which authoritarian power regulates sexualities deemed dangerous or subversive to the social organization.

Jodahs’s character enables a critique of the representations and acts of sex within the Oankali’s anarchist community. Jodahs’s sexuality represents danger to the Oankali because they do not know exactly what will happen when it matures sexually: *its* sexuality subverts and inverts the boundaries and barriers of normative behavior and practice. For example, *its* mates Tomás and Jesusa are brother and sister, a relationship which subverts normative behavior. Normally, a sexual mating between a brother and sister would be considered incestuous and, if not morally wrong, socially repulsive; however, since the pair come from a society where incest is needed for the survival of the community, and their fears of having deformed children are put to rest by the fact that Jodahs will 1) genetically craft future children and 2) facilitate in sexual relations in which the brother and sister will never touch, incest becomes socially acceptable. Not only does Jodahs facilitate a critique of the representation of normative behavior within an

anarchist community, *its* relationship with Tomás and Jesusa exemplifies what I am calling “erotic productive power.”

Although many writers use the term “erotic power” in critiques of the power inherent in sexual relations, desires, and exchanges of passion, it is uncertain whether there is a clear definition of this term. What I mean by the term “erotic power” are the power relations inherent, assumed, or created concerning sexual and/or reproductive acts. Erotic productive power, then, would borrow the Foucauldian post-anarchist capillaristic and rhizomatic conceptualization of power in order to describe how power relations concerning erotic acts could be both productive and destructive. This also implies that mechanisms of resistance can be employed through erotic acts, thus destabilizing barriers and boundaries meant to regulate normative behaviors. Thus, erotic productive power is important to a post-anarchist feminist project because it is another line of flight to examine, critique, resist, and perhaps change current socio-political relations.

Relations of erotic productive power come into play when Jodahs “saves” Tomás and Jesusa because their three-member relationship employs mechanisms of resistance through erotic acts. The siblings had run away from their resister community to avoid forced marriages. Each member of the tripartite relationship is using the relationship to resist something different, although each person’s resistance is to a normative structure or authoritarian power. For example, Jodahs employs sexual relations with Tomás and Jesusa in order to subvert the authoritarian power of the Oankali that wants to exile him to the Mothership. Tomás participates in sexual relations with Jodahs and his sister, Jesusa, because he understands it is a way to subvert the dictums of his community, a place he describes as “[f]ull of pain and sickness and duty and false hope” (*Imago* 163). Tomás is healed from his disfiguring genetic disease through mating with Jodahs, and he also sees the mating as a way to stay connected with his sister, thus

saving her from a life of forced motherhood in their community. Like Tomás, Jesusa also benefits from the relationship with Jodahs because *it* heals her genetic deformities. Jesusa also views the mating as a way to not be forced into a reproductive relationship that would most likely produce children who would die young or live with genetic disorders due to the incest within the home community. Therefore, it is through sexual acts that Jodahs, Tomás, and Jesusa employ mechanisms of resistance against oppression that would limit their agency.

Furthermore, the character of Jodahs exemplifies *anarchy of sexuality* through *anarchy of becoming*. Although Jodahs is a third-sex Oankali-Human construct, *it* is an example of the shapeshifter trope. This trope, commonly found in SF literature, describes a character who changes all or some of her or his identifying characteristics, often taken on the shape or identity of another character in the text. Jodahs can literally *become* anything, and, unless *it* forms relations with others to keep *it* stable or *it* becomes mature enough to control the shapeshifting, *it* will be constantly immersed in a river of becoming (Call 22). The shapeshifter trope of Jodahs is extremely important in understanding of an *anarchy of sexuality* through an *anarchy of becoming* because he experiences sexuality through multiple identities and in a way that denatures the hierarchy of sexuality we usually experience.³⁸

Acts of sex within the Oankali and construct relations are also emblematic of an *anarchy of sexuality*. In his article “Utopia, Dystopia, and Ideology in the Science Fiction of Octavia Butler,” Eric White recognizes the nuances of sexuality in the *Xenogenesis* trilogy. He explains that the Oankali sex in Butler’s texts is significant:

³⁸ By “denature,” I mean the process or act of destabilizing or altering the assumed structure of a particular concept. For example, by enacting an *anarchy of sexuality*, one is able to alter the assumed structure of heterosexuality, thus placing it in a paradigm rather than regarding it as the natural default mode of sexuality in humans.

Undoing the privileging of genital over other erogenous zones, alien sex is polymorphously perverse. Erotic intensity is evenly dispersed across the surface of the body. Oankali sensory experience in general is acentric in just this way. The aliens neither privilege the faculty of sight over the other senses nor concentrate perception and sensation in discrete sensory organs, relying instead on the multifarious tentacles that cover them everywhere. Finally, in alien sex, the nervous systems of all the partners are connected, so that each experiences not only its own but the other's pleasure as well. (White 404)

Just as the metaphor of the *dildo* denatures the hierarchy of the phallus discussed in the introduction to this project via Lena Eckert, the Oankali's sexual acts and other sensory acts denature the hierarchy of erogenous and sensory zones of the body. The acts of sex between the aliens (or between humans if an ooloi is present) exemplify a nonhierarchical experience in which pleasure is neither given nor received, but rather experienced and shared equally through a circuit connecting all bodies involved. This is important because, as Eric White finds, "the aliens can abolish the dualism of self and other. The species as a whole, in fact, periodically links up to form a single nervous system in order to deliberate on matters of general concern" (404). This is significant because the Oankali are able to extend their communitarian modes of communication to sexual polyamorous encounters. Because these sexual acts denature a hierarchy of desire and pleasure between bodies, organs, and sensory zones, the characters enact an *anarchy of sexuality*. The fact that Jodahs is a shapeshifter is important to this aspect of post-anarchist feminist theory as well.

Jodahs represents the possibility of a multiple, dispersed, and schizophrenic subjectivity, which then translates into this role in erotic acts (Call 22). White notes that the cancer cells the

Oankali harvested from humans, like Lilith, enable them to become shapeshifters, and this ability can be found in ooloi like Jodahs, Lilith's child (405). I find this particularly interesting because it insinuates that the ability to become a shapeshifter is extrapolated from our humanity, not an attribute introduced by a foreign species. One implication of the connection between the ability to change shape and humanity is that, as humans, we all have the ability to exist with a flexible identity, perhaps while also experiencing a flexible sexuality. Although a person may not desire to partake in sexual act with a same-sex or same-gender partner (or multiple partners), most people are physically able to do so if they chose that course of action. Throughout *its* metamorphosis, Jodahs changes drastically depending on who or what *it* is around. When *it* is around *its* siblings, *it* looks more human, but when *it* is in the woods alone, *it* begins to form a bald scaly head and face with claws instead of hands (*Imago* 92-94). Furthermore, when Jodahs is around a man, *it* begins to look more feminine; when *it* is around a woman, *it* begins to look more masculine. Around humans, at least, Jodahs transforms into the opposite gender, arguably the result of the other individual's sexual preference. This, of course, is problematic because it implies that Butler only sees Jodahs as filling in as an "other" counterpart in an otherwise heterosexual relationship. Jodahs transforms into a feminine figure in the presence of a masculine individual in an apparent biological effort to attract a mate.

Even though Butler does not let us explore non-heterosexual transformations with Jodahs beyond that of his adventures in the forest, the fact that Jodahs can traverse the social construction of genders and species is truly interesting. White affirms that "Butler thus imagines a revised economy of repetition and difference in which difference is neither persecuted as a threat to identity nor interpreted as subordinate [...] The advent of shapeshifters able to transform themselves at will enables maximally flexible and innovative responsiveness to

heterogeneous situation” (406). Thus, it is through the shapeshifter trope exemplified by Jodahs that we can begin to imagine a world in which “identity has been contrived as a historically situated response to a particular set of circumstances” (White 406). Identity, then, as well as sexuality, becomes malleable instead of fixed. Approaches to identity construction like White’s are the catalyst that could allow us to experiment with an *anarchy of becoming* and an *anarchy of sexuality* in our own practices.

The character of Jodahs, as a third-sex shapeshifter, creates a critical awareness of the construction of gender for reproductive means. An old resister, Francisco, even goes as far to state that if there had been more constructs like Jodahs, or more ooloi’s who could traverse a heteronormative human gender binary as a shapeshifter, then he doubted there would have been human resisters at all. Francisco explains, “My god, if there had been people like you around a hundred years ago, I couldn’t have become a resister. I think there would be no resisters” (*Imago* 214). It is because of construct ooloi like Jodahs who have the power to traverse the gender binary through shapeshifting that the human resisters’ xenophobia is expelled. Jodahs is a welcomed alternative to the tentacled, slug-like Oankali ooloi, which seems very foreign and alien. Jodahs’s shapeshifting abilities help to quell this xenophobia because it can look attractive to humans instead of repulsive. This is caused, in part, by the fact that the humans can categorize Jodahs within their gender binaries, even though it is still a third sex. This gap between gender and sex does not seem to repulse the humans; this signifies that we may not be as connected to rigid parallels between constructions of sex and gender as may have been previously thought. The major implication here is that difference or alienness is not really important if humans can identify in some way with the other or if the other is able to outwardly construct an identity that falls within the preexisting normative structures. This is significant because it demonstrates that

erotic productive power can only be employed if gender is constructed appropriately by the (alien) other for the (human) subject. In other words, relating back to a post-anarchist feminist theory, a *dildo* can only work if it fills the hole left by the phallus-cy of the penis.

Contributions of *Xenogenesis* to PAF

The characters of Lilith, Akin, and Jodahs help to both exemplify and add to a theory of PAF. Lilith brings forth questions of agency, manipulation, and the role of traditions of Western thought in subverting relations. Akin adds critical components concerning productive power, resistance, and ontology. Finally, Jodahs creates a space for considering the construction of gender for reproductive means. Therefore, PAF would also consider the following questions or points of interest in addition to those posited in at the end of the introduction to my project.

5. PAF explores the sexual and reproductive agency of a subject in relation to the manipulation of choice. For example, a PAF might consider how the illusion of choice is constructed to force certain sexual or reproductive outcomes through a hierarchical manipulation of environmental constraints.
6. PAF looks to the traditions of Western thought as a tool to subvert or comment on contemporary socio-political relations.
7. Recognizing that resistance is inherent in a rhizomatic conceptualization of productive power, a PAF theory would question the relationship between productive power and resistance in order to create other avenues of flight that defy a standard ontology from the dominant hegemonic societal organization.
8. PAF would question the connective tissues between sexuality and gender. PAF would ask if gender is necessary for reproduction and explore the ways in which, as well as reasons why, gender is constructed for reproductive means.

CHAPTER IV

POST-ANARCHIST FEMINISM AND ATWOOD'S *MADDADDAM* TRILOGY

The *MaddAddam* trilogy is unlike any of Margaret Atwood's previous works of fiction. The first two books of the trilogy follow a few select characters going through the transition from late capitalism to a postapocalyptic world of extreme environments, genetically constructed animals, and an annihilated human race. Part SF and part realistic warning, this series takes on the major concerns of twenty-first century society: severe environmental degradation, unrestricted consumerism, corporate totalitarianism, and genetic modification without boundaries. Atwood's narrative also presents a postapocalyptic scenario. Called the Waterless Flood by the radical group the God's Gardeners because they believe the event will be similar to the apocalyptic flood during the Biblical time of Noah and his ark, it comes in the form of the annihilation of the human race by a biochemical weapon. As only the first two texts of the series have been published at the time of this project, this chapter will focus only on the first two texts of the series: *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood*.

The two narratives present the same timeline from two very different points of view. The trilogy's first book, *Oryx and Crake*, follows Snowman (a.k.a. Jimmy), a man who has survived cataclysmic events. He believes he may be the only human left on earth besides the genetically engineered humans, named Crakers, with whom he has been charged with the task of caretaking. In a series of flashbacks of his childhood and adult experiences, the reader learns he lived at the Healthwyzer compound, a corporation enclosure that houses the corporate facilities, the homes, and the schools of the employees and their children. Atwood's second book, *The Year of the Flood*, plays out during the same narrative time as the first. The narrative is told through two main first-person voices: Toby and Ren. Toby has been rescued by an environmentally-friendly

religious sect called the God's Gardeners. The Gardeners' main purpose is to prepare for the End, or the imminent flood, by learning how to live without the help of multinational corporations.

One of the main characters in Atwood's trilogy followed in the first book, *Oryx and Crake*, is Jimmy. After the annihilation of the human race by a biochemical weapon, Jimmy decides to name himself after the abominable snowman because he felt as if he lost part of his humanity. Before that, he was the son of disaffected compound scientists with a mediocre interest and ability in formal education. After the waterless flood, which is a huge biochemical apocalypse killing nearly everyone on earth, Snowman lives alone by the sea near the Crakers. They are a bioengineered race based on humanity, but supposedly without the flaws that would cause poverty, war, and violence. Because he is sequestered from any other humans and possibly malnourished, Snowman as the narrator seems mentally ill. He is grappling with the postapocalyptic world in which he is living in conjunction with his role in the destruction of the human race. He is also grieving for his past life, which included a woman named Oryx.

Although much of *Oryx and Crake* is told by Jimmy, the major events in the narrative are promulgated by Jimmy's best friend, Glenn. Glenn is an asocial genius who has a propensity for math and science combined with a flair for philosophical and ethical thought experiments. Jimmy and Glenn, who later takes on the nickname Crake, attend high school together. After high school, Jimmy goes to a liberal arts college while Crake enrolls in the Watson-Crick Institute, which is effectively the Harvard of their corporatized world. Eventually, Crake gets a cushy job at a major corporation developing the BlyssPluss Pill and a new genetically spliced "floor model" version of humanity, intended to be used to show parents the possibilities from which they can choose in order to design their unborn child. Crake brings Jimmy onto the project

do the advertising, but, in reality, Jimmy is there to look after the new species of people after Crake unleashes a biochemical weapon upon the world.

The other major character, who we follow in the second book, *The Year of the Flood*, is Toby, a woman who grew up through the corporatization of her society and has to drop out of college to work at a fast food restaurant called SecretBurger. There, she catches the eye of dangerous criminal turned fast food restaurant manager named Blanco, who is abusive and has a track record of killing his “girlfriends,” or the women he sexually and physically abuses. Before Blanco can kill her, Toby is rescued by a radical group calling the God’s Gardeners. The God’s Gardeners are a collective of individuals who live in the Pleeblands³⁹—the downtrodden areas of the general public not kept up by a corporate entity—and engage in urban farming and material reclamation. They train their members and children how to reuse, recycle, and refurbish materials found outside, and they keep gardens on the roof tops of buildings. They live outside of the world of corporate compounds and consumerism, and they have an equitable hierarchy that involves a panel of “Adams” and “Eves” who are the leaders of the community. Their leader, Adam One, instructs the God’s Gardeners that there will eventually be a waterless flood of the same magnitude as the real flood during the time of Noah. The God’s Gardeners’ mission is to prepare themselves for living through and after the waterless flood. Toby is skeptical of the God’s Gardeners’ lifestyle and beliefs, but she acclimates to their lifestyle and eventually becomes an Eve. When the Waterless Flood comes, Toby is doing reconnaissance undercover at a corporate spa called Anooyoo. She locks herself in the grounds of Anooyoo and survives the

³⁹ Atwood describes the difference between the compounds and the pleeblands as one of security, akin to the differences between modern day suburbs and the inner city: “Compound people didn’t go into the cities unless they had to, and then never alone. They called the cities *the pleeblands*. Despite the fingerprint identity cards now carried by everyone, public security in the pleeblands was leaky” (*Oryx and Crake* 33).

apocalypse because of her training as a God's Gardener. Minor characters include Ren, a former child of the God's Gardeners turned trapeze dancer/sex worker, Jimmy's mother, a stay-at-home former corporation scientist, and Croze, a MaddAddam group member and former God's Gardeners child.

The first two books of Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* provide an interesting framework against which to consider PAF. The commodification and consumption of women in regards to their sex or gender helps us to consider the aspects of the market and exchange in relation to socio-political relations. My examination of Crake's BlyssPluss Pill and the Crakers through the Paradise Project complicates the idea of productive power, lending to its consideration the ethical issues of informed consent, coercion, and the metaphor of the *cyborg*.⁴⁰ Finally, I use Call's postmodern anarchist revolutionary model, a transsemiotic revolution grounded in radical symbolic theory, and I problematize this possibility of revolution in light of MaddAddam's resistance and Crake's revolutionary annihilation of the human race.

Commodification, Gender, and the End of the World

One of the driving forces in the *MaddAddam* series is the commodification of people, especially based on sex and gender. I define commodification as the transformation of things not normally thought of as goods into goods that are then exchanged in a market situation. For example, before the mass bottling of water in the United States, water was thought to be a good that was not necessarily available on the market: it could usually be found for free in nature. Now, water has been commodified into a good available for purchase on the open market, even though it is still available for free in many populated locations on earth. Although commodities

⁴⁰ The Paradise Project is the codename for Crake's laboratory where he creates the BlyssPluss Pill, which is the catalyst for the waterless flood, and the Crakers, a new and perfected kind of people. Both of these projects will be discussed in further detail within this chapter.

are often thought of as goods or services, the idea of commodification is rooted in our social relationship to the world.

In his essay “Commodities and the Politics of Value,” Arjun Appadurai notes that commodities have a social life. Appadurai explains that the demand for commodities “emerges as a function of a variety of social practices and classifications” (40). An example of this is barter, which involves the “exchange of objects for one another *without* reference to money and *with* maximum feasible reduction of social, cultural, political, or personal transaction costs” (Appadurai 35). He also argues that “commoditization lies at the complex intersection of temporal, cultural, and social factors” (Appadurai 38). This means that the transformation of objects into goods available for exchange on the open market relies on demand and the social, cultural, political or personal interest we have in said object.

Many argue, as do I, that commodification is a systemic illness of capitalism when it comes to the obstinate commodification of living things. This is especially true when it comes to the commodification of people (as in slavery), the commodification of the unborn (as in abortion politics), and the commodification of women (as in sex work). The logic of commodification reveals to us that if we acquire the right things, we will become better people and asks us to look at our fellow humans—our mothers, sisters, and children—as things instead of people. Commodification rests on the assumption that consumption is the driving force of humanity, and the belief that, if we have the chance, we will keep consuming things until there is nothing left for any of us to consume. This includes consuming each other.

In Atwood’s postapocalyptic SF narrative, she weaves in the stories of three women who are victims of commodification and consumption. Often, the connections between commodification, consumption, and sex and gender are more insidious than the outright

exchange of commodities in an open market. Especially in terms of commodification through attributes like sex or gender, the assumption is that the person of a certain sex or gender will exchange the skills culturally associated with that sex or gender for something else. This can be seen in the traditional role of the housewife, where a woman could be interpreted as exchanging her skills as maid, sex partner, and nanny for (hopeful) financial security, a culturally approved sex-life, and positive social reinforcement.

Toby's character in *The Year of the Flood* highlights the connection between consumption and sex. Toby's life has been turned upside down by her mother's consumption of Helthwyzer nutritional supplements (from which she gets cancer). Then, her childhood home is consumed by the corporations looking to gather more land area for their corporate compound. Finally, Toby is commodified by a fast food restaurant and the manager. Blanco sees Toby as just another play-thing and a sex object, and Atwood indicates in the narrative that he surely plans to tear her to shreds just like the girls who came before her. As a SecretBurger employee, Toby isn't a person or an individual—she is a laborer. And she begins to internalize this, too, going on drug-induced sex binges with whomever she finds in her haze. She uses her own body for pleasure, just as Blanco uses it for sex and the corporation uses it for labor. Not until she is rescued by the God's Gardeners does she begin to break the spell of commodification. The Gardeners value Toby for who she is, not what she has or what she can be to them.

The cycle of consumption and commodification is especially true for Ren, who works a dancer and sex worker in Scales, an upscale nightclub in the Pleeblands. She is only somewhat aware of the fact she is being viewed as a service or an object, rather than a person. Ren literally dresses as an animal in a biosuit that changes her from a woman into an animal-like fantastical

creature. It is the consumption of this sexualized fantastical creature through sex acts that makes Ren a commodity.

Similarly, Jimmy's mother, Loraine, also experiences this commodification through sexualization. She was once a scientist for the corporation, but now she is a "stay at home" corporation wife. Jimmy recalls her as never being happy, always lurking around the house smoking a cigarette. From Jimmy's memories of her, it can be inferred that she was suffering from "the problem that has no name" in Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*.⁴¹ She is depressed and disconnected from the world around her because she is attempting to create meaning in her life by living vicariously through her husband and child. But this is not enough; she is not doing anything meaningful, and she is intelligent enough to realize that the corporatization of her life is a bad sign. Not only is she commodified as a housewife by her husband, but that is also her role within the compound schema. Unlike Toby and Ren, Jimmy's mother is not necessarily abused, but she is commodified as a housewife. She wrestles with the role of nurturing mother and happy wife she is meant to fill but realizes that she cannot because she does not find it meaningful. Therefore, she plans a careful escape from the corporate compound in which the family resides and becomes, as far as Jimmy can tell from surveillance footage he is shown throughout the years by the corporate security mafia, a clandestine radical who is executed by the hands of the corporate police.

Toby, Ren, and Loraine represent three women whose lives are shaped by corporations. Because they are women within a corporate-run world, they are not viewed as individuals.

⁴¹ In her book *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan writes, "If I am right, the problem that has no name stirring in the minds of so many American women today is not a matter of loss of femininity or too much education, or the demands of domesticity. It is far more important than anyone recognizes. [...] It may well be the key to our future as a nation and a culture. We can no longer ignore that voice within women that says: 'I want something more than my husband and my children and my home'" (78).

Rather, they are laborers or mothers. It is not until they escape from this corporate world that commodifies them because of their sex and gender that they find any type of meaning as an individual. Toby becomes an Eve of God's Gardeners, and becomes a skilled and useful member of this radical community. Ren escapes the apocalypse from the BlyssPlus Pill because she is in quarantine when the outbreak hits. She recalls her life growing up as a child in the God's Gardeners, and is eventually rescued from her containment by her childhood friends. Upon her release, she struggles to regain her sense of individuality apart from her sexualized persona in the nightclub. Finally, Loraine decides to escape from the corporate compound and her unfulfilling life as a mother. The reader never quite figures out what happens to Loraine, but through Jimmy's experiences, we learn that she has tried to find meaning by protesting the destructive acts of the corporations, and she is probably now dead because of her clandestine activities.

When taking a closer look at the relationship between commodification, consumption, and sex and gender, it is interesting to note that the power the corporations have over the commodification of Toby, Ren, and Loraine is a perfect example of how resistance operates. Because the authoritarian reaches that co-opted their individuality are sucking each of them into the hierarchy of the corporation as a commodity (worker, wife, etc.), the authoritarian power gives the women something to fight against or escape from. But power in this sense is complicated, too. The traditional anarchy-feminist would examine how the corporation had power over the women and their sexuality and then she would think about how to subvert it—mainly by demolishing the corporation. That is clearly not an option here. The corporation is everywhere. This specific anarchist approach does not evaluate the nuances involved and the far-reaching effects of power within the lives of the individual. Even the God's Gardeners cannot escape the power of the corporations, but they do manage to hide from it and live as far outside

of its bounds as possible. And they do this because they limit their consumption. They recycle, reuse, and only take what they need. Because of this, they do not have to rely on a corporation for jobs, money, food or clothing. The God's Gardeners understand that they cannot live like this forever. As they are trying to live outside of the boundaries of consumerism and corporatization, those very corporations are destroying the space in which they are hiding. By destroying the environment, the corporations represent the epitome of consumerism: they consume resources until there is nothing left to consume. This is the ultimate endgame of pure market capitalism. At least in Atwood's novel, there is no hope for us once we reach a certain point in late capitalism paired with severe environmental degradation except to exist in clandestine radical groups, like the God's Gardeners, that are adept at living alternatively in the midst of it all.

Crake realizes this and decides something needs to be done. We can extrapolate that Crake believes he is able to rationally appraise the situation and realize that sex, science, corporatization are all forms of consumption, of taking from the world (or others) in a very efficient way. He realizes that humanity has already created its own downfall, and the only hope is to create a new species without flaws to take over after humanity has eviscerated itself. This is why the Crakers, Crake's bioengineered gene-splice models are created: they are not able to "take"; they do not understand how to form complex hierarchies, which Crake argues are required to be able to form an efficient network for consumption.

Productive Power: No Headaches and New Faces

Crake's move to introduce the BlyssPluss Pill and then use it as the sole implement to destroy humanity around the globe seems to be, according to him, the logical conclusion to a post-capitalist revolution. Except, for Crake, a revolution needs new revolutionaries. He cannot trust humans, no matter how radical or willing to change. He realizes humanity has several flaws

that, if not corrected, would lead history to repeat itself, thus he creates a new species of humans to replace those killed by his biochemical weapon. The moves to both destroy humanity and create a new version of it are indicative of productive power because Crake is using it to produce a new (and he thinks better) world; but it is also a productive power that is ethically problematic.

The BlyssPlus Pill is an invention that has three advertised benefits and one unadvertised “benefit.” The Pill protects against STDs; it gives the user unlimited libido, sexual prowess, and energy in an effort to eliminate jealousy, violence, and feelings of low self-worth; and it prolongs youth (*Oryx and Crake* 355). The unadvertised side effect, according to Crake, is that it “would also act as a sure-fire one-time-does-it-all birth-control pill, for male and female alike, thus automatically lowering the population level. This effect could be made reversible, though not in individual subjects, by altering the components of the pill as needed, i.e., if the populations of any one area got too low” (*Oryx and Crake* 355). This means that the BlyssPlus Pill, while advertised as a “cure-all,” was actually produced by Crake to have drastic social consequences. Crake explains to Jimmy that sexual aggression (especially when not released) is the major cause of war. The BlyssPlus Pill, then, would drastically reduce both the cause for war and the number of people who could wage war. This reveals that Crake believes that jealousy and aggression stemming from sex acts as well as reproduction must be limited, as they are the undoing of society.

This is important to consider in light of PAF. Instead of developing a way to open up a paradigm of sexual relations that subvert normative behavior, Crake assumes that human behavior cannot be changed. Therefore, his Pill plays into the normative behaviors of sexual acts (mostly heterosexual and frequent) in order to sell his Pill, and he eventually relies on the supposed human “need” of sex to kill the human race. Crake does not bother with other ways of

ending sexual violence or reproduction, like promoting asexuality or another radical (non)practice. Rather, he gives in to supposed inherent behavior, and he even makes it less dangerous and more lucrative.

When Crake brings Jimmy in on the project to craft the advertising, he explains to Jimmy that the Pill is still in the test phases, and there are still a few things to work out. Unfortunately, even though the Pill provides “[e]ndless high-grade sex, no consequences,” there have been some issues with the test subjects: “A couple of the test subjects had literally fucked themselves to death, several had assaulted old ladies and household pets, and there had been a few unfortunate cases of priapism and split dicks. Also, at first, the sexually transmitted disease protection mechanism had failed in a spectacular manner. One subject had grown a big genital wart all over her epidermis” (*Oryx and Crake* 357). Nihilistic fucking, broken genitals, and unsightly monster STDs are not the only consequences of the BlyssPlus Pill. Unbeknownst to Oryx and Jimmy, Crake uses the Pill to deploy the biological weapon that will destroy the human race, thus putting the fate of humanity in Crake’s hands

Even though Crake is responsible for the destruction of the human race, he does not stick around to watch the endgame of his plan. This is significant because Crake sees himself as part of the problem, not the solution. When the outbreak begins, Jimmy thinks that it is just another nanobioform outbreak (a tiny, human engineer disease), but soon he, and the rest of the world, realizes it is different than all the other outbreaks. He holes himself up in the dome of the Paradise Project, which is Crake’s laboratory, and watches the news. One of the first signs that this was a planned attack and not a regular plague was that it was breaking out in different cities all over the world at the same time indicating the disease was not traveling, but breaking out from some source simultaneously. As he watches the news, Jimmy finds out more about the

outbreak: “It was a rogue hemorrhagic, said the commentators. The symptoms were high fever, bleeding from the eyes and skin, convulsions, then breakdown of the inner organs followed by death. The time from visible onset to final moment was amazingly short” (*Oryx and Crake* 389). Jimmy has no idea the BlyssPluss Pill has anything to do with the outbreak until Oryx, who had been out getting food for the two of them, calls him and says “ ‘It was in the pills. It was in those pills I was giving away, the ones I was selling. It’s all the same cities, I went there. Those pills were supposed to help people!’” (*Oryx and Crake* 389). After the outbreak, Crake comes back to the Paradise Project dome with Oryx and confronts Jimmy, who is hysterical. Crake explains to Jimmy that Jimmy has been protected from the weapon. This is because of special serums Crake gave Jimmy to protect him from promiscuous playtime in the Pleeblands. Crake tells Jimmy that he is counting on Jimmy, then Crake slits Oryx’s throat. Jimmy shoots Crake, and then locks himself back up in the Paradise Project dome.

However, Jimmy is not alone. Crake’s Paradise Project is the creation of a new species of humans, which are called the Crakers. Crake tells Jimmy that the purpose of the Crakers is to produce a model for humans to eventually pick the characteristics of their children. The Crakers are an amalgamation of the different options parents-to-be could pick for their unborn progeny. Crake and his scientists thought about the problems facing the human race and designed the models with a diverse array of characteristics: “Beauty, of course; that would be in high demand. And docility: several world leaders had expressed interest in that. Paradise had already developed a UV-resistant skin, a built-in insect repellent, and unprecedented ability to digest unrefined plant material. As for immunity from microbes, what had until now been done with drugs would soon be innate” (*Oryx and Crake* 366). The models are beautiful beings, and Jimmy notes that most of them look more perfect than any woman with implants or plastic surgery could

look. Crake has even spliced into them a solution for sex-based problems. Crake explains to Jimmy that they would no longer be tormented by sexuality, as humans have been for thousands of years; rather, they would come “into heat at regular intervals, as did most mammals other than man,” and only then could the Craker men become aroused. As soon as the Craker woman was impregnated through a four-man orgy, the men would no longer be able to have erect penises. These people are the “art of the possible” for Crake—because of the genetic changes, “Gone were [the brain’s] destructive features, the features responsible for the world’s current illnesses” (*Oryx and Crake* 367, 366). With the rise of this new species, Crake has eliminated racism, hierarchy, territoriality, family structures, and the resulting evils of these: houses, tools, weapons, clothing, kingdoms, icons, gods, and money (*Oryx and Crake* 366-367). This genetically engineered species is, for Crake, the solution for the destruction and evils of the human race.

Crake’s approach to creating a “better” version of humans is problematic because he changes only the biology, but not necessarily the social constructions that shape culture. Crake believes that if he changes the biology of the Crakers to compensate for the supposed evils perpetrated by the human race, then the culture will follow suit. While biology is certainly connected to psychology, and thus to identity and culture formation, I argue that the two are more separate than Crake concedes. All we need to do is think about the variations between individuals in the same culture as well as the variations between cultures. Many behaviors, beliefs, values, and practices are not the same. While biology may predict a certain range of behaviors, it is the environment in which a culture takes shape that dictates behaviors and values. Furthermore, Crake ignores the vast variations in behaviors and values in the history of Western culture. A foundational element of PAF, I argue, is that we cannot understand biology as

dictating a certain behavior or practice. This is especially true of sexuality and sexual acts, as we have seen in previous chapters.

Jimmy learns that the BlyssPluss Pill and the Crakers are two separate projects part of the same plan—but Crake is not exactly straight with him. Jimmy believes the Pill will reduce human reproduction, which will then be replaced by the perfected species of the Crakers (or the choicest parts of them). Jimmy explains, “In the long run, however, the benefits for the future human race of the two in combination would be stupendous. They were inextricably linked—the Pill and the Project. The Pill would put a stop to haphazard reproduction; the Project would replace it with a superior method. They were two stages of a single plan, you might say” (*Oryx and Crake* 366). However, after the onset of the biochemical weapon Crake planted in the BlyssPluss Pill, Jimmy realizes that the plan was not to slowly phase out current humans with genetically improved humans: Crake destroyed the human race so an entirely new species could flourish without the possibly harmful influences of the earth’s previous inhabitants. While Crake’s take on revolution is certainly interesting, genetic engineering and genocide are always fraught with ethical problems. It is not clear if Crake does see his plan as ethically problematic. In one reading, he may see himself simply replacing a broken component with a new and better-suited version. Of course, this interpretation treats humans and the Crakers as tools to be used for a certain end, rather than individuals with rights.

Crake’s BlyssPluss Pill and new species complicates Lewis Call’s postanarchist theory of productive power. As I wrote in Chapter II, Lewis Call, in *Postmodern Anarchism*, explains the implications of the idea that power is productive (instead of always repressive). Productive power is important because it provides multiple avenues for resistance: anywhere power resides, resistance is also possible. By rejecting classical anarchism’s top-down conceptualization of

power, postmodern anarchism looks to Foucault's idea of capillaries of power as a more advanced version of power. Call explains that a Foucauldian concept of power recognizes the flaws of classical anarchism in that classical anarchism is focused on the visible aspects of power rather than on the recognition that power relations exist more extensively (79). Call employs Foucault's concept that power runs through capillaries and that terminal forms of power are only the endpoints of power networks in his multiple works. Therefore, Call argues, the actual project of the postmodern anarchist is to support a conceptualization of power that likens these relations to capillaries in the body rather than support a conceptualization of power that shows power being held in the hands of the capitalists or the state (79).

The BlyssPlus Pill and the Crakers are, for Crake, multiple avenues of resistance against the destruction of earth courtesy of the human race. Not only does he aim his sights on destroying a goodly portion of the human race (and perhaps he expected to extinguish everyone), he replaces them with a seemingly more perfect and superior species of people to populate the earth. Crake does not take power, nor does he go the traditional route of attempting to revolt against the terminals of power. Rather than destroying the corporations or killing off the head CEOs or political leaders, he does something much more drastic. He approaches the idea of revolution holistically and succeeds in taking down the system of capillaries, not just the terminal ends. But there are some complications with Crake's revolutionary actions.

One challenge is that Crake's resistance is nested in a co-opted and ethically unsatisfactory totalitarian act. Crake forced the best scientists to work for him, lied about the true purpose of the Pill and the Crakers—even to his closest friend—and then effectively destroyed humanity because he thought it was the best course of action. While a PAF theory would certainly consider radical revolutionary moves that purport to change the system in a holistic

fashion, mass murder is not on such an agenda. One of the implicit assumptions of (post)anarchist, feminist, or postmodern theories is that revolution or change occurs because it is beneficial to humanity. Therefore, a positive change in socio-political relations cannot benefit a people that it attempts to annihilate.

A related complication is that of informed consent and coercion. The BlyssPlus Pill permanently sterilizes anyone who takes it, although this is not made clear to the individual. The Pill and the Crakers were created through Crake's explicit coercion under threat of death. Perhaps in Crake's view, the ends justify the means, but the reality is that if the means were unethical, so too are the ends, no matter what the potential positive outcomes there may be. PAF is an ethically sensitive theory that looks not only at the endgame but also at the means taken to achieve particular goals. Equity and fairness are born out of a sense of ethical justice; therefore, for PAF to promulgate revolutionary theoretical possibilities for private and public socio-political relations, a firm sense of ethical justice is a prerequisite.

A third complication for Crake's productive power is the creation of the Crakers. In light of Call's ideas of resistance, the Crakers can be read as a very real resistance to the oppressive and destructive power of the human race. Not only can the Crakers be read as a resistance to power, but they also can be read as *cyborgs*. As I wrote in Chapter II, the *cyborg* is another way to map power and identity—and in this mapping, *cyborgs*, rather than origins or Fathers or Gardens—are responsible for the boundaries created to rule a posthuman subjectivity.⁴² The *cyborg* does not look to produce a totalizing theory and is able to shirk the veil of tradition, by which I mean traditionally normative practices and behaviors, and create per own veil, or

⁴² By "posthuman subjectivity," I mean the subject perceived as a posthuman. A posthuman is no longer tied to the ideals of humanism and is able to go beyond the standard limitations of what it means to be "human." The quintessential example of a posthuman subject is Haraway's *cyborg*.

perhaps, fail to create one at all. Because of these advantages, the *cyborg* is a posthuman feminist tool to examine, to move past, and to move through a mapping of power and identity bestowed by the Father to a mapping of power and identity created by herself. The Crakers are not supposed to follow the same traditions as their human ancestors: Crake created them with attributes he felt were adverse to war, violence, and hierarchy; however, near the end of *Oryx and Crake*, the Crakers begin to talk as if they think Oryx and Crake are gods. This is problematic because, even though Haraway's *cyborgs* are supposed to lack the production capacity for a totalizing theory and shirk the veil of tradition, the Crakers are re-assuming such possibilities. For example, even though the Crakers are not supposed to be able to think symbolically, they begin to think of Oryx and Crake as gods and begin to show signs of worshipping them as such. Is it possible for Haraway's *cyborg* to do the same? Like Haraway's *Cyborg*, the Crakers are supposed to map power and identity created through their own volition. Although the Crakers do begin to create their own identities, they are greatly influenced by Snowman, who attempts to answer their questions about the world with what amounts to a nonsensical theology. This causes a backslide in which the Crakers begin to see themselves through the eyes of Snowman, Crake, and Oryx, instead of creating their own identities. Apparently, Crake could not gene-splice out the need for confirmation and recognition from others, which questions if the *cyborg* can remove herself from such needs, too. If identity creation happens in a social context, then can anyone, include the Crakers or a *cyborg*, create their own identity impervious to cultural influence? While Crake's actions may have gestures of PAF, namely that he attempts to let the Craker's define themselves without a (human) cultural influence, his actions do not contain the ethical substance or motivation found in PAF. Self-definition and identity formation is at the core of PAF. Whether we are talking about sex, gender,

sexuality, or some related aspect of the self, PAF is concerned with 1) how the self is constructed, 2) if it is done so in the least authoritarian method possible, and 3) the relative level of freedom an individual has to shift any aspect of their identity whenever and however s_he wishes to do so.

Revolution and Collapse: Simulation and Symbolic Exchange

Crake's apocalypse is achieved, chiefly, through his interaction with MaddAddam, the revolutionary group responsible for the online game Extinctathon and acts of bioterrorism around the world. MaddAddam is an offshoot of the God's Gardeners, a group of people who respect nature and decry environmental degradation, but MaddAddam lacks the idealist pacifism and emphasis on Christian theology to which the God's Gardeners hold themselves. Crake and Jimmy first discover MaddAddam through the online game Extinctathon when they are teenagers.

Crake and Jimmy come across the online game Extinctathon as an amusing past time, between their normal amusements of watching people beheaded in the Middle East and pornography. Extinctathon, "an interactive biofreak masterlore game he'd found on the Web" is a game centered on guessing "some bioform that had kakked out within the past fifty years" by challenging an Extinctathon Grandmaster (*Oryx and Crake* 97). To win at the game, "you'd narrow it down, Phylum Class Order Family Genus Species, then the habitat and when last seen, and what had snuffed it. (Pollution, habitat destruction, credulous morons who thought that eating its horn would give them a boner.)" (*Oryx and Crake* 97-98). The key to the game was to guess the correct plant or animal, but with speed. Jimmy explains:

The longer the challenger held out, the more points he got, but you could win big bonuses for speed. It helped to have the MaddAddam printout of every extinct species, but that

gave you only the Latin names, and anyway it was a couple of hundred pages of fine print and filled with obscure bugs, weeds, and frogs nobody had ever heard of. Nobody except, it seemed, the Extinctathon Grandmasters, who had brains like search engines. (*Oryx and Crake* 98)

These Extinctathon Grandmasters, Crake comes to find out, are the scientists Crake later coerces to join his team to create the Pill and the Project. But, it is not until Crake and Jimmy are grown and in college that Jimmy finds out the reaches of Extinctathon. One weekend, Jimmy visits Crake at the Watson-Crick Institute, which is where Jimmy is going to college. Jimmy relates that Watson-Crick is nicknamed Aspergers U because all of the students attending are exceptionally smart but extraordinarily socially awkward. This foreshadows the fact that, although Crake is exceptionally intelligent, he has difficulty relating to others, and it is lack of empathy that creates an ethical firestorm resulting in genocide. After Crake shows Jimmy around the complex (which is much nicer than Jimmy's liberal arts college, Martha Graham, named after the famous modern dancer and choreographer), they go back to Crake's room where he shows Jimmy the inner workings of Extinctathon.

When Crake shows Jimmy the hidden world behind Extinctathon, he exposes the real work of the MaddAddam group: "Then there was a string of e-bulletins, with places and dates—CorpSeCorps issue, by the look of them, marked For Secure Addresses Only" (261). The bulletins contain information about the results of bioweaponry: house mice eating electric wiring and thus causing house fires, coffee beans menaced by a new bean weevil, a tar-eating microbe turning highways to sand (*Oryx and Crake* 261). A few years later, when Crake is in charge of the Paradise Project and Jimmy is blundering as a mid-level corporation employee with an unsatisfactory but intensive sex life, Crake invites Jimmy to come work for him. When Jimmy

visits the Paradise Project, he realizes that Crake has used the same names as Grandmasters in Extinctathon for the employees at the Paradise Project, but Crake corrects him: These people are not just named after the Grandmasters of the game, they *are* the Grandmasters of Extinctathon” (*Oryx and Crake* 360). When questioned about these new employees, Crake reveals that he coerced the scientists into becoming part of his team (although he assures Jimmy it is in their own best interests), and those who tried to escape “fell off pleebland overpasses” (*Oryx and Crake* 361).

The Extinctathon Grandmasters who work for Crake are also members of a group called MaddAddam. Croze, a former God’s Gardener, tells Ren and Toby what happened with MaddAddam and Crake when they are reunited. After Ren and Toby find more God’s Gardeners at the Tree of Life where they used to sell things like honey and all natural herbs, Croze tells Ren about finding the other survivors, the former MaddAddam collective whose members were turned into gene-splice scientists through coercion on behalf of Crake. Ren explains, “Then he tells me about the MaddAddams—how they were working with Zeb, but then the CorpSeCorps tracked them down through a MaddAddam codenamed Crake, and they ended up as brain slaves in a place called the Paradise Project dome” (*The Year of the Flood* 395). The MaddAddam scientists were forced into working for Crake: “It was a choice between that and being spraygunned, so they took the jobs. Then when the Flood came and the guards vanished, they deactivated the security and walked out, but that wasn’t too hard for them because they’re all brainiacs” (*The Year of the Flood* 395). Not only does Crake’s annihilation of the human race raise ethical concerns, but so too does the fact that he compels others to be complicit in his plot.

Although the collapse of humanity is created through a transemiotic revolution grounded in radical symbolic theory at the level of symbolic exchange, Crake’s totalitarian power over the

appropriate scientists in the Paradise Project complicates the positive revolutionary capacity of this solution. Furthermore, is it ever possible to get past the idea that revolution necessarily means the transition to a more perfect race of humans—the idea that Crake aligns with his revolutionary actions?

Call's theory of postmodern anarchism details the possibility of a revolutionary path through a transsemiotic revolution grounded in radical symbolic theory (Call 22-23). In simplistic terms, we can view this revolutionary model as taking over the modes of communication so they cannot be dominated by those in control. Call uses the theories of Baudrillard to look at the role of simulation and symbolic theory in the projects of postmodern anarchism. Call writes, "Today simulation has become a massive social and cultural fact; it is therefore in the realm of simulation that any meaningful political action must take place" (22). Baudrillard, to Call, is a purveyor of postmodern anarchist thought because his theories contain "...significant antistatist and anticapitalist implications" (90). Not only do Baudrillard's theories center on a transsemiotic revolution question existing terminals of power, he deconstructs the totalitarian metanarratives which have allowed Western society to perform "justifiable" actions within the last two centuries. His solution, according to Call, is that, "To transcend these twin systems of political and economic repression, we must find a way to step outside of the semiotics which authorize such systems. It is in the pursuit of this monumental (and perhaps utopian) goal that Baudrillard introduces the category of the symbolic as a challenge to what he calls 'contemporary semiocracy'" (Call 91).

Because we operate in a simulated world (the internet, television, etc) of signs, power manifests itself through those signs. Call believes that it is at the level of symbolic exchange that any meaningful or successful revolution must take place. Call argues for a contemporary

revolutionary process that “consistently positions itself outside the real” in an attempt to create a void of symbolic exchange to interrupt the power structures of the state and capital (104). It is not enough to engage a revolution with guns and bombs; rather, any revolutionary action must be taken in the simulated world, where the most powerful hegemony of the state and capital now reside. Although Call’s revolution is not feminist in nature, as it does not call upon women or aspects of sex, gender, or sexuality specifically, that does not preclude it from consideration of PAF. Because Call’s revolutionary model examines the ways in which authoritarian control is dispersed (through certain high-speed methods of communication, such as the internet), it shares a similar interest with the tradition of feminist inquiry. Feminist and anarcho-feminist inquiry has long been interested in figure out the avenues by which control and domination operates. Call identifies one such avenue and suggests it be liberated.

MaddAddam’s resistance movement and Crake’s revolution operated in the simulated world of Extinctathon through the level of symbolic exchange, which means that MaddAddam and Crake needed to stop the powerful hegemony of the state and capital from bestowing any particular meaning onto signs. In short, MaddAddam and Crake were both looking to reveal reality, not simply the picture manufactured by the corporations. MaddAddam, it seems, only wanted to illustrate the destructive power of augmented organic material (plants, animals, and microbes) to bring awareness to environmental degradation and the concern that messing with nature could lead to dire consequences for the human race. Through this organized productive resistance that created organized chaos, MaddAddam was able to break the hold of symbolic exchange perpetuated by the corporations and create a void of symbolic exchange so individuals had the ability to ascribe their own meaning to the acts of resistance. Crake, on the other hand, destroys the grounds on which symbolic exchange occurs.

Crake's revolutionary apocalypse is problematic for a revolution based in dominating lines of communication. Chiefly, his approach is problematic because he does not create a void to interrupt the power structures of the state and capital; rather, he simply annihilates the entire system. This approach poses an interesting dilemma: is it possible to annihilate the system of symbolic exchange without annihilating the human race? In short, is it necessary to negotiate within the limits of symbolic exchange and simulation, or it is possible to get rid of the structures upholding such relation entirely? To what extent can we shirk the veil of tradition, which is symbolic of our traditionally normative behaviors and practices? Perhaps it is possible, in a manner of speaking, to simply set it on fire—a symbolic gesture that could express an attitude of finality and irreversible destruction of normativity.

These are important questions to consider for PAF. To what extent can PAF comply with the postmodern anarchist revolutionary model of a transsemiotic revolution grounded in radical symbolic theory? When read through *MaddAddam*, such a revolution seems promising, but not as impactful as we might hope. Localized events of resistance often do not translate to any meaningful evolutionary or revolutionary potential. Crake's revolutionary model, while problematic in terms of the annihilation of the human race, may have potential: instead of engaging in a transsemiotic revolution grounded in radical symbolic theory, can we simply destroy the structures that allow the state and capital to co-opt the relational expressways of symbolic theory?⁴³ Can we destroy the relational expressways of symbolic theory themselves, to prevent anyone from co-opting them now, or in the future?

⁴³ By relational expressways, I am referring to pathways of high-speed communication, such as the internet.

Contributions of *MaddAddam* to PAF

The first two books of Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* provide an interesting framework against which to work through PAF. The commodification and consumption of women because of the sex and gender helps us to consider the aspects of the market and exchange in relation to socio-political relations. An examination of Crake's BlyssPluss Pill and the Crakers through the Paradise Project complicates the idea of productive power, lending to its consideration the ethical issues of informed consent, coercion, and the metaphor of the *cyborg*. Finally, Call's postmodern anarchist revolutionary model, a transsemiotic revolution grounded in radical symbolic theory, is problematized in light of *MaddAddam*'s resistance to the corporations by creating small terrorist attacks that raise awareness and Crake's revolutionary annihilation of the human race. These narratives help us to consider these further questions in defining what PAF is and is not:

9. PAF investigates how resistance could operate in the commodification and consumption of individuals based on their sex and gender. In short, how does the authoritarian reach that co-opts individuality and pulls people into the hierarchy of the corporation as a commodity (worker, wife, etc.), and what can individuals do to resist, subvert, or overcome such commodification in both the public and private spheres of living.
10. Drawing on the questions raised when reading the Crakers as *cyborgs*, PAF is interested in the question of the possibility for anyone to freely create their own identity without authoritarian influence if identity formation takes place in a social context, especially one which requires negotiations between different members of a group or community.
11. PAF questions the ethical viability of revolutionary or radical evolutionary goals when they involve coercion or lack of informed consent.

12. Drawing on Call's transsemiotic revolution grounded in radical symbolic theory, PAF asks if there is a way to destroy the structures that allow the state and capital to co-opt the relational expressways of symbolic exchange and symbolic theory, or to destroy them altogether, instead of using those same veins from which to launch a revolution.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The previous chapters have led us down a winding path that incorporates many distinct themes and issues. At the end of each chapter, I posed a certain number of questions or lines of inquiry under which post-anarchist feminism (PAF) might operate. For the most part, the 12 questions I have posed explored within this project fall into two categories: relations and resistance. Some areas of inquiry fall under both categories. Lines of inquiry concerning relations include examining the role of productive and authoritarian power; queering and (de)sexualizing all body parts and all things as well as exploring how sex/gender identity and expression can become an *anarchy of sexuality* through an *anarchy of becoming*. They also include looking at the sexual and reproductive agency of a subject in relation to the manipulation of choice and asking if gender is necessary for reproduction. The relationship between gender and reproduction also includes exploring the ways in which, as well as reasons why, gender is constructed for reproductive means. These lines of inquiry, too, ask us to think about identity formation in relation to the social consciousness and how that translates into emotional and physical relationships between people. Finally, lines of inquiry concerning relations include questioning the possibility for anyone to create their own identity independently, especially if identity formation takes place in a social context and negotiations between different members of a group or community. Lines of inquiry concerning resistance or revolution can help us think about the role that gender, sex, sexuality, and identity formation could play in emancipation or direct action. These lines concerning resistance or revolution include questioning the relationship between productive power and resistance in order to create other avenues of flight that defy a standard ontology from the dominant hegemonic societal organization. As a continuation of such

lines of inquiry, PAF asks if there is a way to destroy the structures that allow the state and capital to co-opt the relational expressways of symbolic exchange and symbolic theory, or to destroy them altogether, instead of using those same veins from which to launch a revolution. Another line of inquiry is concerned with investigating how resistance could operate in the commodification and consumption of individuals based on their sex or gender as well as determining the ethical viability of revolutionary or radical evolutionary goals when they involve coercion or lack of informed consent.

The ideas or questions I have just listed comprise the beginning of a theory of PAF, a theory that is emerging, but still not completely formulated at this time. The blending of post-anarchism and feminism to produce a new theoretical approach borrowing critiques and arguments from both yielded an interesting amalgamation of questions highlighted by the SF literature I employed. Some of the ideas seem to be only tangentially related, such as the relationship between the metaphor of the *dildo* and co-opting the expressways of communication in search of revolution. But all of these ideas have one common spirit, and that is the spirit of possibility. Whether we seek to uncover the possibilities in our bodies, our sexuality, or the ways we can resist or revolt, these possibilities are shaped by both our relations and our ability to understand resistance.

I originally set out to connect post-anarchism and feminism because both theoretical approaches have similar ideas about identity, the constructed nature of reality, and resistance (or revolution). Putting (post)anarchism and feminism in conversation with each other has yielded some very interesting points for consideration. Utilizing feminism within postanarchist studies has helped me to think about where postanarchism fails to extend its reach. Although postanarchism has produced sexuality-related thought, such as queer anarchism, it has, up until

now, mostly ignored any traditionally feminist issues both in the historical anarchist movement (which some theories proclaim one the purposes of postanarchism is to interrogate classical anarchism) as well in contemporary (post)anarchist thought and activism. Issues of gender, sex, and sexuality are ignored, whether willfully or simply by the nature of the movement, within contemporary anarchist and postanarchist circles. In many revolutionary movements, “women’s issues” are put aside to focus on the emancipation of the whole, but I argue that the whole can never be emancipated unless these issues are interrogated. Gender, sex, and sexuality are not women’s issues; they are people’s issues. They need to be at the table in our postanarchist conversations and our postanarchist scholarship. Introducing feminism into the field of contemporary anarchist and postanarchist thought has yielded new venues of research and lines of inquiry that need to be explored.

Bringing postanarchism to feminist thought has also yielded interesting results. By and large, much of the field of anarchist studies has had a bent toward certain militant or radical methodologies and conclusions. While there are certainly many feminist thinkers who are radical and revolutionary, certain strands of feminist scholarship back away from radicalism or radical solutions in favor of integrational approaches in regards to gender, sex, and sexuality. Postanarchism brings to feminism a sense that radicalism is back on the table, and perhaps, suggests to feminist inquiry that the only way to confront issues of gender, sex, and sexuality *is* in a radical manner. When I was thinking about how to name the theory that I developed in this project, I had to think carefully about the implications of noun and adjective placement. I could have named this theory “post-feminist anarchism,” with “anarchism” as the root noun and “feminist” as the modifier (which also would have allayed the theory with the post-feminist approach I rejected earlier), but I decided on “post-anarchist feminism.” I chose “feminism” as

the noun and “anarchism” as the modifier because the root of this project rests in an augmented inquiry of gender, sex, and sexuality, to which anarchism and postanarchism bring new theoretical frameworks to help us consider how to look at gender, sex, and sexuality as possibilities for revolution, resistance, subversion, and other radical actions.

Two further questions that building PAF has brought about are that of technology and power and how those are affected by the limitations we impose upon them and they impose upon us. PAF is inextricably bound up in the issue of technology. Classical anarchism and postanarchism respond to the use of technology in a plethora of ways, from Kropotkin’s assumption that technology will replace the drudgery of housework and lead to the emancipation of women to Zerzan’s belief that we need to head for the proverbial hills and reclaim our hunter-gatherer (and thus socially simplistic) way of life to ensure true equality. This denial of technology in favor of a more simplistic, back-to-nature approach to life is often referred to as anarcho-primitivism, and encompasses several different variations on this philosophical theme. The allure of technology to create positive change and its propensity to be used for domination and destruction are two sides of the same coin: technology is rife with possibilities, for the better and for the worse.

At the root of the matter, the implementation of digital technology produces the illusion of choice to create false dichotomies (or trichotomies, etc.) when it comes to ways of being, lines of flight, and other acts of resistance. By this, I mean that technology makes it easier to perpetuate the illusion of choice because contemporary Western society believes in the myth that digital technology is limitless and full of possibility (i.e. the possibilities of the internet or social media for both totalitarianism and total emancipation). This myth leads us, whether anarchist or not, to trust that technology cannot possibly give us a range of choices and that it can only

present us with a full array of options unfettered by the limitations of our conceptual abilities, ethical limitations, or capitalistic devotions. Because people create digital technology, it is limited by human capacities. In spite of this myth, we hold dear to our hearts that technology presents us with a range of all possibilities, when, in fact, it holds the same limitations that we as individuals or members of a particular society or culture do. This myth and its unraveling confront the same myth that technology equals possibility and progress woven into SF literature, postmodernism, and anarchism.

Technology, however, gives us the ability to think about realistic theoretical possibilities. Both the *cyborg* and the metaphor of the *dildo* represent technology and were developed as a direct result of advancements in machinery and digital technology. In the first two chapters, I explore three models of emancipation: nomadic fluidity, identity politics, and withdrawal. I have used both the *cyborg* and the metaphor of the *dildo* to explore nomadic fluidity, which I consider the most promising model of emancipation. In other words, while the myth of the possibilities of technology, especially digital technology, are problematic, some technologies, like those that have produced the *cyborg* and the metaphor of the *dildo*, are helpful in thinking through emancipation in terms of nomadic fluidity.

Developing PAF has led me think further about the relationship between power and resistance. While the classical anarchists saw power as gathering in specific terminal ends: the church, the lumber baron, the president, or the male head of house, postmodern anarchism recognizes that power is capillaristic. This, of course, means that power is present in all social relations, not just those that are the most visible, and it also means that opportunities for resistance are present in all of our social relations as well. Thus, one does not have to assassinate a banking institution's CEO to illustrate resistance (as Alexander Berkman's failed assassination

attempt of businessman Henry Clay Frick); it could simply be a matter of standing up to sexual discrimination led by a coworker in the workplace. It would be a mistake, however, to think that a capillaristic conception of power means that the power in all social relations is equal to that in all other social relations. Because post-anarchist feminism asks us to examine the limitations of possibility in the hopes of 1) finding them and 2) changing them, we need to examine power and resistance and the role privilege and hierarchy plays in each. If not all power relations are equal, are all acts of resistance equal? Who gets to place a value on each of these, and, more importantly, what purpose does such a valuation serve?

This project is only the first imaginings of a theory of post-anarchist feminism. Perhaps, in the years to come, it will continue to provide a basis for questions such as those raised herein about the connections between feminism, anarchism, and postmodernism. The questions and theoretical arguments brought up about sex, gender, sexuality, power, resistance, authority, domination, and other themes belong to many fields including feminist studies, anarchist studies, literary theory, cultural theory, and philosophy. They deserve to be brought up in light of these disciplines, viewed through their looking glasses, and interrogated by the foundations of each. Doing so will hopefully produce challenging vistas and exciting lines of inquiry leading to other such projects.

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