

“Thingness: A Rehabilitative Politics of Futurity”

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Can a thing have a future? This question is fundamental to disability politics as well as to the question of trauma and its thing-making properties. The assertion that “violence turns anybody subjected to it into a thing” (Sontag 12) is used by Susan Sontag in *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003) to decry war photography and images of violence and conflict as being only ever dehumanizing and objectifying of the individuals involved and the suffering they experience as participants, willing or otherwise. This argument can be applied broadly to many kinds of violence, both interpersonal and institutional.

“Turning into a thing” and the processes that would make such an experience possible or essential form the basis of the idea of *thingness*. Thingness operates as an effect of institutional power, that is, to make a person a nonentity in their own life and within interpersonal social relations. Queer, transgender, and disabled subjects are familiar with this function of thingness—or *thingification*—of being made “into a thing.” However, another potential sense of thingness inheres also within the sense of possibility found in being outside the grasp of these same processes.

While one could think about the many uses of the word “thing” and how they might inform thingness, the definition that is the focus of my analysis is that of a “meeting” or a “matter or concern.” The word “thing” has been historically considered to function solely as a pejorative term, or a negative, unwanted, or undesirable position, this definition opens intriguing and unique new avenues for theory. The idea of a thing as a “meeting” is suggestive of a plurality or collective as the subject of such a gathering, but

also a gathering in possession of a repetitive quality, as a meeting can happen multiple times, and similarly can occur over a period of time. This links the thing as meeting to the passage of time, which means this kind of thingness moves toward a future. Likewise, a meeting involves intersection. The thing-as-concern thus has a basis in time and futurity: Its etymological roots, stemming from late Middle English, “from the French, *concerner*; or late Latin, *concernere* (in medieval Latin, to ‘be relevant to’), from *con-*, ‘expressing intensive force,’ and *cernere*, to ‘sift, or discern’” (Oxford English Dictionaries), suggest thingness in the shift of interest or importance regarding the thing over time by power. Finally, “matter,” which comes from Middle English, via Old French, “from Latin *materia*, ‘timber, or substance,’” reveals how the thing is both made real or substantive, but also becomes the “subject,” as from the Latin *mater*, “mother, or subject of discourse.” This situates the the non-thing as oppositional to and contingent on the thing for existence; the non-thing is literally “nothing.”

To become things with our own futures, people with disabilities require a confrontational disability politics that resists the casting of the disabled body as some “thing” to be pitied, erased, controlled, or confined, and instead posits such bodies as subjects concerned not with cures, but with their own

A similar rehabilitative “matter or concern” pervades Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's (2003) analysis of paranoid and reparative readings and the resulting effects of paranoid reading on queer theory. Sedgwick seeks to understand how “knowledge [is] performative and how best ... [one] move[s] among its causes and effects”; she laments that the process of discovery and new knowledge production “has been blunted through the habitual practices ... of [the] critical theory” that allows for such discoveries in the

first place (Sedgwick 124). She sees Paul Ricœur's "hermeneutics of suspicion" being taken up as a critical mode in the academy as creating "a mandatory injunction ... rather than a possibility among other possibilities" (Sedgwick 125). This sense of suspicion as a compulsory mode taken up to please the whims of the academy—lest the theorist be dismissed as possessing naiveté, piety, or complaisance—aligns suspicion with the paranoid mode and situates the viewing and creation of thingness as inherently negative or pathological, whereas approaching suspicion as a "possibility among other possibilities" creates space for the use of other modes, such as the reparative reading, thereby resisting thingification while facilitating thingness and its implicit futurity. The centering and over-emphasis of suspicion and the paranoid reading within queer theory has led to its lack of faith in new or alternative theoretical approaches and allowed for paranoia's prioritization over the reparative. Sedgwick herself articulates a desire to move away from the paranoid and toward other modes. Such reparative modes when pursued may lead to other models for thingness, and therefore for disability. Queer theory's "distinctive history of intimacy" with paranoia poses problems for a reparative disability politics. Sedgwick notes that the "traditional, homophobic psychoanalytic [mode]" that has been associated with Sigmund Freud has been cited as posing problems for a reparative disability politics of thingification historically used to "pathologize homosexuals as paranoid or to consider paranoia a distinctly homosexual disease" (Sedgwick 126). Alternately, the theorist Guy Hocquenghem theorized that "paranoia is a uniquely privileged site for illuminating, not homosexuality itself ... but rather precisely the mechanisms of homophobi[a] and heterosexism[m]" (Sedgwick 126). That is, paranoia does not expose the workings of homosexuality, but instead makes evident the

institutional thingification that seeks to identify, regulate, and “cure” homosexuality. Sedgwick notes that paranoia became a methodology because of it first being taken up as a “privileged object of anti-homophobic theory,” but also because paranoia is itself a “symmetrical epistemology” to the phobic discourse around homosexuality (Sedgwick 126). As a result of queer theory's panoptic need to theorize the root and function of the repressive hypothesis and apparatus, suspicion and paranoia were “structurally inevitable” as methodologies because of their burgeoning omnipresence within anti-homophobic theory (Sedgwick 127).

Sedgwick finds an alternative to the paranoid mode within Melanie Klein's depressive position, an “anxiety-mitigating” mode, that when inhabited, turns the dangerous parts of paranoia into a new whole, “not necessarily like any existing whole.” This reparative process is one that can “offer one nourishment and comfort” (Sedgwick 128). Simultaneously, Sedgwick admits that paranoia has some use as a “way ... of seeking, finding, and organizing knowledge” (Sedgwick 130). As a temporal orientation that moves back and forth in time, paranoia is centered in hypervigilance, “requir[ing] that bad news be always already known” (Sedgwick 130). However, this requirement for badness to be always already evident marks paranoia also as a thing that prevents futurity. Sedgwick believes the great danger of the “prejudicious gender reifications” offered by paranoia lies not in their being unanticipated but rather their being unchallenged (Sedgwick 132-3). In contrast, the reparative mode is the project of a collective attainment, a future-making practice of “the many ways selves and communities succeed in extracting sustenance from the objects of a culture, even of a culture whose avowed desire has been not to sustain them” (Sedgwick 150). The

continual striving involved in such a project is inextricably tied to the passage of time. The sense of urgency that is subsequently created by constantly trying to keep pace with time, which is always moving forward, and fighting being pushed backwards in time by the flow of progress, is what has historically given movements their momentum. This sense of momentum is not accessible by or viable for all bodies or communities, which marks it as a site of disability; however, the collectivity stressed by the reparative mode can be used to mitigate its disabling effects. In Melanie Klein's conception of love as a reparative mode, one could also read love as a kind of sustenance that promotes a futurity-centric, non-curative disability politics. Mvskoke poet Joy Harjo's poem "The Myth of Blackbirds" (1994) gives expression to Klein's theorization of love as repair:

I believe love is the strongest force in this world, though it doesn't often appear to be so at the ragged end of this century.

And its appearance in places of drought from lovelessness is always startling.

Being in love can make the connections between all life apparent—

whereas lovelessness emphasizes the absence of relativity (Harjo 30).

Harjo's reparative gesture here presages queer theory's most emphatic defense of futurity: José Esteban Muñoz' book *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (2009) rejected the idea of future as solely a heterosexual concern, instead linking hope to "[a] sustaining ... spirit of imaginative inquisitiveness that allows ... [for the] envision[ing] [of] alternatives to the life-arresting logic of the heteronormative present" (Ruti 114). Muñoz posited queer sociality and relationality as both essential to the perseverance and survival of queer individuals and communities. Muñoz' casting aside of the paranoid reading in favor of the reparative has become the central moment in

queer theory's turn toward the future.

In her analysis of images of war trauma, Sontag thus uses a paranoid reading of thingification to discuss the process of objectification as it relates to image-making and the dehumanization that results. Such an analysis remains rooted in the past, rejecting the future and the possibility it presents for the creation of new theories of image-making and analysis. T. Benjamin Singer's "From the Medical Gaze to Sublime Mutations: The Ethics of (Re)Viewing Non-Normative Body Images" (2006) moves past Sontag's analysis and its freezing of time, seeking instead to theorize about what image-making looks like after the paranoid mode is rejected. Singer is instead concerned with a reparative reading of medical image-making through a lens of futurity, theorizing the complexity of transgender embodiment as emblematic of "disorienting encounters with the sublime" (Singer 601)—an embodiment which also must come to terms with the pathologizing and medicalizing legacy of medical photography and its power to create things from subjects. Singer believes that the "rootless, unpredictable, and circuitous variability" of transgender phenomena—in other words, their "thingness"—is rhizomatic. The rhizome, like the transgender body and the disabled body, encompasses "all manner of becomings." Singer's reparative reading therefore evades traditionally quantitative views of how genders, bodies, identities, and language combine to form the cognizable "things" known as the transgender body and the disabled body. By mechanically "de-sexualizing, de-familiarizing and de-personalizing the represented figure" (Singer 602), medical images "create anonymous character types and specimens of physical pathology, rather than images of people with uncommon bodies" (Singer 603). Instead, Singer moves toward a more qualitative, transformative understanding:

“The rhizome ... operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots ... [and] is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable In contrast to centered (even polycentric) systems with hierarchical modes of communication and pre-established paths, the rhizome is an acentered, nonhierarchical, nonsignifying system without ... an organizing memory or central automaton, defined solely by a circulation of states. What is at question in the rhizome is a relation to sexuality ... that is totally different from the arborescent relation [i.e., "merely localizable linkages between points and positions"]" (Singer 617).

Singer analyzes how transgender and disability self-portraiture creates a space for the validation of myriad expressions of embodiment, supplanting medical authority and providing an alternate mode that rehabilitates the transgender body and disabled body as not fixed “things” to be consumed, but as *thingness*—a sublime meeting-site that exceeds the bounds of formal aesthetics.

Singer begins his analysis of medical image-making and gatekeeping by noting that the disciplines of medicine and criminology have historically used their pathologizing gaze to "locate the sight/site of deviance" (Singer 601), and act as the "essential means of reproducing all forms and structures which science seeks for delineation" (Singer 602). Photography, especially its use in medical and criminological contexts, created space and institutional apparatuses for thing-making as a force of erasure and violence. However, this force is not absolute and can be challenged and resisted by those who fall within its purview. Singer theorizes photography and photographic “truth” as not "unmediated" and not suggestive of a way to "[overcome] subjectivity and [get] at the real truth" (Singer 602); this to say that there can be no supposition of a “real truth,” only one that privileges certain segments of the audience.

Singer's discussion of photographic ethics critiques Sontag and the way she theorizes "iconograph[ies] of suffering" (Sontag 40) as the logical consequence or sole

result of any body-focused image-making. Singer highlights the personal and artistic use of photography by transgender and disability activists as an archive that weakens Sontag's argument, while also enriching the lives and increasing the agency of trans and disabled people. Singer's definition of photographic ethics as a "proper regard for the other's legitimate claims for recognition" (Singer 602) creates a kind of interpellative possibility—not for violence, but to affirm. While the medical model fixes transgender and disabled bodies as things, Singer suggests a radical shift towards a model of sublimity, a kind of forward-viewing trauma response. Medical photography constructs the non-normative body via anonymity framed as objectivity: the subject's eyes are obscured by a black bar or their face entirely blurred, they are shot against a sterile, clinical background, and the image caption relates only the medical condition being documented. This construction itself erases the subject's humanity and agency, normalizes their reduction to only anatomy or pathology, and obscures the fact that these images are not really objective at all. These bodies are made into things, and their difference becomes aberration, taken up as medicalized pity, fetishism, or curiosity.¹

Despite this, Singer rejects outright a paranoid reading of photographic image-making, suggesting that the "truth" or "ethics" of thingness created by medicalization apparatuses lies in the body made a thing, not the process that thingifies. Singer instead advances the reparative mode, via affirming, self-determined, and community-based image-making, as the only way to approach finding, understanding, and validating the subjective truth contained within the spectrum of "things" and the complex processes that create them. Contrasting "the colonizing eye of authority," what Griselda Pollack terms

¹ It is perplexing that people with medicalized bodies (e.g., possessing testicular feminization) were pathologized while also being fetishized because they outwardly depicted a normative/abled ideal (e.g., Marilyn Monroe's body type).

the 'mastering eye/I'" (Singer 604), the "subjective eye/I" resists a thingification that pathologizes, medicalizes, and colonizes. It embodies the social/medical divide (i.e., subjective embodiment vs. "objective") and resists and critiques the privileging of the professional over the amateur in the process of depicting and in depictions of non-normative social reality. Singer cites Magnus Hirschfeld's medical photography as exemplary of a rehabilitative medical regime which sought to validate rather than erase transgender subjectivity. Singer's analysis of affirming medical portraiture frames aesthetic choices as a "legitimizing strategy" that allows visibility by "counter[ing] the tyranny of the visual" and "the spectator's pre-conditioned gaze" (Singer 607).

Institutional thingification creates belief only for evidence that matches dominant narratives, while affirming transgender and disability imagery creates space for thingness-as-becoming that situates non-matching evidence as legitimate. In this way, disability imagery can resist collusion with the medicalized gaze, as the audience's gaze is reflected back onto them. Such images show the "[social] ambivalence experienced by a person trapped, not in the wrong body, but in the wrong context" (Singer 611). Access to a multitude of non-curative futures is created out of the unexpected ways these traps are evaded and bypassed: after all, "laughing at, jarring, or exiting from systems of exploitation or oppression" including social, economic, and medical structures "clearly designed with the interests of capital, not human beings, in mind is ... the crux of ... crip traditions of noncompliance and even desertion" (McRuer 139-40). It is through such images that we may begin to grasp how disabled transgender subjects might integrate their hybrid identities and their continuing relationship to trauma, in order to rehabilitate their status as "things" and move into thingness as a meeting with the world.

The rehabilitative practice of thingness I call attention to here is evident in other modes of transgender and disabled cultural production that showcase a confrontational and disruptive politics of futurity. For example, through his memoir, *Man Alive: A True Story of Violence, Forgiveness and Becoming a Man* (2014), Thomas Page McBee theorizes that reparative and paranoid thingness are inseparably linked to both the production of knowledge and the construction and regulation of identity. As a literary form that recollects the past from the unfolding present, memoir is explicitly concerned with the inevitability of the future. Centrally embedded within McBee's narrative structure are his multiple, parallel selves and histories—a multiplicity that suggests a sense of possibility. This fragmentation of self over time, however, is also the way through which McBee experiences his continuing relationship to trauma. McBee's retelling of his abuse mimics both memory and the experience of trauma, as it goes forward and backward in time, rather than a linear, presentist narrative. McBee recounts being sexually abused as a child by his father after an incident as an adult where he is mugged at gunpoint, with his realization and acceptance of his trans identity and his experiences with gender transition—namely, pondering a potential present/future as a happily-married transgender man—interwoven into both narratives. Trauma occurs for McBee as a dissociative quality, a “freeze ... [and a] split” (McBee 14), a condition that seems inherently linked to the double-bind of navigating the myriad ways of embodying one's transness while seeking to move beyond and through legacies of abuse, both personal and institutional. However, this use of parallel structures within his narrative also situates his transgender identity and his abuse history as neither exclusive of each other, nor solely causing each other to be brought into existence. McBee feels alternately

hypervisible and invisible in regard to “how [he] lost [his] body or how [he] conflated the two ways his body was lost to [him]” (McBee 14)—sexual abuse changes the way McBee inhabits and thinks about his body, but his relationship with his former body also changes due to his gender transition. He looks back on being “a trans man, an invisible man” (McBee 162) and experiences dreams of a fully-transitioned, future masculine self, suggestive of how a paranoid thingification can also be a force for creation. How McBee reacts in his memoir to his body moving through the world and through his own history, calling it “an adventure story about how [he] quit being a ghost” (McBee 8), suggests a possibility for him to remake himself as the kind of man he wants to be, both literally through his gender transition, and psychologically in coming to terms with his own masculine identity in relation to the toxic masculinity of his abuser.

McBee wonders at first if his abuse caused his transness, and if he can outrun his trauma, both through grappling with it in his mind and physically by moving away, across the country. Later, he realizes that his past selves will always remain, and that he must first come to terms with the role his father’s traumatic past played in his own abuse history in order to move forward with his life. During the course of this meeting, by allowing his father to call him Page while they put McBee’s memories of abuse in context, McBee is simultaneously Page, his pre-transition self, and his future, adult self, Thomas. Given the chance to finally react to his father’s hurt face-to-face, McBee is “powerful and fragile at once” (McBee 84) and “stricken with tenderness” (McBee 144), deciding to reject violent masculinity and create a new future for himself wherein he has a sense of closure, understanding, and empathy.

Rather than casting transgender identity in the shadow of the constant subjugation

and destruction of transgender, queer, and disabled bodies, and the constant, repeated viewing of such images as a kind of spectacle or entertainment, McBee believes that he can “let [his] body deliver [him], [he] could trust its instincts ... [and] know [himself]” (McBee 148). He suggests that there is a better way to be a person in the world. He does not use his transition as a curative solution to his trauma or gender issues; instead, he harnesses this technology as tool to rehabilitate his relationship to the trauma itself. This practice functions in the classical sense of rehabilitation, integrating his identity into society by making it identical—or very similar—to conventional masculinity, albeit a more empathetic and self-aware version of it. However, by transitioning in such a conscious way, he is also rejecting a medical context that traditionally employs transition to cure trans people of the negative status of “thing” assigned to transness. McBee uses thingification subversively to access other futures, to “be more than the worst that's done to [him]” (McBee 107). His use of transition also further problematizes other kinds of curative rehabilitation models, like the common “wrong body” gender transition narrative, awakening the reader to the reparative and confrontational possibilities of noncompliant disability and gender futures: the “truth isn't binary ... everything, in the end, is a choice” (McBee 81); ultimately, “every moment [is] a decision, a story” which one tells themselves (McBee 147).

Much like McBee’s memoir, noncompliant rehabilitation takes a central position in *Transparent*, a dramatic fictionalized account of creator Jill Soloway's experiences as the adult child of a transgender parent. The Amazon streaming TV series focuses on the dysfunctional Pfefferman family, who all seek various interventions, healthy or otherwise, to come to terms with and move beyond familial and personal traumas.

Several of the episodes in *Transparent's* second season directly address the intergenerational trauma and shame inherited from the Holocaust, and the familial and personal anxieties it creates. The series' title could itself be read as a reference to thingification: the thing is rendered as visible to society because of their difference, not despite it; however, the act of being made a thing creates both a sense of social/economic invisibility and necessitates the thing's ostracization and relegation to the margins. In this sense, the title has many layers of meaning: It could refer to a transgender parent; to not being completely visible to society as a transgender woman; and to the sense of hypervisibility having the "wrong" gender creates in the eyes of those cisgender individuals invested in reinforcing binarism through gender policing. The entire Pfefferman family seems to try to cope in their own maladaptive ways with the trauma of Maura's gender transition, but also the family's unspoken Jewish connection to the Holocaust.

Throughout the narrative arc I examined, many parallels were made between the historical Pfeffermans and their modern counterparts, which recalls McBee's strategic use of parallel histories in *Man Alive*. Ali and her girlfriend Syd go to the nursing home to visit Ali's grandmother, Rose; during the visit, Rose wrongly interpellates Ali as Rose's long-dead sister, Gittel, due to Ali's androgynous appearance. Ali does not really understand this misrecognition at first, but also doesn't seem to mind, as it sparks a fruitful interest in and study of the epigenetic transmission of family trauma ("Cherry Blossoms"). This seems apt, because Ali is the one person in the Pfefferman family who seems to be putting in the most effort to try to understand their traumatic history and how it plays into their dysfunctional dynamic.

The use of Gittel's ring as a plot device during this narrative arc makes it a multifaceted “thing.” Gittel literally embodies thingness-as-futurity, through her gender “transformation,” and as a representation of the historicity of transgender and gender-variant individuals and communities. Gittel creates a lived precedent for Maura’s existence as an out-and-proud trans woman, and her story presents to transgender people—and the allied viewer—a cautious and bittersweet optimism that society can someday achieve the trans-affirming utopian milieu that the Magnus Hirschfeld Institute sought to create for people like her; and that the loss of Gittel—and others like her—will not have been in vain. Gittel’s ring is also symbolic: When the ring is passed to Ali from her brother Josh, it has the reparative and emotional effect of making Ali feel like more of a woman, while connecting her more to Jewishness and the family's past. However, the ring, which Gittel and Rose's mother, Yetta, hides inside the chocolates she brings with her when she and Rose leave Berlin for America, also evokes the painful and enduring loss of Gittel and people like her throughout time. Due to her legal “transvestite” status, Gittel is seen as non-human in the eyes of the Nazis, and something that must be destroyed. The ring is a literal token of the Pfeffermans' traumatic and tragic history. This makes its destructive power, when transferred to Josh and Raquel as an unintentional symbol of their relationship, all the more saddening.

Shelly, Maura's ex-spouse and mother of the Pfefferman children, seems to be coping with the family's dysfunction by acting like a stereotypical Jewish mother and cohabitating with Buzz, a man she meets while running for a position on the synagogue board. It is not at all clear in Shelly's relationship with her children who is actually the parent: Shelly’s guilted her children that at least she “didn't beat [them]” and donating

Ali's high school paintings because her house is “not a storage facility” (“The Book of Life”) are telling signs of the shame Shelly carries with herself about her own role as a parent and the role of parents as the bearers of family history. Her embodiment of Maura's grandmother's quintessentially Jewish anxiety is apparent in the way Shelly cites superstitions and overdramatically grieves when Josh tells those gathered at the Yom Kippur dinner that he and his fiancée Raquel have broken up and Raquel has miscarried (“The Book of Life”). The Yom Kippur-focused “The Book of Life” ultimately raises the question: “What does it mean when forgiveness is asked for, but not given?” While obtaining forgiveness has been linked to popular ideas about healing from and moving past trauma, the process of seeking forgiveness can also be a form of gatekeeping that consolidates the abuser’s power and entrenches paranoia, thus preventing futurity. Resisting the need for forgiveness in order to heal and allowing oneself to be angry or bitter is also another form of rehabilitation from trauma that is sometimes undertaken. One could link forgiveness with visibility in *Transparent*’s line of questioning: absent forgiveness or visibility, a paranoid thingness occurs, although increased visibility also has its own dangers.

“Man on the Land,” with its subplot concerning the fictional women's music festival Idyllwyld, focuses on visibility and paranoia in relation to thingness, namely the parallels drawn between Gittel's “Jew shoes” and the festival attendees' “man on the land” chant. The name of the festival itself seems to evoke a kind of futurity in the tension between the two components of its name, as it forces the attendees to choose between the sociality of the utopian idyll, which necessarily has a homogenizing effect—and creates a blunted affect—or a collective future that totally embraces wildness in all

its forms. An idyll is “an extremely happy, peaceful, or picturesque episode or scene, typically an idealized or unsustainable one” (Oxford English Dictionaries). This is contrasted by the wildness of the literal wilderness in which Idyllwyld takes place, but also the wild, sexually-liberated behavior of its attendees. It is perhaps the wildness of this idyll which makes it both ideal and unsustainable: an idyll must eventually end. Maura feels threatened at Idyllwyld because she fears not only not being seen as a woman but wrongly seen as a predator: cast as a “thing.” Strangely, this fear arises only after she learns the festival has a “women-born-women” policy. The policy forces Maura into the unwanted status of “thing,” and causes her to become alternately hypervigilant and defensive, marking the process as one of identity regulation and institutional control. The festival's chant has the same function as the shoes, announcing the presence of an “undesirable” and operating on the basis of a generalized but clearly-made assumption of such an identity. In this case, Jewishness and transness both have conferred upon them a negative and paranoid thing status.

Maura's ability to pass, to be seen correctly as a woman, is what initially grants her access to the festival grounds, but it is also her lack of transgender visibility and her failure to be interpellated as a woman that makes her denounce the festival and leave. Maura's discomfort with Idyllwyld's liberated sexual politics also echoes Yetta's admonishment to Gittel after she inadvertently witnesses Gittel's performance in a holiday-themed burlesque show at the Magnus Hirschfeld Institute: “If you're going to be a girl, cover your tits. It's shameful” (“Man on the Land”). It also mirrors Maura's confrontation with her friend Davina on the morning of Yom Kippur over being objectified by Davina's trans-amorous boyfriend, Sal, who is staying with Davina after

getting out of jail. Maura may be coming from a place of emotional closeness with her friend in telling Davina that she “can do better” than Sal, but Maura has clearly overstepped her boundaries. Davina rightfully calls out Maura on her classism, and ultimately tells her to leave. In doing so, Davina problematizes popular conceptions of the relationships transgender women can and do engage in. Davina is not particularly content with being a fetish, a thing, but she clearly realizes that there is an underlying economic component to her relationship: “I’m a fifty-three-year-old ex-prostitute HIV-positive woman with a dick. I know what I want, and I know what I need” (“The Book of Life”).

Ali, who has been trying to become more feminine and Jewish, wears the “Jew shoes” while walking through Idyllwyld's grounds in search of Maura. This triggers a dreamlike flashback wherein she witnesses Gittel being dragged away by Nazis while the Hirschfeld Institute's collection of sexological literature burns in a giant bonfire. The message of the scene captures the bimodality of thingness: Is Ali still supposed to be aligned with Gittel as a kind of epiphany of personal, familial, and Jewish futurity, in which Ali begins to heal the family’s trauma and her own by literally moving past their past histories, or is a bigger parallel being made by the show’s writers between Idyllwyld's anti-transgender policy and the Nazi suppression of “deviance” as thing-making processes? Echoing her daughter Sarah's “religious” sexual awakening, Maura has a romantic and sexual connection with the breast cancer survivor Vicki, who gave Maura a ride after seeing her hitchhiking after leaving Idyllwyld. Their bonding in both being things, rejected by society for not being ideally feminine enough, casts reparative thingness as accessible only through a collective social relation that resists a paranoid

identification. Ultimately, it is Vicki's compassion and empathy that gives Maura the strength to go visit her mother, who has "never really seen [Maura]" as herself ("Grey Green Brown & Copper"), and try to reconnect.

In one last parallel glance into Maura's history, the viewer witnesses her traumatic birth and her mother's apparent disappointment with birthing an assigned-male child. The lingering effects this has, even decades later, are painfully evident, though they are effects which Maura has chosen to finally start accepting and working through. This disappointment with men and maleness, akin to the way McBee's mother says "men" as if there is "a lemon in [her] mouth" (McBee 7), seems to arise from Rose still being distraught over losing Gittel because of the evil deeds of men, and being married to a man who did not really know or love her. It is doubly tragic that so many years later Rose still can't see Maura as she is. Post-transition, Maura is again reduced to a thing, an "obstacle for her family to overcome" (Léger). To her mother, Maura exists as a mere symbol of Rose's loss of Gittel to time, and not as an actual, full person. This is also reflective of how broader society does not see transgender women as "real" women or even full human beings. This paranoid conception of transgender people as only symbolic of suffering, tragedy, or inhumanity marks *Transparent* as an inadequate source from which to truly envision a complete rehabilitation of/from the kinds of loss and trauma it explores thematically.

The speculative, future-oriented nature of *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) differentiates it from my previous sources; the film's insistence on looking at "what could be" instead of "what is" and its rejection of the past situates it as perhaps the best source for exploring a new rehabilitative politics of thingness-as-future. The major themes of the

film are survival, solidarity, home, and redemption; these are all themes which are inherently suggestive of futurity. Furthermore, the character of the Emperor Furiosa can be read as symbolic of Donna Haraway's cyborg, particularly Alison Kafer's conception of the cyborg's function as a disability analogue. While the cyborg is a temporal specter of danger, violence, control, and destruction for Kafer, Haraway, the Emperor Furiosa, and Max Rockatansky alike, it is also symbolic of a feminist, queer, and crip futurity, both “an elsewhere born out of the hard (and sometimes joyful) work of getting on together” and “a matter of survival” (Kafer 128). Consequently, it is useful to examine how an interpretation of Furiosa's embodiment of a cyborgian ethos maps onto an analysis of thingness as a collective solution to the problem of how to obtain futurity in a literal sense.

In the film, the Emperor Furiosa abducts and frees the Immortan Joe's Five Wives, who had been previously doomed to a future of and enslavement and containment as broodmares, existing only to bear healthy [i.e., abled] children for Joe, who is himself dependent on assistive technology to live. This theme of containment as linked to reproductive futures is similar to the containment-as-cure discourse advanced by Hollywood depictions of disability based on a pity/victim representation model (Hayes and Black). This film is also a Hollywood depiction of disability, albeit one that avoids a curative representation and frames disability as something commonplace and non-allegorical. Furiosa's sense of community with the group of women is formed via “affinity-through-difference,” based not “on the basis of natural identification [as women], but ... on the basis of conscious coalition, of affinity, of political kinship” (Kafer 104). *Mad Max: Fury Road* therefore resists the kinds of sociality explored in *Man Alive*

and *Transparent*, which are based in more traditional paranoid identity categorizations. Furiosa herself could be categorized as a literal “[map] of power and identity” and “function[ing] as evidence’ of ‘differences, histories, stories, bodies, [and] places” (Kafer 106).

Furiosa's “disinterest in and refusal of temporalities ruled by ‘salvation history,’ ‘oedipal calendar[s]’ and ‘rebirth without flaw’” marks her as a cyborg. Her refusal of “rebirth without flaw” in particular could be articulated as a major reason why she frees the Wives in the first place, allowing them to experience a sense of futurity “grounded in something other than the compulsory reproduction of able-bodiedness/able-mindedness” (Kafer 106) that Joe demands of and from them. The audience never really gets the sense that Furiosa's prosthesis is a source “only of new powers, never of problems” (Kafer 107); she seems to work better with it detached from her body when she is working on the War Rig in the desert after evading Joe's forces during a sandstorm. Furiosa's disability is also never framed as a problem to be solved. It could be posited that absent a defined curative narrative, her disability might be read in terms of being “exemplary, and self-evident, [cyborg], requiring neither analysis nor critique” (Kafer 105). Ultimately, Furiosa's use of her prosthesis is neither ahistorical or apolitical; she uses it to fix and drive the War Rig, which will get her and the others to freedom, but she also uses it to hold a gun, and to defend herself and protect her fellow travelers. Furiosa's use of assistive technology, echoing McRuer, marks her disability as “severe,” read through her “defiance, fierceness, [and] critique; the ‘severity’ of [her] impairments is due not to [her] perceived failures to adhere to normative expectations of movement, flexibility, or appearance, but to [her] public ‘call[ing] out [of] the inadequacies of compulsory able-

bodiedness” (Kafer 124). The Wives, via their association with Furiosa, also participate in this “public calling out” of compulsory able-bodiedness as an inadequate or undesirable future.

Another way one might conceive of Furiosa as cyborgian is via the film's interest, stated or not, in resisting “binaries of pure/impure, natural/unnatural, and natural/technological” (Kafer 109). The film is also cyborgian in its treatment of Max Rockatansky himself, specifically around the questions it raises about “what it means to be an ally” (Kafer 117). The film interrogates the ableist and capitalist positioning of people “in terms of efficiency, productivity, and ability to work, or lack thereof” (Kafer 119), as Furiosa, Max, and the Wives all resist and/or plainly refuse to participate in the “normal” work demanded of them by their class status within the post-apocalyptic society, and instead attempt to escape via crip futurity to a literal “elsewhen.” Furiosa's relationship to Max is reminiscent of how sociologist Rod Michalko describes his connection with his guide dog, Smokie: their bond is both “an opening into a new way or new understanding of 'being in the world,'” and a kinship “constituted by complex relations of trust, respect, dependence, and communication” (Kafer 119-20). The post-apocalyptic narrative of *Mad Max: Fury Road*, and its use of cyborg theory, “enables us to ask 'local political questions of consequences and inclusion’” (Kafer 124), forcing us to examine the effects of invoking the cyborg in our own understandings of the world, being in the world, and disability itself.

Thingness-as-futurity can and must feature in and inform any conceptions of disability and transgender identity. These identities contain “political, ethical, and epistemic dimensions” and navigating them “will require grappling with [their] histories

and futures” (Kafer 128). The use of the cyborg as one of many utopian models has broad and potentially positive implications for transgender/disabled sociality and the reparative, collective futurity that can result. Through the cyborg, we can better grasp how disabled transgender subjects might integrate their hybrid identities and their continuing relationship to trauma, in order to rehabilitate their status as “things” and move into thingness as a meeting with the world.

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Rehabilitation describes specialized healthcare dedicated to improving, maintaining or restoring physical strength, cognition and mobility with maximized results. Typically, rehabilitation helps people gain greater independence after illness, injury or surgery. Rehabilitation of people with disabilities is a process aimed at enabling them to reach and maintain their optimal physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological and social functional level. It involves a team of physicians, specially trained therapists, and nurses, as well as psychologists, nutritionists, biomedical engineers, and chap Rehabilitation is the process of re-educating and retraining those who commit crime. It generally involves psychological approaches which target the cognitive distortions associated with specific kinds of crime committed by particular offenders - but may also involve more general education such as literacy skills and work training. The goal is to re-integrate offenders back into society. A successful rehabilitation of a prisoner is also helped if convicted persons "Political realism refuses to identify the moral aspirations of a particular nation with the moral laws that govern the universe. As it distinguishes between truth and opinion, so it distinguishes between truth and idolatry. All nations are tempted " and few have been able to resist the power for long " to clothe their own aspirations and action in the moral purposes of the universe. To know that nations are subject to the moral law is one thing, while to pretend to know with certainty what is good and evil in the relations among nations is quite another. There is a world of difference between Providing rehabilitation for inmates offers countless benefits to the individual inmate as well as the community that inmate will re-enter upon his or her release. The options for rehabilitation for inmates vary by facility, offense, and sentence length. Just like the cause of incarceration varies by inmate, the type of rehabilitation an inmate might respond to can also vary. (Note: To learn about your loved one's rehabilitation options, please contact their correctional facility directly and request more information.) Some inmates may benefit from multiple kinds of rehabilitation. We put toge The first characteristic of political globalization is the creation of supranational organisms that assume part of the power traditionally exercised by national governments. This amounts to a loss of sovereignty on the part of States. Greater international cooperation. This facet of globalization seeks to increase international cooperation to address issues that a single country would find difficult to solve. A great example is the fight against global warming; any action to develop policies to stop it requires the participation of as many countries as possible. The Globalization Of Politics: The Changed Focus Of Political Action In The Modern World. Retrieved from foreignaffairs.com. Guptara, Prabhu.