

TRANSFIGURATION: A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF MALE-TO-FEMALE  
TRANSSEXUAL IN GEORGIA

by

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(Under the Direction of Kathleen de Marrais)

ABSTRACT

The position of transsexual in the West has been constituted in narrative as a specific body and subject position. To be a transsexual is to narrate oneself as a transsexual (Prosser, 1998). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine how narrative re/produces a transsexual body and subject. Specifically, I examined the structure of transsexual narratives and the body and subject represented in these narratives.

This study was a narrative analysis (Bal, 1999). The participants for this study were two male-to-female transsexuals living in Georgia. The data consisted of two biographical interviews, two photo elicitations, and one Yahoo profile. The interview data collected were condensed using Bal's (1999) concept of an event and Moustakas's (1994) concept of data reduction. These narratives were then analyzed for their alignment to Roof's (1996) heteronarrative structure – an introduction that commences in the heteronormative and foreshadows the struggles to come, a conclusion that ends in the heteronormative, and a middle which allows homology, or the logic of the perverse. The constituents of the body and subject – essential, inscribed (Foucault, 1980, 1984, 1990), discursive (Butler, 1993, 1997, 1999)

and/or becoming (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) of the protagonist in each narrative was also analyzed.

It was found that the position of transsexual was contained within the heteronormative through the structure of narrative. Each narrative erased the homologic possibility of transsexual through concluding in the heterologic, the logic of productivity, capitalism, and the modern alignment of sex/gender/sexual orientation. Additionally, the homology of the middle was an illusion as each instance of ambiguity was quickly pulled back into the heteronormative. It was also found that the presentation of the body and subject followed a heteronarrative structure. Almost exclusively, each narrative began and concluded with an essential self and presented, albeit briefly, an ambiguous body and subject in the middle. Each homologic body and subject was thwarted, however, as it was quickly sutured to the heteronormative.

INDEX WORDS: Transsexual, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Identity, Narrative

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Living in the excesses of the heterosexual matrix, the interconnecting discourses that constitute heterosexuality as the normative, is not a new mode of existence. Variations of transgendered bodies and subjects permeate cultures and histories (Feinberg, 1996; Green, 1998; Prosser, 1998). The Roman Goddess Venus listened with compassion to the desires of feminine souls residing in male bodies; prior to becoming the emperor of Rome, Heliogabalus was delighted to be called wife and Queen in his former marriage; Abbe de Choisy, Ambassador of Louis XIV, knew herself as a woman and dressed in female attire as she passed in and out of Russia on trips of espionage (Green, 1998). In 1922, Earl Lind was castrated because she wanted to rid her body of its maleness (Meyerowitz, 2002). In 2004, Deirdre McCloskey, a post-operative male-to-female transsexual, is the Distinguished Professor of the Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Precious Armani, a pre-operative male-to-female transsexual, was shot in the head in front of her apartment in Buckhead, Georgia.

In the West the position of male-to-female transsexual has been constituted in narrative as a specific body and subject position. Although the position of female-to-male transsexual intersects with this position, it is an alternate experience and signification – the meaning which is linked to a signifier, a word -- and beyond the scope of this study. In the following I discuss the emergence of the male-to-female transsexual position, its changing signification, and its



dependence on the body and subject positions available. This is followed by the purpose statement and research questions of this study.

In the West, the first sex reassignment surgery was recorded in 1922 when Lili Elbe, born Earl Lind, was castrated in Berlin at the Hirschfeld Institute (Meyerowitz, 2002). Elbe died nine years later of heart failure after surgery to construct a vagina. With the help of her doctor's pen, her autobiography was published in the United States in 1932. The fabula--"a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors" (Bal, 1999, p. 5)--of her story was that she was a female "personality" born into an intersexed body. Reaching a fairly wide circulation in the States, Elbe's autobiography spread this specific hermaphroditic fabula, which may still be heard in transsexual autobiographies to date.

The hermaphroditic fabula began to shift in 1949 when Dr. David Cauldwell, a psychiatrist, named "trans-sexual" those individuals who narrated themselves as being the opposite gender from their biological sex (Meyerowitz, 2002). In this naming, Cauldwell not only shifted the transsexual fabula from one of being a female personality in an intersexed body to one of being a woman born into the wrong body, he constituted transsexuality as an autobiographical act, one was a transsexual because one named herself as such (Prosser, 1998).

A contemporary of Cauldwell's and the first advocate for medical intervention rather than psychoanalysis in the treatment of transsexuals (Fausto-Sterling, 2000), Harry Benjamin, an endocrinologist, interviewed hundreds of patients, diagnosing over a hundred of them as transsexual (Califia, 1997). His diagnoses were based on the sex/gender misalignment fabula set forth by Cauldwell accompanied by a theme of extreme psychological distress as a result of gender dysphoria (Prosser, 1998). But, working in the strict heterosexual social climate of post World War II, Benjamin and his associates only supported those candidates who would align

within the heterosexual matrix after transition (Meyerowitz, 2002). Thus, to be diagnosed as transsexual and be in the position to receive help from the medical community in transitioning, a patient had to narrate physically – possess a body that would pass after transition -- and textually – structure her narrative within the misalignment fabula – a specific heterosexual narrative. This narration was based on a modern understanding of self. The transsexual was constituted as a material outside – the physical body -- and a psychological inside -- gender. She possessed the agency – the internal motivation and ability to act -- to seek help and heal – a process toward a predetermined teleological wholeness -- her sex/gender misalignment. She then followed what was considered the natural developmental path to becoming a productive heterosexual member of society.

Those individuals who did not follow this narrative structure were denied an official diagnosis of transsexual. These women had few options: if they had the means, they could get hormones and sex reassignment surgery in other countries, if they did not have such means, they often committed suicide due to the intolerable stress of living in gender dysphoria or they ingested hormones they bought on the streets and hid their secondary sex characteristics to the best of their ability. By the late 1990's, a different type of transsexual narrative was beginning to emerge. In 18 oral histories with trans people, Hill (2000) found that the majority of his participants narrated some aspect of a postmodern subjectivity, a position he defined as both/and and neither/nor. Trans stories with postmodern subjectivities can also be read in recent autobiographical vignettes (Nestle et al., 2002; O'Keefe & Fox, 2003; Queen & Schimel, 1997); these texts, in varying degrees, represented a fragmented and shifting body and subject. She/males identifying as female, but not women (Sepulveda, 2003); a narrated "I" that slides

between male and female significations (Munson, 2002), and women who are what Hill (2000) terms “neither/nor” (Samson, 2003).

These narratives function on a postfoundational discourse -- interlocking groups of statements that exclude and reproduce one another and make possible the appearance of objects and ideas (Foucault, 1972) -- of the body and subject. Unlike the sex/gender misalignment narratives which were constituted on the understanding of a modern, essential self, these narratives represent moments of a homologic transsexual body and subject -- a body and subject constituted outside the logic of heteronormative -- the logic of the modern individual, the “natural” alignment of sex/gender/sexual orientation, the re/productive logic of sexuality and capitalism. Aligned with several positions simultaneously or with none of the positions available, constituted of discontinuous parts, and in a constant state of transition, these bodies and subjects may be read as inscribed in and through power (Foucault, 1980, 1984a, 1990), a body formed in and through language (Butler, 1993, 1997, 1999), and/or a body and subject constituted through becomings (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

#### Purpose of the Study

From its emergence in the West as a female personality in an intersexed body to the current narrated moments of a homologic subjectivity, transsexual has remained a narrative position. Not only must one narrate oneself as a transsexual to be a transsexual (Prosser, 1998), there is no body and subject prior to narration (Butler, 1993; Roof, 1996). Therefore, the question arises, how does narrative re/produce the transsexual body and subject? The investigation of this question may not only illustrate how narrative functions to re/produce a transsexual body and subject, it may also bring to consciousness the erasure of the homology -- the logic of the perverse, the logic of the middle, the logic of adolescents in Freudian

psychology wherein the desire is mandated to cross sex and gender boundaries (Roof, 1996)-- of transsexual subjectivity, showing the transsexual body and subject written in contradiction as it is simultaneously fixed to a position of heteronormative intelligibility (Bal, 1999; Cohen & Shires, 1988; Roof, 1996). Additionally, such an analysis may show sites where the transsexual body and subject refuse containment within the heteronormative, pointing the way toward a transfiguration of our narrative structure, allowing for the intelligibility and acceptability of a transsexual body and subject through the continuation of the homologic. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine how narrative re/produces the transsexual body and subject. Specifically, I ask the following questions:

1. What is the structure of transsexual narratives?
  - a. What is the structure of the entire narrative?
  - b. What is the structure of the introduction, middle, and conclusion of the narrative?
2. How are the transsexual body and subject narrated?
  - a. How are the body and subject narrated as inscribed?
  - b. How are the body and subject narrated as discursive?
  - c. How are the body and subject narrated as becoming?

In the following chapter I discuss transsexual as a narrative position. This is followed by a third chapter in which I explain the methodology and methods I used in this study. I then discuss the two cases analyzed in this study. An attempt at disrupting the heteronarrative structure can be read in the sixth chapter, followed by a discussion and further avenues for research in the final chapter.

## Definition of Terms

Becoming (Body and Subject): A becoming is always a becoming something. It is not a state in and of itself. It is not an imitation. It is “emitting particles that enter the relation of movement and rest, or the zone of proximity,” of that which you become (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 277).

Discourse: It is interlocking groups of statements that exclude and reproduce one another and make possible the appearance of objects and ideas (Foucault, 1972). According to Bove (1990), discourse cannot be defined, for any defining is an essentializing practice which would contradict the logic of the structure of thought which uses the term.

Discursive Body and Subject: The discursive subject is the position of the I which appears in and through language; the discursive body is the material formation, appearance, and understanding of the physical body constituted through the repetition of language and the discourses available (Butler, 1997).

Essential Self: An essential self is the modern understanding of the human. It is a psychological and/or spiritual inside which naturally exists at the core of every human being. The body is genetically determined and naturally formed. The combination of the psyche/soul and the body constitute an individual.

Heterology: Heterology is the logic of the heterosexual matrix; it is the underpinning re/productive logic of capitalism and the modern individual, and it is the logic of sex/gender/sexual orientation alignment (Roof, 1996).

Heteronarrative: The heteronarrative is the structure of narrative in the West according to Roof (1996). The heteronarrative begins and concludes in the heteronormative. The introduction foreshadows the struggles to come and the middle present homology.

Heteronormative: The ideology that the heterosexual matrix is the natural norm.

Heterosexual Matrix: The heterosexual matrix is the interconnecting discourses that constitute heterosexuality as the normative. It is underpinned by the reproductive logic of capitalism (Roof, 1996).

Homology: Homology is the logic of the perverse; it is the logic of the middle; it is the logic of adolescents in Freudian psychology wherein the desire is mandated to cross sex and gender boundaries (Roof, 1996).

Inscribed body and subject: Within this work, an inscribed subject and a discursive subject have not been differentiated. An inscribed body is the material body formed through language and discourse. It is the language and discourse literally written on the body constituting certain behaviors, postures, movements, and forms (Foucault, 1984).

Perverse: Perverse is that which occurs in the middle; it is the stage of adolescence; it is ambiguous, homologous and queer (Roof, 1996).

Queer: Any individual who self identifies as not politically, ideologically, or socially aligning with the heteronormative sex/gender/sexual orientation alignment. Often used as a political stance and/or a poststructural sign of “troubling,” (St. Pierre, 2000).

Stratification: “Strata are layers, belts” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 40). Strata give form to matter. They imprison intensities or lock singularities into systems of resonance and redundancy. They produce on “the body of the earth molecules large and small and organizing them into molar aggregates” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 40).

Transgender: Individuals who self identify as not aligning with the heteronormative sex/gender/sexual orientation alignment.

Transsexual (Male-to-female): A male-to-female transsexual is a biological male desiring to change at least some of her bodily characteristics of sex to female characteristics of sex or who finds an incongruence between her “inner” gender and “outer” sex and has a desire to express her gender through alternate significations, such as body modifications, cross dressing, and gender/sex blurred identifications (Lawrence, 2002)

## CHAPTER 2

### TRANSSEXUALITY: A NARRATIVE POSITION

Throughout cultures and histories, people have lived transgendered lives. In the fourteenth century, Pedro de Magalhaes reported that some females among the Tupinamba in northeastern Brazil lived as men and with men, hunting and going to war; in 1429, Joan of Arc dressed in traditional male clothing, gathered an army of peasants, and began her crusade to push the English from France; in the seventeenth century Jesuit Jacques Marquette wrote that when the Councils of the Illinois and Nadouessi met, they would not make a decision without the advice of Two-spirit people; in 1886, We'Wha, a biological male and an accomplished potter and weaver, wore the ceremonial regalia of Zuni women and spent six months meeting with President Grover Cleveland who recognized her as a woman (Feinberg, 1996). Within their own cultures, these people were revered – The Tupinamba men were “accepted among men” (Feinberg, 1996, p. 22); the two spirited people of the Illinois and Nadousessi were “people of consequence” (Feinberg, 1996, p. 23); We'Wha was buried in a dress which covered men's trousers, and the clothes of Joan of Arc were considered “sacred” by her peasant followers (Feinberg, 1996, p. 31). But to the colonizers, transgendered people were “sinful, heinous, perverted, nefarious, abominable, unnatural, disgusting, lewd,” and oft as not tossed to the dogs, and used as an excuse to “justify genocide” (Feinberg, 1996, p. 22).

From revered to despised, the meaning of people who live alternately gendered lives has changed through out history. In the liberal sexual attitudes of Germany in the early 1920's, the acceptability of the first sex change operations were argued on the grounds of the



hermaphroditic bodies of the patients. In 1950's America, when national security was synonymous with the nuclear family, transsexuality emerged as an narrative act; one was a transsexual because one narrated oneself as a transsexual. Within this context, transsexuality was mandated as a specific narrative that relied on a modern self – a material outside and a psychological inside which conformed to the heterosexual alignment of sex/gender/sexual orientation, agenic, developmental, and re/productive. With the postmodern turn of the 1960's, "rights" activism of the 1980's, and identity politics of the 1990's, a new transsexual narrative began to appear on the margins (Nestle et al., 2002). These narratives relied on a postfoundational discourse of the body and subject, narrating the position of transsexuality as both/and or neither/nor (Hill, 2000). Yet throughout its changing representation, the position of transsexual remained a narrative position.

In the following, I discuss the emergence and changing signification of the position of transsexuality in the West from the first recorded sex reassignment surgery in the 1920's to the present. Concluding that transsexual is a narrative position reliant on the body and subject positions available, I then discuss several readings of the body and subject (Butler, 1993, 1997, 1999; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Foucault, 1980, 1984a, 1990).

### The Emergence of the Sign Transsexual

Within European, modern culture, the first record of a transgendered person surgically altering her body in order to be the opposite sex was that of Dorchen Richter. In 1922, Richter was castrated, and in 1931 she had her penis removed and a vagina constructed at Magnus Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science in Berlin (Meyerowitz, 2002). Hirschfeld, a German physician and pioneer in sex reassignment surgery, first wrote of and operated on transsexuals, whom he called transvestites, in the early 1920's. Self identifying as a homosexual and

believing that “hermaphrodites, androgynes, homosexuals, and transvestites constituted distinct types of [natural] sexual ‘intermediaries,’” Hirschfeld was a key figure in the emergence of European sexual science, which promoted the theory of universal bisexuality and the individual right to live one’s gender and sex of choice (Meyerowitz, 2002).

Although a small number of Americans had heard of Hirschfeld and the possibility of sex transformation in the 1920’s, the 1933 English translation of *Man into Women: An Authentic Record of a Sex Change* (Hoyer, 1933), the autobiography of Hirschfeld’s patient Lili Elbe, spread a specific transsexual narrative. Relying on a hermaphroditic fabula – a female personality in a hermaphroditic body-- Elbe narrated herself as a female “personality” born into a body with two underdeveloped ovaries and testicles. In adolescence, her body beginning to demonstrate female secondary sex characteristics, and she began to experience male desire. According to Meyerowitz (2002), Elbe’s intersexed condition is highly dubious as the presence of both sets of ovaries and testes had not been previously documented; nevertheless, positioning herself as a hermaphrodite gave Elbe the foundation from which to argue her transsexual right and the necessity of medical intervention.

Variations of the hermaphroditic fabula were heard in sex change stories of the 1920’s and 1930’s -- the appearance of male and female tissue, a feminine personality, the sudden awakening of feminine secondary sex characteristics, and male desire. Although continuing to be heard for decades, as evidence in *Christine Jorgensen: A Personal Autobiography*– “My body was not only slight, but it lacked other development usual in a male.” (Jorgensen, 1968, p. 31), the hermaphroditic fabula began to shift as a function of its naming in 1949 by David Caldwell. A psychiatrist and the letters editor of *Sexology* from 1946-1959, Caldwell was a supporter of transvestites and homosexuals. His support, however, did not extend to

transsexuals. After interviewing one of his patients who narrated herself as being a female in a male body, Cauldwell named her subject position “transsexual.” Publishing his “findings” in a pamphlet entitled “Questions and Answers on the Sex Life Problems of Trans-Sexuals,” Cauldwell wrote, “Trans-sexuals are individuals who are physically of one sex and apparently psychologically of the opposite sex” (Cauldwell as quoted by Meyerowitz, 2002, p. 44). Later that same year, Cauldwell expanded on his thesis. In “Psychopathia Transexualis” published in *Sexology*, he characterized trans-sexuality as a mental illness, and condemned sex reassignment surgery as mutilation (Meyerowitz, 2002).

Facilitated by the prolific nature of his writings, his position of power as the letter editor of *Sexology*, and the passing of The 1946 National Institute of Mental Health Act, a law which expanded and grounded psychiatry’s power in the medical arena, Cauldwell’s position – the separation of and cross identification between biological sex and psychological gender, transsexuality as psychological disorder, and the condemnation of sex reassignment surgery -- became the common psychiatric position in the United States (Meyerowitz, 2002). Enabled by the social context of the day – the increasing prestige and power of the discourse of psychology after its successful employment of intelligence testing among the recruits for World War II, and the post war ideology that a secure nation is based on stable nuclear family relations – Cauldwell’s naming and defining of trans-sexual had a tremendous impact on the position. Transsexuality became an autobiographical act, an official subject position within the medical discourse that was signed as a psychological and not a medical disorder, and a sign that implicated the possibility of a dysfunctional alignment between biological sex and psychological gender.

The move from Hirschfeld's sign "transvestitism" and its grounding in European sexual science – the belief in universal bisexuality and the right of each individual to choose his/her sex/gender performance-- to Cauldwell's sign "trans-sexualism," functioned to shift the hermaphroditic fabula of transsexual narrative to a fabula of an essential gender trapped in the wrong sexed body. This was not an entirely new fabula. It was implicitly embedded in the previous narratives, heard/read when the gender-crossed individual communicated having always felt as a woman, and/or having discovered that which had always already been. But the emphasis on the former took precedence and the latter slowly receded. Thus, transsexual narrative began to be structured around a mistake in gender/sex alignment rather than on a mistake in the physical body.

Harry Benjamin, an influential force in the transsexual movement, facilitated the emergence of the gender/sex alignment fabula, as he publicized the name and subject position of transsexual in the early 1950's. An endocrinologist with a private practice in New York and San Francisco, Benjamin spent his life working for the rights of transsexuals within the discursive limits of his time. A defender and friend of Christine Jorgensen, as well as the medical expert who introduced her autobiography, Benjamin worked with Hirschfeld in Berlin and was a strong supporter of European sexual science. One of the first in the United States who believed transsexuality could not be "cured" by psychoanalysis and that transsexuals should be allowed the opportunity to live according to their desire, Benjamin supported sex reassignment surgery, and offered medical treatment, in the form of hormone extracts and x-ray treatments to reduce testes (Meyerowitz, 2002), to his first transsexual patient in the 1920's.

For Benjamin, and soon for others who followed, one was diagnosed as a transsexual based on the autobiographical fabula of sex/gender misalignment accompanied by the theme of

extreme psychological distress caused by the gender dysphoria (Prosser, 1998). A more detailed understanding of this fabula and its signifying functions can be gleaned from a reading of *The Transsexual Phenomenon* (Benjamin, 1966). Benjamin opens his book by enumerating the multiple methods by which to determine sex – gonadal, chromosomal, and psychological, etc. Arguing that sex is an elusive concept that loses scientific meaning upon investigation, Benjamin began to break the bounds of the naturalness of sex. But, he quickly reverts to a two sexed, heterosexual system in his presentation of the two views of transsexuality. In the first view, transsexuality is understood as the third stage of transvestitism. Here, the transsexual is defined as experiencing a great degree of emotional disturbance, deep gender disorientation, and a desire to free her female soul from the prison of her male body. A transvestite transsexual is primarily asexual, but may be sexually aroused by, until surgically reassigned, the image of herself as female. The second view Benjamin shares is the reading of transsexuality through object choice. As predominately asexual, transsexuals object choice is sex transformation. This is differentiated from transvestites who fulfill their desire through the donning of female attire, and homosexuals, who have a sexual problem and need someone of the same sex to fulfill their desire. Benjamin embedded his work in a patronizing tone. He describes the personality characteristics of transsexuals, as “unreliable,” “paranoid,” “deceitful,” etc. (Benjamin, 1966)

Benjamin’s elaboration of transsexuality has been a two-edged sword for the transsexual community. On the one hand he understood sex as a slippery term that did not strictly fall into a two sexed system and facilitated the medicalization of transsexuality, advocating for medical help for transsexuals in order that they might live in alignment with their chosen sex/gender. On the other hand, Benjamin’s reading delimited the possibilities of

transsexual performance. First, his implicit negative reading of the subject position continued the disparaging attitude toward transsexuals. Second, defining transsexuals as asexual or heterosexual after transition disallowed alternate sexual orientations and/or desires. Third, by differentiating transsexuality from homosexuality and transvestitism, Benjamin tightened the bounds of the subject position. Additionally, he read transsexuality as a desire for a body that mirrors, as completely as possible, the female sex.

Benjamin's potent voice in the arguments around the constituents and origins of transsexuality was only one voice among many. John Money, now deceased, from Johns Hopkins University argued that gender was constituted through the environment, and thus was the result of the assignment to which a child was reared. Promoting his theory, Money published widely on the now infamous John/Joan case. Born biologically male, John was castrated after a circumcision accident and raised, at the suggestion of Money, as a Joan. Before committing suicide as an adult, John publicly announced that he never considered himself female, resisted adamantly his female status as a child, and expressed his plans to live the remainder of his life as John. Although this announcement undermined some of Money's theories, the influence of his work had taken root. The John/Joan case not only facilitated the emergence of gender as a category separate from sex, which promoted the transsexual misalignment fabula, it was also used to underpin programs wherein biological males who exhibited female behavioral traits were encouraged through behavioral modification to perform a more masculine variation of male. This latter use of Money's theory also functioned to emphasize transsexuality as deviant.

Money, as with Benjamin, had both a positive and negative influence on the lives of transsexuals. As the head of the Gender Identity Clinic at Johns Hopkins Medical Center, not

only did he reinforce transsexuality as a behavioral problem, he also advocated for and pushed through the policy changes that allowed for the first sex reassignment surgery at John Hopkins in 1966. Although John Hopkins turned away almost all applicants for surgery, Money's work cleared the way for other medical institutes to follow: Northwestern University Medical School, 1967; Stanford University, 1968; The University of Washington, 1968 (Meyerowitz 2002).

The theories of what constituted transsexuality were varied and numerous. Robert Stoller from the University of California at Los Angeles argued that although gender was a biological function, "Transsexuals' crossgender identification resulted from damaging psychodynamic processes in early childhood" (Meyerowitz, p. 116, 2002). While adhering to the sex/gender misalignment fabula, this view advocated psychotherapy and not surgery as a cure.

As conflicting discourses continued to emerge around what constituted a transsexual, the sex/gender misalignment fabula remained prominent in the practice of diagnosing transsexuals. To be diagnosed officially as a transsexual by a psychiatrist was of extreme importance, for it was only through this documentation that one was in position to receive hormones and sex reassignment surgery from the medical profession. In order to be diagnosed as a transsexual, one had to story oneself along a specific fabula – I am a woman born into the wrong body; this causes me extreme psychological duress; after you help me acquire a female body, I will be returned to my true self and live as a happy and productive, heterosexual citizen (Prosser, 1998). This story, repeated again and again by patients and the medical profession, solidified transsexual subjectivity within the concept of the modern individual and heterosexual matrix. Each patient had an essential, internal Self that was specifically gendered and housed

in a physically inter/sexed body. Body, gender and sexual orientation all aligned; each body had one sex; each sex had one gender; each person had an essential Self that was truly reflected in the “natural” correspondence of self, body, gender, sex, and sexual orientation.

But this became a mixed metaphor. For not only were transsexuals mandated to story themselves in a certain manner, the transsexual narrative became the story by which one came to understand herself as a transsexual. Both Christine Jorgenson (Jorgensen, 1968) and Renee Richards (Richards & Ames, 1983), for example, note that after reading the autobiography of Lili Elbe they were able to name their identity. Richards also acknowledged that Benjamin seemed to know her story better than she knew it herself, as Benjamin filled in the gaps and details when Richards stumbled to communicate. This does not mean that there is not a transsexual identity, that people were only mimicking a sign, but it does point to the complex interface between the performative and the discourses available (Butler, 1999).

Both transsexual fabulas, the hermaphroditic and the sex/gender misalignment, have predominately functioned on a modern understanding of the body and subject. Sex is seen as an essential, biological, material, outside and gender as an innate, psychological, interior component, while each mirror the other in the Self in a two gendered system in which each individual is one and only one sex/gender. This has provided the grounding for an academic response that constituted transsexual as a deviant position. I will discuss three of these positions below

#### Constituting a Deviant Signification for the Sign Transsexual

The sign of transsexual constituted on the sex/gender misalignment fabula and the an essential self has given the ontological foundation for certain feminist and academic responses to male-to-female transsexuals – they are not women, but the result of patriarch and male desire



for female empowerment (Raymond, 1979), they are the result of the semiotics of gender (Hausman, 1995), and they are constituted through twentieth century medical technologies. Raymond, by defining sex chromosomally, argues that male-to-female transsexuals are not real women, but are in fact products of patriarchy. Desiring to possess female creative power, these “men” are shaped by surgeons who use them to fashion their own female ideal and replace the “real” woman. Thus, for Raymond, transsexuals should not be allowed sex reassignment surgery, but instead we must engage in a gender revolution which would alter the sex/gender structures of society and consequently remove transsexual desire. Hausman argues that the transitioned body is a simulation, a copy of the real, which is demanded on the basis of gender. But gender, she continues, is hyperreal, a “simulacrum of the idea of sexual difference” that makes invisible the difference between body/sex/gender due to their homologous relation (Hausman, 1995, p. 192). Consequently, transsexuals make a demand on a simulation, gender, which makes a simulation of the real, the body. This makes transsexuality disturbing, as it requires the appearance of gender as the master signifier of sex and the displacement of the body to the order of simulacra. Hausman, in my reading, is only able to construct this argument if she relies on the real of the body, an ontological stance that is facilitated by the sex/gender misalignment fabula that plays out on the modern body/self. Additionally, both of these authors rely on the underpinnings of an essential Self to dismiss the ontological possibility of transsexuality through arguing that it is a position only possible through the advent of medical technologies. Thus, the same ontological grounds that were used in sex/gender misalignment fabulas also functioned to allow an academic and feminist response that marked the transsexual as an impossible/abjected subject position.

The sex/gender misalignment fabula grounded on an essential self also underpins Bailey's (2003) categorization of transsexuals as autogynephilic and homosexual. In an argument that can be heard echoed in *Transsexual Phenomenon* (Benjamin, 1966) – seen when Benjamin discusses female transsexuals on a continuum with transvestites, the categorization of transsexuals according to object of desire, and the sexual arousal of some transsexuals with the idea of themselves as women -- Bailey argues that transsexuals are either homosexual or autogynephilic. Homosexual transsexuals are extremely feminine gay “men” who love men and desire to become women to attract heterosexual men. The latter are those who are sexually aroused by the sight and thought of themselves as women. The autogynephilic transsexual, according to Bailey, is caused by an error in the development of the “animal heterosexual preference,” which gets misplaced on the “inside” of the transsexual, rather than on the outside. Autogynephilic transsexuals are not females, according to Bailey, but heterosexual men with two genders in one body. Bailey's argument functions on several underpinning concepts: Firstly, “animal heterosexual preference” is not a natural state, but constructed by reading data through specific ideological underpinnings (Fausto-Sterling, 2000). Secondly, his reading of the transsexual body and subject is underpinned by a modern Self – a heterosexual body and subject, constituted as a material outside and a psychological inside, and thirdly, it functions on a twist of the sex/gender misalignment fabula. Rather than being an essential female in a male body, Bailey's autogynephilic is a male in a male body who has transposed a female gender within “his” body. Thus, “he” is essentially a natural heterosexual male who has pathologically internalized a female gender. Dr. Anne Lawrence (2003), a prominent physician and transsexual activist, notes that not only may autogynephilia be an effect and not a cause of

gender dysphoria, but also that the alteration of heterosexual bodies is a common and accepted practice.

Another transsexual narrative, which was not entirely reliant on the modern self and the sex/gender misalignment fabula, began to appear in the 1990's. In the wake of the gay and women's rights movements and the emergence of identity politics, "as the seeds of sex and gender activism began to grow, as the Internet united those whose sex and gender identity falls outside the average male-female in a way never seen before" (O'Keefe & Fox, 2003), voices discordant with a modern representation of Self and the sex/gender misalignment fabula began to be published in edited volumes of transsexual autobiographical vignettes, on Internet sites, and in academic/activist literature. These signed and encouraged a postmodern subjectivity, a discourse in which the signifying chains between the body and subject, between sex, gender and sexual orientation, began to blur. In the following, I will discuss several examples of postmodern transsexual narratives and a few of the works of academics and activists who speak of a postmodern transsexual subjectivity.

#### Constituting a Postmodern Signification for the Sign Transsexual

The infusion of postmodern discourses since the 1960's has allowed the construction of a different transsexual narrative and subjectivity. In his oral history of 28 transgendered individuals, Hill (2000, 2002) found that most of his participants told, in varying degrees, a postmodern narrative. While not examining the function of the structure of narrative on re/production of the transsexual body and subject, he found that many of the narratives his participants told exhibited moments of a non-linear fabula, themes of difference, and gender and sex signed as neither/nor or both/and.

Aspects of a postmodern transsexual narrative may also be noticed in a few of the recently published edited volumes containing gender-bending stories (Nestle et al., 2002; O'Keefe & Fox, 2003; Queen & Schimel, 1997). The stories in these volumes remain predominately structured in a modern framework. However, they also illustrate occasional postmodern functions: the sex/gender of the autobiographical subject is often blurred, fragments may tell a life and/or a life may be told in fragments, time need not be chronological, fabulas or non-fabulas vary by author, and sexual performances and fantasy may be explicitly told.

O'Keefe and Fox have gathered some wonderful trans narratives with postmodern or homologic aspects in their edited volume, ironically titled, *Finding the Real Me: True Tales of Sex and Gender* (2003). Most of these narratives primarily align with a modern transsexual narrative structure, many however, such as Sepulveda (2003) and Samson (2003), also show evidence of a postmodern subject and/or a postmodern narrative structure. Sepulveda, in "Confessions of a She-Male Merchant Marine," narrates herself within a modern fabula. In a linear sequence she recognizes herself as always already alternately gendered, narrates a developmental process to her present she-male identity, and concludes in the modern convenience of happiness. Yet, in this conclusion, she throws in a twist and grounds herself outside of an enclosed male or female identity: "Oddly enough, I don't consider myself a woman. I think I'm as far from being a woman as I am from being a man. I identify as female, and want to be accepted as such, but I don't equate that with being a woman" (2003, p. 156). Sampson, in "Other-Gendered Boy," also narrates a postmodern subject. But Samson's postmodern subjectivity is a continuous theme. Samson's physical description and self-identification both consciously express difference: "I am a fat, big breasted boy. I have baby-

carrying hips and a nice round belly. I have a handsome goatee but no sideburns (sigh)" (2003, p. 206). Identifying as a "third-gender," Samson is content to be "in-between" and has no desire to hide difference. "I am not interested in becoming male, and I don't want to be on a conveyor belt in the trannie factory, moving from female to male. I don't want my differences to become invisible" (2003, p. 207). Thus, I read both Sepulveda and Samson narrating aspects of a postmodern body and subject.

*PomoSexuals: Challenging Assumptions about Gender and Sexuality* (Queen & Schimel, 1997), shares a wonderful collection of essays and autobiographical vignettes that challenge heteronormative identity. Within and across narratives, identity is variously signed, moving between a delineated sign to which one attaches and an ephemeral metaphor that remains elusive, moving between modern commodity and postmodern fragment. One example is "Lines in the Sand, Cries of Desire" (Wilchins, 1997). Wilchins begins her essay, "...you suggest I might want to write about the boundaries where my different selves meet: the complexity of this place, its borders and contours...the boundary where a lesbian, a pre-operative transsexual with a cock, a woman, a femme, an addict, an incest survivor, and a post-operative transsexual with a cunt all intersect?" (1997, p. 138). Wilchins is at once identifying as a homologous body and subject, as multiple fragments of self, and at the same time identifying as a modern self, as she is looking for the intersection of these selves, the boundary of unity. I also read this split in her attempt to reclaim "the myriad ways and fragments of my life lost to incest, transsexuality, shame, and self hate," (1997, p. 139) and the apparently dichotomous naming of herself within a theme of reclaiming the whole, a theme of healing:

I want my clit, my scrotum, my vagina, my cock, my beard...I want my breast back, the ones I watched go through a second complete puberty at twenty-nine...I want the scar

on my throat open to shave my Adam's apple down...I want the scars you can't see, on the inside of my labia...I want my body back. (Wilchins, 1997, p. 139)

Thus, Wilchins represents herself as a fragmented postmodern body and subject within the modern theme of healing, as she attempts to integrate all aspects of herself into herself.

*Genderqueer* (Nestle et al., 2002), another collection of trans narratives, also simultaneously presents evidence of a modern and a postmodern narrative. The most radical of which is Munson's "Do your ears?" (2003), a series of autobiographical vignettes that represent a postmodern subject in a postmodern narrative. The main character is first identified with "We are bad boys..." (2003, p. 147). In the following scene the autobiographical narrator is identified with "When I was 6, I used to walk around with my shirt off in the summertime. 'Don't you know you are a girl?' the neighbor boy asked me" (2003, p. 148). In the next paragraph, "Look at this," he says tracing the hard cartilage and soft, dangling flap of my ear. 'You have little boy cocks all over your body'" (2003, p. 148). And a paragraph later she writes, "But we aren't queers because we don't kiss and we don't touch each other's dicks; we only think about it" (2003, p. 148). Several paragraphs latter the "I" announces, "I was a stringent dyke sergeant" (2003, p. 149). In a following vignette, the autobiographical "I" who "started metamorphosing" into his/her companions bad boy chum, tries to control his/her desire "because we had rolled through several processing talks that satisfied my lesbian Roberta's rules of Order about how we shouldn't sexualize our friendship..." (2003, p. 151). Then the autobiographical "I"'s companion, who had been identified through male pronouns, in a single embedded sentence is noted differently, "From the front he can't always pass, but from the back he is rarely read as a *she*, even through he hasn't done hormones or surgery" (2003, p. 151). In the proceeding and final vignette, the autobiographical "I" narrates,

I hold him tightly against my body so he can feel my androgyny and strength and narrow boyish hips. A lot of people quickly identify me as a femme, and I feel so relieved to be out of that dress. When he gets close to my face, he notices the wispy black hairs above my upper lip and tells me I have a little mustache.” (Munson, 2003, p. 152)

A few paragraphs later the “I” is once again a bad boy who “want[s] to shove cock into his mouth” (2003, p. 152). Later, the seemingly same “he,” who is “rarely read as a she” wants to be alone to jerk off” (2003, p. 155). Thus, Munson represents bodies and subjects who are both/and, neither/or gendered. Both the autobiographical “I” and the “he” slide between sexed signs and gender performances, leaving me, as a reader, in a conundrum as to their body and subject position.

Munson (2003) also works the narrative outside of time. The chronology is elusive as it is not clearly signed, especially in the first few pages where in Munson shifts from identifying as a child in one sentence to describing her/his adult behavior in the next. The juxtaposition of the different chronological “I”s, allows time to fade, becoming an insignificant theme. Munson also blurs the lines of public and private as s/he explicitly narrates gender-bending sexual performances. The fabula of “Do Your Ears?” does not sign the misalignment of sex/gender of the autobiographical “I” and the lover. Rather, the fabula signs the instability of sex/gender/sexual orientation alignment.

Postmodern narratives and reflections of bodies and subjects that are counterintuitive to our norms are also found on the Internet, heard in personal conversations, and appear embedded in activist texts. An established dentist, physically beautiful with long dark hair, gentle curves and long limbs, did not want to give up the sex drive her testosterone producing

testes provided. So she had her testicle implanted in her abdomen and a vagina constructed (Lawrence, 2002). Dora, a beautiful woman who runs a bed and breakfast in the mountains of the Northwest, is 6' 3" and weighs 237 pounds (Dorington, personal communication, December 23, 2003). Sporting a beard and male hair distribution, she wears a plaid wool kilt, a nylon blouse, and hiking boots with rolled down wool socks. Her lips and nails are painted a subtle pink; she walks with a heavy stride and gestures with grace. Walter, a male lesbian, sexually loves women and lives in a biologically male body she does not desire to change (Hill, 2003). Riki Wilchins, who refers to her "vagina" as a "penis" (1997, p. 117), shares a portrait of Holley Boswell: "S/he has tender features, long, wavy blonde hair, a soft Carolina accent, a delicate feminine bosom, and no interest in surgery. Holly lives as an openly transgendered mother of two in Asheville, North Carolina" (1997, p. 118).

Postmodern transsexual narratives have been accompanied by a postmodern activist/academic dialogue. In these manuscripts an activist argues in academic discourse the ontological grounding of sex and gender and the viability of identity politics. Many of these essays and books, in their structure and content, blur the demarcation between academic and activist, and autobiographical and theoretical, as well as the sayable and unsayable. Perhaps the most influential of these to date is Kate Bornstein's discussion in *Gender Outlaw* (1994). In a combination of autobiographical and academic references and underpinnings, Bornstein, a male-to-female transsexual, activist, author, and actress, argues that the system of gender should be dissolved and a third space, which allows for infinite virtual gender play, be constituted. Gender should be performed as an ambiguous fluid state, moving in and out of roles of behavior and desires. In such a transgendered field, a transsexual becomes not only any one who self identifies as such, but also as "anyone whose performance of gender calls into



question the construction of gender itself” (Bornstein, 1994, p. 121). Separating desire from gender, Bornstein also argues that sexual preference is culturally linked to our gender system erroneously allowing the gender of one’s partner name the identity of self. This functions to delimit one’s exploration of sexual preference and settle for categories that are not only narrow in possibilities, but also performances which reify the heterosexual matrix through their binary gender signification.

Califia (1997), an activist, therapist, author of erotic literature, and sadomasochistic lesbian, disagrees with Bornstein (1994). In her analysis of transgenderism in the twentieth century, based on the data set of “history, interview, cultural analyzes, and personal anecdotes,” (1997, p. 1), Califia blurs the academic/activist boundary in a study presented in an academic structure, yet is underpinned and forefronted with her explicit sexuality. In this work, which not only analyses what Califia terms first and second wave transsexual autobiography, transphobia and activism, Califia argues that eradicating gender would be a form of oppression, as many use it not only for as a self definition, but also as a political/medical means by which to obtain hormones and sex reassignment surgery. Additionally, she maintains that adding a third space would not necessitate acceptance of gender diversity and the erasing of gender oppression.

Wilchins in *Read My Lips: Sexual Subversion and the End of Gender* (1997) also disagrees with Bornstein (1994). Wilchins is a male-to-female transsexual, the co-founder of Transsexual Menace, and the Executive Director of Gender PAC. She blurs the academic/activist and un/sayable lines as she argues on the basis of her bodily experience, which she reads through the theoretical conceptions of semiotics, Foucault’s theory of sexuality and erotics, and Butler’s performative, that bodies are a sign that must be read. She calls for

the right to choose gender/body meaning, more options from which to choose, and freedom from punishment for the performance of choice. But, the system of gender cannot, she argues, be totally eradicated, because participation in the erotic economy requires gender, a semiotic of difference by which desire is read on the body. Arguing that we begin life with "a full semiotic deck of meanings" (1997, p. 162), Wilchins suggests that we must lose meanings in order to be intelligible. These lost parts are recovered through

a vicarious enjoyment of that lost part...[for example] a man, even to enjoy his own masculinity requires one to first experience a prior femininity against which it can be perceived. Paradoxically, then, men who are busy ogling large breasts are not enjoying women's 'femininity'...but rather, they are producing the aesthetic experience of femininity in themselves, something which they then must disown as 'not me,' as coming from outside themselves. (Wilchins, 1997, p. 165)

This process detaches pleasure from sensation and places it on meaning, thus pointing desire not toward its own fulfillment and amplification, but toward bodies and those organs that are of procreative value. An erotics of meaning is productive – creating specific “sites, acts, and bodies as erotic currency in the first place, simultaneously making others unintelligible, even unthinkable...body parts that aren't named, acts one mustn't do, gender one can't perform—because they are outside other binary box.” (Wilchins, 1997 p. 167).

What constitutes a transsexual has continued to be debated since its emergence as a body and subject position in the West. Underpinned by various fabulas – intersexed to misaligned to queer –and alternate themes of desire --a Freudian erotics (Benjamin, 1964) to an erotics of meaning (Wilchins, 1997) -- the body and subject of transsexual has not remained a static position. Since the 1990's a marginal transsexual discourse has appeared in which the

transsexual body and subject is not entirely underpinned by a modern self, but is contingent on various discourses of a postfoundational body and subject. Therefore, in the following, I present a reading of the body and subject of Foucault (1980,1984,1990), Butler (1993,1997,1999), and Deleuze and Guattari (1987).

### Transsexuality and the Body and Subject

Transsexual, as a person who desires to change aspects of the biological sex of their bodies in order to “be” gender, relies on and is inseparable from the signified of the body and subject, which is always already sexed -- there is no body that is not already sexed through our ideology of gender within the heterosexual matrix. The body and subject, however, is an unstable site, constituted in and through the structure of narrative, which we continually take as the “real.” Consequently, we remain ignorant of how our taken for granted understanding of the body and subject function to produce and constrain the signifying bounds and thus performative possibilities of transsexual. In the following I discuss the body and subject as read by Foucault (1984a, 1990), Butler (1992, 1993, 1997, 1999), and Deleuze and Guattari (1987).

### Foucault and the Body and Subject

One possible way to read the body and subject presented in the homologic moments of narrative is through Foucault’s understanding of the body and subject constituted in and through power (1980, 1984, 1990). The modalities of power for Foucault (1980, 1984b, 1990) that function to constitute the body and subject are disciplinary power, power functioning through the disciplines (strands of thought such as biology, physiology, psychology) and disciplinary techniques, and bio-power, power functioning at the target of life. Operating in interconnected relations, disciplinary power and bio-power function as the site of emergence

for the body and subject. The subject emerging through disciplinary power and bio-power is characterized by a consciousness “of the discontinuity of time” and an attitude which infuses the subject’s mode of relation, thinking, feeling, and behaving (Foucault, 1984b). The subject constituted in/with this consciousness and attitude “takes oneself as an object of a complex and difficult elaboration” making of her “body,” behavior, feelings, and passions a work of art, not in order to discover herself, but in order to invent herself (Foucault, 1984b, p. 42).

The object of these relations of power is the “body,” and the subject of these relations is defined through normalization (Foucault, 1980). These relations are exercised from innumerable points and exist within other relations, social, cultural, discursive (Foucault, 1990). Productive and taking place in multiple relations of force, relations of disciplinary power and bio-power are intentional and non-subjective (Foucault, 1990). They do not emerge from a central location or specific subject; but are exercised through tactics, connecting together, propagating, forming comprehensible systems whose objectives and aims are clearly visible and yet have not been invented by any one party.

Disciplinary power is formed around two distinct poles of the “body,” the subject-”body” and the social-”body”. The subject has become ever more subjected to this objectifying power through the technologies of surveillance, normalizing judgments, and the examination. These techniques focus directly on the “body,” forming the “body” itself -- its gestures, movements, performances, desires. Their aim is not to form a unified societal mass, but to separate, analyze and differentiate, to individualize (Foucault, 1984). Disciplinary power trains and regards subjects as both its objects and points of articulation. (Foucault, 1984). Power thus becomes the law of the subject, the rules of productive and prohibitive possibilities of the subject. In other words, the subject is not only inscribed with power as the law, but becomes

the manifestation of the law, speaking the law, doing the law, “being” the law. For example, the prisoner is a manifested position of the law, who articulates and performs the law in his/her position, and thus “is” the law in his/her individual and social position.

Disciplinary power, formed around two poles of the body, functions through the mechanisms of surveillance, normalizing judgments, and the examination. Functioning through the mechanism of surveillance, disciplinary power subjects the subject to a continuous gaze. The subject, under constant surveillance, turns her own gaze on others and on herself. As evidenced in the panopticon, the subject is watched by others, watches herself, and watches others (Foucault, 1980). Butler (1997) speaks of this gaze of the other as a power in recoil. The power of the gaze turns back on itself and becomes internalized as the subject’s own conscience. Thus, the subject becomes her own “other,” prohibiting her thoughts, actions, drives, and desires.

Surveillance also functions through an obsession with details (Foucault, 1984). A discourse arose in the 1800s in which no detail about the subject was too minute for observation and documentation; every move, gesture, word, and performance was noted. Through this meticulous practice of surveillance, a form of biography arose that went beyond the descriptive, delving into the cause of behaviors, composing an inseparable link between the deed and the subject, forming categorical positions of the normal and the abnormal. Thus, the subject became connected to the deed as its autonomous agent as well as became solidified into demarcated positionings of normal, constituting the intelligibility of the subject within institutionalized normalcy, marginalizing the abnormal to the constituted outside.

Along with functioning through the mechanism of surveillance, disciplinary power functions through normalizing judgments. Normalizing judgments subject subjects to a

"micropenalty" of time, activity, behavior, and speech along with the infliction of punishment for the slightest deviation (Foucault, 1984). What becomes punishable is that which does not live up to the rule of order defined by the observable and natural process of their functioning (Foucault, 1984). The aim of these techniques is differentiation in relation to the norm, hierarchization in terms of value, constraint of conformity, and delimitation of difference of bodies/subjects. According to Foucault, "The perpetual penalty that traverses all points and supervises every instant in the disciplinary institutions compares, differentiates hierarchies, homogenizes, and excludes. In short, it normalizes" (1984, p. 195).

Disciplinary power functioning as the examination is another technique that joins with surveillance and normalization. Through ritualized ceremonies and extensive documentation, the examination individualizes each body and subject, making her a case, an objectified unit, while simultaneously homogenizing populations through the categorization of each case into groups. The examination objectifies bodies/subjects with its gaze while it classifies, judges, and differentiates. According to Foucault (1984), the examination has several functions: First, it renders the exercise of power invisible while demanding visibility of the body and subject, subjecting her to mechanisms of objectification. Through the visibility and objectification of the body and subject, intensified through the examination, power is felt directly on the "body". Second, through the examination, subjectivity enters the field of documentation, charting attitudes, symptoms, behaviors, and abilities. Through extensive documentation, writing, the subject is defined and positioned in relations of power. This extensive documentation presupposes the two poles of disciplinary power, the individual "body" and the social "body", the first via fixation of the object's characteristics through the documentation of individual bodies and the second through the compilation and categorization of data relating to

populations. Thus, the examination, through documentation, makes each body and subject a case and homogenizes groups. And finally, the examination constitutes the body and subject as both the object and the effect of power. Thus, the subject is a "reality fabricated by this specific technology of power...called 'discipline'" (Foucault, 1984, p. 204).

The object and target of these strategies of disciplinary power, as noted, is the "body", and the aim is to create docility (Foucault, 1984). The "body" is targeted individually and continuously. These continuous relations objectify the "body" and develop capacities that are most useful to the relations of disciplinary power. Any power resulting from these capacities is turned back on the subject, becoming relations of strict subjection; thus, disciplinary power "increases the forces of the "body" (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience)" (Foucault, 1984, p. 182). The docile "body" is not formed through power that is implemented from above, subduing and crushing its target. The subject is not the opposite of power, but the effect of power. "Certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourse, certain desires, come to be identified and constituted as individuals" (Foucault, 1990, p. 98).

Normalization is the result of these techniques of disciplinary power, as they simultaneously individualize and generalize. Through the disciplinary mechanisms of surveillance, normalizing judgment, and the examination implemented in space and through time, the "body" is the focus of a disciplinary formation that individualizes through hierarchical categorization and generalizes through the distribution of this hierarchy around a norm. Since power is exercised around the norm and the positions created by these techniques can be filled by anyone, the subject and power are anonymous and generalized; thus, normalization results

in the anonymity of power and the effacement of the subject, while simultaneously constituting each individual as a case.

Disciplinary power, functioning through the techniques of surveillance, normalizing judgments, and the examination began to be invaded by bio-power in the eighteenth century. As bio-power, power that focused on life “and assumed responsibility for life processes and undertook control to modify them,” began to penetrate the disciplines, strategies, techniques, and mechanisms emerged which produced sexuality and sex (Foucault, 1990, p. 142).

Sexuality, according to Foucault, is not a natural, instinctual drive; it is a transfer point for relations of power. It is a social construction, the manifestation of “a great surface network” of discourses, strategies and knowledges that form the discursive myth of sexuality (Foucault, 1990, p. 105). The deployment of sexuality through its various strategies created the concept of "sex." “Sex” is subordinate to sexuality, for it is through the formation of sexuality that “sex” has arisen as an element necessary for the operation of sexuality.

The conception of "sex" contributes several, indispensable functions. It has made it possible to group together "in an artificial unity" multiple elements -- biological functions, conducts, sensations, and pleasures. It offers a causal principle, making it appear that sexuality is its natural effect. By being thus defined, “sex” is able to mark the line of contact between knowledge of human sexuality and biological sciences of reproduction, which functioned as normative principles for human sexuality. Also, the concept of “sex” made it possible for power to invert its relationship with sexuality by making it appear as if sexuality is rooted in a “specific and irreducible urgency” which power attempts to dominate (Foucault, 1990, p. 155). Thus, "sex" makes it possible to evade what gives power its power by enabling one to conceive of power solely as law and taboo. "Sex is the most speculative, most ideal, most internal



element in a deployment of sexuality organized by power in its grip on bodies and their materiality, their forces, energies, sensations, and pleasures" (Foucault, 1990, p. 155). It is through "sex" that each subject must pass to have access to his/her own intelligibility since it is the hidden and generative principle of meaning. The West has arrived at the point where a subject can expect her intelligibility to come from the completeness of her "body" and her identity from an obscure nameless urge (Foucault, 1990).

In summary, one possible interpretation of a homologic body and subject is as produced in a matrix of discursive relations functioning through disciplinary power and bio-power. The subject is individualized and generalized through the disciplinary strategies of surveillance, examinations and normalizing judgments that function around a norm. The subject is anonymous, a shifting site, an effect of relations of power whose intelligibility is constituted through "sex." "Sex" is a norm that produces bodies. "Sex" as a norm is constructed through a network of relations of power and materializes through time through the process of repetition. The "body" is a site of inscription; it is not "naturally sexed. The idea of "sex" makes it possible, according to Foucault, to unify multiple elements, anatomical, gestures, desires, drives, pleasures, pains that have no necessary connection, into a cohesion that functions as a fictitious unity and causal principle. "Sex" as a causal principle allows bodily pleasures and gesture to be interpreted as signs of "sex." In the following, I present Butler's (1993, 1999) understanding of the body and subject as another alternative to reading a homologic body and subject in our transsexual narratives.

#### Butler and the Body and Subject

The body and subject formed in disciplinary power and bio-power may also be understood as formed through language. Understanding the "body" as constituted in language,

the linguistic structures and discursive formations that demarcate im/possible forms of emergence, does not, according to Butler (1993, 1999), mean that the “body” is entirely language. The “body” is neither entirely signification nor materiality. Rather, materiality and signification are inseparable functions. There is some sense of materiality to the “body,” but this materiality is only intelligible and constituted through signification, which is itself material as well as linguistic. Signification is composed of both the material and non-material; it appears through material means, the written sign and acoustic image, and is structured through non-material relations of the linguistic structure (Butler, 1993). The materiality of the signifier can only signify to the extent that it is impure, contaminated by the linguistic structure, the context, and by the materiality constituted, and the space between the signified and the referent which are irreducible (Butler, 1993). In other words, there is no such thing as a “pure” signification of a “pure” “body”; both are “contaminated” prior to signification.

To be constructed in and through language means that the body and subject are “a consequence of certain rule governed discourses that govern the intelligible innovation of identity (Butler, 1993, 1999). But to be constructed does not imply that there is an active agent doing the constructing. There is no doer inscribing on a passive “body” or inert substance. Construction is a process of reiteration by which both subjects and acts appear; “There is no power that acts, but only a reiterated acting that is power in its persistence and instability” (Butler, 1993). It is grammar, linguistic structures that govern the construction of a sentence, which conveys the understanding that there is a “doer,” an actor who acts on an object. Thus, discourse does not act as the inscriber on a pure substance prior to the inscription. Not only is discourse not in the subject position with the power of agency to inscribe on the subject as object, “There is no reference to a pure ‘body’ which is not at the same time a further formation

of that body” (Butler, 1993, p. 10). The power of discourse to inscribe is its own citational authority, and the subject appears to be the agent of discourse to the extent that those discourses remain unmarked (Butler, 1993). In other words, discourse gains its power to inscribe, not through a discursive agency, but through the sedimentation of meaning that occurs through its own citational power and repetition. The subject appears to be the author of discourse to the extent that the discourse appears as though it is emerging from an agenic individual, an appearance that is facilitated through grammar, which conveys that the subject (noun) is an actor (noun/verb connection) with specific attributes (adjectives).

The body and subject is not only constituted, but also substantiated through signification. The materiality of the “body” is intelligible only through the significations that affirm it. These categories, “biology, anatomy, physiology, hormonal and chemical composition,” each have a history, discursively constructed in time and through time, and are “constituted through the boundary lines that distinguish them, and hence by what they exclude” (Butler, 1993, p. 67). In the theory of being constituted in and through language, that which is excluded as well as that which is included in signification forms what is signified. When an object is signified, the signification demarcates a space, which includes that which is under signification. Thus, by definition, something must be excluded. Not only does the exclusion define the signified through signifying that which the signified is not, it constrains the possibilities of signification through limiting the options of possible signification. For example, the signification of odd numbers, 1, 3, 5, makes the possibility of 2 following 1, an impossibility (Fink, 1995). This excess, this outside, this excluded, is not an ontological “thereness;” it is that which can only be thought, when not beyond the thinkable, in relation to discourse (Butler, 1993). Signification is thus not only a productive, constitutive force as

maintained by Foucault, but also a constitutive force of erasure, foreclosures, and abjection of the “body” and subject (Butler, 1993).

The “body” as a space limited by the skin and possessing specific contours is not a site recognizable before inscription. It relies on the binaries of im/permeability and in/outside. The “body” as im/permeable is, according to Butler (1999), underlined by the heterosexual matrix that constructs certain orifices im/possible to permeate. Through this inscription the boundaries of a “natural” “body” are constructed. Further, the constitution of an in/outside of the body and subject are contingent on the constructions of im/permeability. Butler (1999), reading Kristeva, notes that the constructions of in/outside are underpinned by the notion of the expulsion of the abject, that which is deemed “other,” “not-me” (Butler, 1999). That which is expelled becomes the “not-me,” the abject, and constructs the other as well as the boundaries of the “body” and subject. The “not-me,” by definition it becomes the “other” and also by definition, the constitution of an “other” marks a line of differentiation, a boundary, between “me/not me.”

The “other,” however, was initially part of the subject, and only becomes abject upon expulsion; what is/was constituted as part of the subject becomes abjected “other.” The subject, then, is “constituted through the force of exclusion and abjection, one which produces a constitutive outside to the subject, an abjected outside, which is, after all, ‘inside’ the subject as its own founding repudiation” (Butler, 1997, p. 3). Not only are the body and subject constituted in the metaphors of in/outside, but these metaphors are its founding moment, a moment which must be continually repeated in order for the site of the “body” and the position of the subject to continue.

Substance is discourse as it sediments over time (Butler, 1999). The continued repetition of these metaphors produces a sedimentation that appears as substance, a substance

that takes on the effect of a natural ontology: a physically bounded “body” and a psychically functioning inside. The notion of an ontologically bounded “body” and an internal core is “an enacted fantasy,” it is the repeated performance of gestures and desires which “produce the effect of an internal core or substance, but produce this on the surface of the “body” through the play of signifying absences that suggest...the organizing principle of identity as cause” (Butler, 1999). Acts, gesture, and desires do not represent an internal core or ontological reality of the body and subject but are the effect of the discursive and function to produce the illusion of the individual through that which is absent, erased, marginalized, or barred, in signification.

The “body” is not a pre-symbolic site; it is the sedimentation of discourse, which is “orchestrated through regulatory schemas that produce intelligible morphological possibilities” (Butler, 1993, p. 13-14). The body and subject do not precede discourse; there is a vacillation between the real and imagined “body” as the idea of the “body” and materiality of the “body” become inseparable. Drives and desires are constructed as a subject identifies with a signifier, which signifier dissects the “body” and renders parts of it available and other parts inaccessible and dead (Fink, 1995). The linguistic grammar available implies that there is a subject choosing identifications, a noun as the agent of the verb, but there is no subject prior to the choosing. Additionally, this “choice” is a forced choice as there is no subject without the choosing of signifiers, for identification is a necessity of emergence of the subject (Butler, 1993). “There is no doer behind the deed” (Butler, 1992).

Language deems the legitimate and illegitimate sites for the emergence of the subject through the im/possible significations of the pronoun “I.” The I as a body and subject is an identity that is possible through signifying practices that are governed by rules of the signifying order, discursive formations, and practices available. To be constituted as a body and subject is

a consequence of certain rule-governed discourses that govern intelligible identities (Butler, 1999). Intelligible subjects and bodies are the effects of language that create the sedimentary effects of identity through discursive acts that are repeated and naturalize their own effects through their own citational authority.

The body and subject are recognizable as they continue to repeat the gestures, actions, and desires signified by discursive law. This law, which makes bodies and subjects intelligible, is the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1993, 1999; Foucault, 1990). Preceding the “body” and the subject, this matrix forms each subject along gendered lines. As noted above, for Foucault (1990) intelligibility is possible through the materialization of a fictive, heterosexual “sex.” Bodies/subjects are produced through repetition of the prohibitive law that is written on their bodies as their style and/or essence. The discursive law manifests itself on the subject’s “body” as the subject’s meaning (Foucault, 1980, 1990). This law is not available prior to signification; it is the repetition of norms that creates the phenomena of a natural “body” and an authentic subject. Repeated over time, these norms produce styles that appear as naturalized. For Butler (1993, 1999), the “body” and the subject are maintained through repetitive acts that are discursively formed along the heterosexual matrix and sedimented through time into materiality. These acts, Butler’s performative, reiteration of discursive acts that produces that which it names, are not prediscursive, nor are they the free willed choice of the subject (1993). Whether to reenact nor what to reenact is not a free willed choice. The former is a condition of existence and the latter choice is only possible within the significations available. Thus, this choice, or agency of the subject, is only available within the discourses available.

Repetition, as found in the performative, is the mechanism of cultural reproduction of identities (Bracher, 1993; Butler, 1999). The I is performatively constituted by the very

expressions we take for the cause (Butler, 1999). For example, being a woman is an expression, a repetitive performance that is taken to be the cause of the expressions, the repetitive performance of gestures and desires of woman. Although the rules and content of this repetition, the what, when, why, where, how and by whom of the act, is produced and constricted through the linguistic categories available, it is not a direct reflection of the subordinating power that forms the subject, for on recoil this power is altered, thus repetitions and reiterations are allowed movement within the parameters of the linguistic realms available (Butler, 1997). Thus, what emerges through repetition is not a direct copy of the subordinating power. Through repetition, possibilities of the subject emerge that have the propensity to expand the bounds of what is culturally intelligible (Butler, 1999).

To summarize, a possible reading of the transsexual body and subject is as a position constituted in and through language. As positions, they emerge, are constituted, and maintained in and through language. They are the consequence of rule-governed discourses that are written on the “body” and repetitively performed in the signifying spaces available. The materiality of the “body” is the sedimentation of these discursive acts which function around the metaphors of im/penetrability and in/outside. The idea of an internal psychic core and external substantive contour is an “enacted fantasy.” The “body” and the subject are inseparable sites, both emerging through the identification with a bodily ego. Bodies and subjects are intelligible by passing through the heterosexual matrix and performatively constituted by that which is taken for the cause. It is the sign, which makes intelligible subjects im/possible. In the following I summarize my reading of a body and subject presented by Deleuze and Guattari (1987). This position illustrates another possible reading of a homologic transsexual body and subject.

## Deleuze and Guattari and the Body and Subject

According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987), the body as we traditionally understand it – formed matter encased in a skin that envelopes solidified organs with rigid univocal functions – is not the body, but “a phenomenon of accumulations, coagulation, and sedimentation that...imposes upon it forms, functions, bonds, dominant and hierarchized organizations, organized transcendences” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 159). This body understood and classified as an organism, is the effect of stratification as a function of the plane of organization and development; whereas, the “real” body, they contend, is a body without organs (BwO) in a continual process of becoming. In the following, I will share my reading of Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) body and subject through examining the constituents and functions of the BwO and becomings.

The BwO is a complex experience. Understanding it requires a twisting of perception and the patience to construct meaning of component slices of Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) philosophy. One of those slices is the plane of consistency and the plane of organization and development. This plane may be understood as two separate planes or two perceptions/articulations of the same plane. The plane of consistency has no form nor does it occupy space. It has no beginning, end or points; it is a rhizome – constituted of only lines and middles. It contains only sub-molecular particles, pure intensities that form subjectless and formless individuations, haecceities. Through relations of speed, haecceities, lines, and elements assemble to form multiplicities, symbiotic assemblages defined and transformed by the borderlines that determine their number of dimensions. Any change in the border, thus the dimension, of a multiplicity, changes the multiplicity. The border of a multiplicity is constituted only of affects, themselves assemblages of haecceities, lines, intensities. It is with



these borders that you must make an alliance, formed through the relation of speed, as a precondition for deterritorialization, the alliance of a line of one multiplicity with another which carries the former across/through/beyond its previous assemblage. The number of dimensions continually increases on the plane of consistency, freeing lines and dissolving forms. It is therefore not a plane of development and evolution, but a plane of involution.

The plane of consistency, consisting of only haecceities, has its own semiotics to express its content: indefinite article or pronoun + proper noun or name + infinitive verb. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987) this mode of expression links statements to a haecceity rather than to a subject of enunciation or the function of a form. It does so as the indefinite article or pronoun signifies the individuating function within a haecceity, a proper name or noun signifies the unformed order of event of the haecceity, and the infinitive verb expresses the floating nonpulsed time of Aeon. “A HANS TO BECOME HORSE” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 264); A JOHN TO BECOME WOMAN.

The plane of organization and development is a second articulation of the plane of consistency. It is the plane of concrete manifestation; it makes the visible seen and the audible heard. It is the plane of structure as it concerns the development of forms and the formation of subjects through an abstract machine which gives rise to the structure necessary for forms and the signifier necessary for subjects. It is the plane of evolution, development, and filial relations. Contrary to the plane of consistency, it exists in a supplementary dimension to that which it gives rise,  $n+1$ .

It is on the plane of organization and development that matter, unorganized, pure intensities, is formed. Matter recoils and coagulates as it experiences strata, layers or belts that “imprison intensities and lock them into systems of resonance and redundancy (Deleuze &

Guattari, 1987, p. 40). Strata, operating by code and territorialization are the judgments of God that produce molar aggregates from molecular singularities. Blocking flows, folding intensities: “the three great strata that bind us are organism, significance, and subjectifications.” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 159).

The plane of consistency as it begins to thicken is the BwO. The BwO is what remains of the conventional body when fantasy, significances and subjectifications are removed. It is nonstratified matter populated by intensities that circulate and pass on/in it. Its organs, appearing and functioning as pure intensities, change function and position as they cross thresholds -- A pack of anuses in an eye, a pack of boys in a woman’s voice, singing with your sinuses, walking on your head (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Existing neither in space or place, the BwO is pulled between the plane of consistency and strata. On the level of the plane of consistency, the body is constantly involving, increasing dimensions as it forms alliances, freeing lines and dissolving forms. On the level of strata, the BwO is made into an organism. The body thickens; the sedimentations and coagulations are folded back on themselves, composing an organism and a subject. But the BwO does not want to be an organism; it is the judgment of God, the theological system, many layers of strata, which makes it an organism. Upon becoming coagulated and recoiled, “the BwO howls: ‘They’ve made me an organism! They’ve wrongfully folded me! They’ve stolen my body!’” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 159).

The BwO and the organism, as well as the plane of consistency and the plane of organization and development, are inseparable. Neither the plane of consistency nor the BwO precedes the plane of organization and development and the organism. They are adjacent to one another; they are two articulations of the same thing that may be read differently. From the

standpoint of physiology, we are specific characteristics, organs and functions, but from the standpoint of ethology, we are understood by elements and their relations (latitude) and affects and their degrees (longitude). Ethologically, we are blocks of becomings, spatiotemporal relations: “Read without pause: the animal-stalks-at-five-o’clock...are not affects as the predicates of the thing, but dimensions of multiplicities.” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 263).

Pulled in a continual combat between the plane of consistency and the plane of organization, blocks of becoming, haecceities, matter stratified, recoiled and folded over on itself by the judgment of God; we are one or more BwO’s. Through territorializing and deterritorializing -- blocking intensities, rearticulating on the plane of organization and development, and/or following lines of flight, joining with the border of a multiplicity on the plane of consistency—we are continually making BwO’s.

According to Deleuze and Guattari, we must experiment with making BwO’s as a means of dismantling the self, tearing the body away from the organism. In order to do this, they suggest:

Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small fabula of new land at all times. It is through a meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight, causing conjugated flows to pass and escape and bringing forth continuous intensities for a BwO. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 161)

Making a BwO is a becoming, destratifying the organism. Becomings are alliances of heterogeneous molecular collectivities that “bring into play beings of totally different scales

and kingdoms, with no possible filiation” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 238). Becomings are molecular; you do not become the molar subject/object of the becoming. On one side of becomings are becoming-animal and becoming-woman, on the other is becoming-imperceptible.

You become-animal as the multiplicity on which you participate enters into relation with the multiplicity of an animal: “the line breaks free of the point as origin; the diagonal breaks free of the vertical and the horizontal as coordinates; and the transversal breaks free of the diagonal as a localizable connection between two points.” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 297). To become is to “extract particles between which one establishes the relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness that are closest to what one is becoming, and through which one becomes” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 273). You are animal to the degree that you emit particles that function as the relation of movement and molecular proximity of the relations which the animal enters, because an animal is a machinic assemblage, a collection of affects – the wolf-stalks-the-street-at-five-o’clock.

Becoming-woman, as all becomings, is molecular. It is neither an imitation of nor a transformation into molar woman. It is the freeing of lines from points, a deterritorialization of the arborescent, the reconstruction of the BwO that has been stolen from us. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987), the girl’s body is stolen first – “Don’t do that; grown-up little girls do not scratch.” By using the girl as an example and pointing to her as the object of his desire, the boy’s body is subsequently stolen and made into an opposed organism. Through the stealing of our bodies, a history is imposed on us that functions as stratification and fabricates the organism.

The girl as the first victim is the example for the boy; thus, “reconstruction of the BwO is inseparable from becoming-woman, or molecular woman” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 276). Becoming-woman, then, is the true girl, a haecceity that roams the BwO, an abstract line, a line of flight. She is a “block of becoming that is contemporaneous to each opposable term, man, woman, child, adult” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.267). Consequently, girls do not belong to an age group or sex; “they slip in everywhere between ages and sexes and produces n molecular sexes on the line of flight in relation to the dualism machines they cross right through” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 267). She is the becoming-woman, the reconstitution of the BwO, of each sex, and “any sexuality is a becoming-woman, a girl” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 277).

Becoming-woman and becoming-animal are rushing toward becoming imperceptible, the immanent end and cosmic formula of all becomings. Becoming-imperceptible is becoming everybody/everything. It is making the world a becoming. In becoming everybody/everything, one is nothing more than an abstract line that conjugates and continues with other lines in order to make a world those overlays the first one, as a transparency. Becoming-everybody/everything is becoming a rhizome; it is suppressing “everything that prevents us from slipping between things and growing in the midst of things...it is the indefinite article, the infinitive-becoming, and the proper name to which one is reduced” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 280).

In summary, Deleuze & Guattari present a possible reading of a homologic body and subject. They argue that the body as we traditionally know it is not our body at all, but the blocked, folded, stratified BwO. Our ‘real’ body is the BwO. The BwO is the plane of consistency, which has its own semiotics to express haecceities. The plane of organization and

development is the plane of evolution and structure. It is the plane where matter is stratified. The three great strata that bind us are significance, subjectifications, and the organism. Deleuze and Guattari advocate that we experiment with making BwO's in order to free ourselves from our stratified bodies. We can make BwO's through becomings. Our first becoming is becoming-woman, which is followed by becoming-animal. The ultimate becoming is becoming-imperceptible, becoming an abstract line, a rhizome.

### Conclusion

Living across sex and gender lines has been documented through out history. Within the West, a transsexual position has emerged as a narrative act. Originally narrated as a female personality in a hermaphroditic body, transsexual came to be narrated as a misalignment between sex and gender. Set in the heterosensitive space of the 1950's this narration was underpinned by a modern understanding of self. With the infusion of alternate discourses, a different narration of transsexual began to appear on the margins in the late 1990's (Nestle, et. al., 2002). The representation of the homologic body and subject in this narration was underpinned by discourses of a postfoundational body and subject. Regardless of its shifting signification, however, transsexual remained a narrative act. As such, it has been continually re/produced within narrative. Thus the question arises, how does narrative re/produce the transsexual body and subject? I investigate this question in the chapters to come. In the following chapter, I discuss the methods I used to analyze how narrative re/produces a transsexual body and subject. This chapter is followed by the findings of this analysis. The proceeding chapter explores possible ways to narrate a homologic transsexual body and subject. This study is concluded with a summary of the findings and indicated research agendas.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

I used narrative analysis, as outlined in *Narratology* (Bal, 1999), to examine how narrative re/produces a transsexual body and subject. Narratology is a structural theory of narrative, wherein narrative is understood as “narrative texts, images, spectacles, events; cultural artifacts that ‘tell a story’” (Bal, 1999, p. 3). By analyzing narratives on the level of structure, narratology has the propensity to disclose the ideological underpinnings of a narrative’s construction and illustrate its re/productive function. Such disclosure is of course subjective, as it is formed through the compilation of experiences of my particular body and subject position. Understanding narrative in its broad sense, narratology is suitable for analyzing both written and visual texts; it thus allowed me a comprehensive theory by which to analyze all the data sets of this study – transcribed interviews, photographs, autobiographies, and journal writings.

The participants for this study were two male-to-female transsexuals living in Georgia. Pseudonyms were used for both participants and the names of identifying locations were changed. Michelle, a 23 year old research assistant, who transitioned at the age of 18 years and had no plans to have sex reassignment surgery, and Jessie, a 32 year old professional, who transitioned after graduate school and had sex reassignment surgery in 2002. I was introduced to Michelle through a mutual acquaintance and met Jessie at a gender explorations group. Both of these participants fulfilled the criterion of being from Georgia, self-identified male-to-female transsexuals, and over the age of 18 years. I chose Georgia as the geographical region of this

study due to the paucity of literature examining the Southern transsexual experience, as well as Derrida's (1974) suggestion of beginning where you are. Male-to female transsexuals were chosen for this study because I had greater access to this community and believing there was a qualitative difference between the male-to-female and the female-to-male transsexual experience, I did not want to conflate these two experiences. Only participants over the age of 18 were considered, as I wanted to maintain continuity of developmental status through out my data sets. For the purpose of this study, a male-to-female transsexual is a biological male desiring to change at least some of her bodily characteristics of sex to female characteristics of sex or who finds an incongruence between her "inner" gender and "outer" sex and has a desire to express her gender through alternate significations, such as body modifications, cross dressing, and gender/sex blurred identifications (Lawrence, 2002).

My data set consisted of two case studies, Michelle and Jessie. The case of Michelle consisted of three data sets: an in-depth biographical interview, a photo elicitation interview, and a Yahoo profile. Michelle and I met at a coffee shop in Atlanta, Georgia in October of 2003 for an in-depth biographical interview (Erben, 1998). This interview began with the request, "Tell me your life story." Michelle, speaking for over an hour, told me a fairly rehearsed story of her life. That she had told this story before was evident in the ease in which she told it, her lack of pauses, and the cohesiveness of the story. This rehearsal is important only in it may have the propensity to solidify the structure of her narrative. Michelle's interview data, as with all interview data, contains the words and thoughts of others. These statements must be read as attributions and thus with caution. During this interview, I attempted only to give affirmative signals, nodding my head and saying "um hum" in order to encourage her to continue speaking at length (de Marrais, 2003)



I audio-taped and transcribed the interview with Michelle. After I completed the transcription, I sent her a hard copy to read and make any desired changes. Michelle and I agreed in advance that we would discuss her biographical interview following the photo elicited interview described below. At that time she could request that I make any additions, deletions, or changes to her interview.

In order to gain deeper insight into how Michelle's constituted transsexuality as well as the discursive underpinnings of transsexuality, I used the method of photo elicitation in the tradition of Ewald (1985, 2000). At the conclusion of the biographical interview, I gave Michelle a disposable camera and a self addressed postage paid envelope. I asked her to take pictures answering the question, "What does transsexuality mean to me?" After taking eleven photographs, she mailed the camera to me. I developed two sets of the photographs, one for each of us to keep. We then met at the same coffee shop in Mid-Town in January of 2004 for another long interview. In this interview, I asked Michelle to tell me about the photographs. After deciding that she wanted to speak about them in the same order she took them, she proceeded to tell me about each picture. Following her discussion of the photographs, I turned the conversation to the previous interview. Michelle had no changes she wanted to make to the transcript, but did mention her pleasure at having a hard copy of her story. I had a couple of questions I wanted to ask for clarity. After Michelle answered these queries, the interview was terminated. This interview was audio-taped and transcribed. Both the photographs and Michelle's description of them were understood as narrative (Bal, 1999) and became part of the data set.

Michelle's Yahoo Profile became the third data set in her case. A Yahoo Profile is a web page wherein a Yahoo member can introduce herself to the Yahoo community. The front

page of this site is a pre-formed space in which members insert their photograph and pertinent information about themselves. This site can be linked to a photo album, if the participant desires. Michelle has a photo album consisting of seven dated file folders, 1998-2004. Each of these folders has between 2 and fourteen photographs of her and often her friends. It thus presents a photographic journal of Michelle. I considered this photographic journal a narrative (Bal, 1999). Photographs are a reflection that detaches the subject from itself and places the subject back into meaning through the relations of a storying field (Barthes, 1994), thus capturing a moment of death when the subject knows it is becoming an object (Barthes, 1981). This allows photographs not only to produce “pleasure” (Barthes, 1994), but also to be read between the fissures of the subject as self and object, a simulacra which may denote the social construction of identity within the social constrictions of that choice (Jay, 1994).

The data set for Jessie consisted of two types of data – a biographical interview and a photo elicitation interview. Jessie and I met at a restaurant in Athens, Georgia one evening in early January 2004 for an in-depth biographical interview (Erben, 1998). In an interview conducted in the same manner as the one discussed above, Jessie spoke for almost 2 hours in response to the question, “Tell me your life story.” I audio-taped this interview and sent Jessie a copy of the transcription in order that she could make changes to the transcript. We agreed to discuss any changes following the photo elicitation interview. Although when the time came, she had no changes to request, the offer was especially important to Jessie as she was concerned with her standing in the professional community.

Photo elicitation was conducted in the same manner as noted above. After the biographical interview, I gave Jessie a disposable camera and a postage paid envelope, asking her to take photographs of “What does transsexuality mean to me?” We met in Madison,

Georgia in April, 2004 for the photo elicitation interview. The only notable difference between the discussion above and this experience was Jessie took approximately 7 minutes to sort and arrange the photographs she took into the order she wanted to talk about them. After Jessie spoke about the photographs for approximately 45 minutes, we discussed several questions I had from her biographical interview.

Member checks were conducted throughout the analysis and interpretation of the data for this study. I e-mailed Michelle and Jessie when I did not clearly understand a segment of their data. This was done to facilitate my understanding of the participants' narratives and to diminish the differential implicit in etic research. Triangulation was achieved through the use of multiple data sources.

The data gathered above was unwieldy –92 pages of interview data and 68 photographs. In order to create data sets of a size that could be analyzed in depth, I created abridged narratives from the interviews. These narratives were constructed using predominately the narrator's own words -- altering the text only for clarity and brevity -- Bal's (1999) concept of an event, and Moustakas's (1994) concept of data reduction. According to Bal, an event is "the transition from one state to another state, caused or experienced by actors" (p. 182, 1999). The criteria for selecting events are the following: 1. Does it communicate change? 2. Does it determine future events? 3. Does it have two actors and a predicate – an actor that acts on another actor? I found, however, that in following this formula exactly, I lost much important information. For example, the fact that Michelle's father was a co-pastor of the church was not an event, but in relation to the other events of the fabula it was an important piece of information in setting the context of Michelle's life. Thus, I found myself basically using Bal's suggestion, but also using my own intuition and keeping lines of the story that I felt were

necessary to the meaning of the narrative. I combined the idea of using only events with Moustakas's (1994) suggestion of data reduction, using everything that is narrated, but only include it once. Thus, I only repeated an event once, regardless of the number of times it was narrated. I used this method for constructing narratives with all verbal and written data in this study.

An example of this method can be seen below. A verbatim segment of the interview is presented. The italicized words in this text are those that I kept. The words "knew" and "saw" are underlined as they both communicate approximately the same idea. Thus in attempting to repeat ideas only once, I kept only "saw," a subjective choice, in the condensed story. It can also be noticed that I added the word "said" in the condensed narrative for clarity.

But, I am sitting at work *one day* and *this beautiful blonde girl*, she is like my big sister now, I haven't talked to her lately. But, she is getting her checked cashed and I finish her transaction and she looks at me and just like "*Do you want to be a girl?*" And *it was just like the angels sang and the lights flashed* and *she was trans herself*, I had no clue; she was completely 100% passable. And *she just knew it, in my eyes and saw my soul* and just knew that, that is what I wanted. And so, I got off of work. We met and had coffee. And she gave me the name of her doctor. *I went to her doctor three days later.*

The condensed version reads as follows:

*One day at work this beautiful blond girl said, "Do you want to be a girl?" It was just like the angels sang and the lights flashed. She was trans herself. I had no clue. She saw it in my eyes and my soul. I went to her doctor three days later.*

After the narratives had been condensed, I then separated each narrative into scenes. I did this in order to analyze how and if the narratives aligned with Roof's (1999) heteronarrative structure, which will be discussed below. With the biographical interview data, I separated the narrative into a different scene when the main theme that connected a series of fabula changed. For example, reading the exposure of Michelle's homosexuality, her dismissal from school, and her subsequent treatment at home as being linked by the theme of being banished from home, I separated these events from the surrounding text, labeling them as one scene. This approach became problematic when the theme changed after an embedded fabula. The question then arose, to which scene does the embedded fabula belong. When this situation came up, I read and re-read the data and attempted to attach the embedded story to the scene to which it most closely aligned.

The process of constructing scenes with the photo elicited texts was quite simple. Before the photo elicitation interview, I asked each participant to sort the photographs in the order they wish to talk about them. I then took the photograph she discussed first and the condensed fabula that described it and assigned this the position of the introduction. I placed as the conclusion the photograph she discussed last and its description. In the order that they were mentioned, the remainder of the photographs and their accompanying narrative stood as the middle scenes.

In the case of Michelle's Yahoo profile, I followed primarily the same logic. I allowed the opening page of the site to be the first scene and each dated folder to constitute the following scenes. The opening page then became the introduction, the 2004 folder the conclusion, and the 1999-2003 folders became the middle scenes of the narrative. And finally,

with Jessie's journal, I allowed her first entry to stand as the introduction, her last entry to represent the conclusion, and the remaining entries to constitute the middles.

All data was considered of equal status as it was examined using Bal's (1999) theory of narratology and Roof's (1996) theory of the heteronarrative. Using Bal's basic theories, as will be discussed below, I analyzed the structure of the narratives constructed from this data. Roof (1996) suggests that our narratives in the West follow a specific structure which always concludes in the heteronormative, the normative of the modern individual – the alignment of sex/gender/sexual orientation, the logic of capitalism, knowledge, identity, and family (Roof, 1996). By concluding in the heteronormative, this structure disallows the re/production of homologic bodies and subjects, bodies and subjects constituted outside the logic of the heteronormative, ambiguous and/or perverse bodies and subjects.

The structure of this narrative, which Roof (1996) called heteronarrative, begins in the heteronormative. The introduction foreshadows the events to come. This foreshadowing tells of homologic middles to follow as well as the heteronormative conclusion. Homology is allowed and in fact mandated in the middle of the narrative in order to create the tension needed for a series of events to constitute a story. Homology provides pleasure as we can safely enjoy its perversity since we already know it will conclude in the heteronormative. We know this not only because of the foreshadowing in the introduction, but because we have read the structure so many time before. After the homology of the middle, the conclusion ends in the heteronormative through pulling any of the remaining homologic events and characters back into the heterologic through the logic of the heteronormative. Thus, the introduction begins in the heteronormative and foreshadows the events to come. The middle is homologic, and the conclusion ends in the heteronormative.

This narrative structure is inseparable from the selves we narrate; there is no body and subject to narrate that is not already a narration (Butler, 1999; Roof, 1996). The structure of narrative and the body and subject positions available are two sides of the same dynamic which function to re/produce body and subject positions. Therefore, Roof's theory of heteronarrative provides a structure by which to analyze how narrative re/produces the transsexual body and subject within the heteronormative.

Although Roof (1996) provided me with the structure by which to analyze these narratives, she did not give me the methods I required to carry out the task. So, I turned to Bal's (1999) methods of narrative analysis. Bal presents a structural analysis of texts. She suggests that texts can be analyzed on the level of the fabula, the story, "a fabula that is presented in a certain manner" (p. 5) and the text –the medium, "such as language, imagery, sound, buildings, or combination thereof" in which a story is told (p. 5). She thus offered me a theory that would encompass my entire data set.

On the level of the text, she gave me the tools to examine narration, argumentative elements, descriptive elements, metaphors, and embedded texts (Bal, 1999). Stories are narrated by an external narrator (EN) and/or a character bound narrator (CN). The first is a narrator that is not an actor in the fabula, and the latter is a character in the narrative. The difference in the level of narration between an (EN) and a (CN), "entails a difference in the narrative rhetoric of truth" (Bal, 1999, p. 22). Our interpretation of what we read as 'truth' is very much influenced on the position of the narrator. If the fabula is narrated by a CN, this narrator usually proclaims that she is voicing the 'truth' about herself. But the "I" of the narrator may or may not be an actor in the fabula and may or may not be the focalizer, the perspective or point of view. The distinctions between the levels of narration, allow a "finer

picture” of narrative event (Bal, 1999, p. 29). Additionally, separating the narrative from the non-narrative comments of a fabula allowed me “to measure the difference between the text’s overt ideology, as stated in such comments, and its more hidden or naturalized ideology, as embodied in the narrative representations” (Bal, 1999, p. 31).

Bal (1999) also gave me tools to examine the argumentative, descriptive, and metaphorical elements of the texts. Argumentative passages are portions in the text that refer to elements outside the fabula (Bal, 1999). In referring to elements outside itself, a narrative often exposes its ideological underpinnings. As these underpinnings may be contradicted in the descriptive or narrative portions of the text, argumentative references cannot be examined in isolation, but should be explored in the context of the whole. Description also has a great impact on the ideological effect of a text (Bal, 1999). As a “textual fragment in which features are attributed to objects,” description is a “privileged site of focalization” (Bal, 1999, p. 36). Metaphors often cover ideological meaning in a text. Taken as natural, they often stand in for narratives behind the text. Therefore, through the examination of metaphors, I was able to gain “insight not into what the speaker ‘means’, but into what a cultural community considers acceptable interpretations” (Bal, 1999, p. 35).

And lastly, on the level of the text, I explored the relation between the embedded narratives and the primary fabula. Embedded narratives are stories within the primary fabula. There are three different types of embedded narratives: those that explain the primary fabula, those that resemble the primary fabula, and non-narrative. Those embedded texts that explain may reify ideology by merely serving an explanatory function, or they may lead to change through explaining an alternate outcome to the primary fabula. And finally, non-narrative embedded texts, may effect the reading of a story through explicit commentary.



On the level of the story, ideology is most often inscribed through the ordering of events, the rhythm, the characters, and focalization (Bal, 1999). The ordering of the events in a story is a technique that draws attention to certain things. An event is a process, a “transition from one state to another state, caused or experienced by actors” which contains an element of change, choice and confrontation (Bal, 1999, p.182). Events in a fabula are linked in some type of logical, usually chronological, order. Chronological deviations, especially in the form of retroversions, references to events that have occurred in the past, are not unfamiliar. Anticipations, references to events that have not yet taken place, also occur, albeit less frequently. Referring to the future, anticipations are usually covert allusions to the outcome of the fabula, “an outcome which one must know, in order to recognize (in retrospect) the anticipations for what they are...[--a suggested] sense of fatalism or predestination: Nothing can be done, we can only watch the progression toward the final result” (Bal, 1999, p. 95). I thus explored chronological deviations, for their ideological implications and their possible function as a foreshadowing of the conclusion that erases the homologic narrative middle (Roof, 1996).

I also examined the rhythm of the story. The general rhythm of a narrative may be determined by surveying how much story time is given to events in the fabula. The relation between the two, ranging from zero to infinity, may indicate the importance of an event through an abundance of pages in relation to the fabula, or it may indicate boredom, an on-going, slow moving elaboration. The ellipsing of an event, its absence in the story, may also indicate importance. An ellipsed event may signify that it was too painful to speak, or it may mark an event’s erasure. A collapsing of this relation between the fabula and the story, on the other hand, gives the text a postmodern “feel” (Bal, 1999, p. 110).

Every time an event is presented in a story, it is presented from a certain perspective. This perspective influences the meaning of the text. Thus, I analyzed the focalization, the relation between the one who sees and the object seen (Bal, 1999). Focalization can shift through out a story, moving from a character in the story (CF) to an external agent (EF). The following questions are important in analyzing focalization: 1) What object is focalized? 2) Who focalizes? 3) What is the attitude of the focalizer? and 4) Who can perceive the focalized object? This latter question is important, as being privy to a focalized object gives an agent power.

On the level of the fabula, I looked at the relation between events and how they fit into the narrative cycle and the relation between actors. Examining the relation between events and comparing them to other narrative structures illustrates how the story aligns with the traditional narrative structure (Bal, 1999). It also makes apparent whether the teleological process of the story follows the pattern of improvement or deterioration. The positive or negative trajectory of this pattern may illustrate the ideology of the position that the character holds, since what is improvement and what is deterioration is culturally defined.

Along with using Bal's method to examine the heteronarrative structure of the narratives I constructed from the data sets, I also used narratology to analyze the constituents of the body and subject. These tools allowed me to investigate the other side of the narrative dynamic, the "type" of body and subject narrated, which functions to re/produce the transsexual body and subject.

In the following two chapters, I discuss my findings, which I have constructed from a narrative analysis of the data sets of two male-to-female transsexuals in Georgia. Michelle's narratives are presented in chapter 4, and Jessie's narratives are discussed in chapter 5. This is

followed by an exploration into a homologic representation of a transsexual body and subject.

A concluding chapter follows.

## CHAPTER 4

### MICHELLE'S NARRATIVES

Michelle is a female who was born biologically male. Raised in a conservative Baptist family in South Georgia, she left home at the age of 17 years and moved to Atlanta. Currently 23 years of age, she began her transition five years ago at the age of 18 years. She is presently a research assistant working on a nationally funded HIV/AIDS research grant at a prominent university in Atlanta.

Michelle provided me with three sets of data: an interview, elicited photographs, and a Yahoo profile. In the following, I analyze the three narratives I have constructed from these data sets for their alignment to the heteronarrative structure. Following this structural analysis, I examine the narrated body and subject of the protagonist in these same data sets, specifically noting its essential, inscribed discursive and becoming formations.

#### The Structure of Michelle's Narratives

Transsexuality is a narrative act; to be a transsexual is to narrate oneself as a transsexual (Prosser, 1998). As such, the transsexual body and subject are re/produced within the structure of narrative. Relying on a heteronarrative structure – an introduction that foreshadows the conclusion, a conclusion that always ends in the heteronormative, and middles that allow ambiguity, transsexual's homology is delimited by the structure of narrative. In the following, I examine the structure of Michelle's interview narrative, photo elicited narrative, and Yahoo Profile narrative, in order to illuminate the function of the structure of narrative on the re/production of the transsexual body and subject. Beginning from Roof's (1999) assumption

that our narratives begin and end in the heteronormative and allow homology in the middles, I analyzed each narrative in the order of introduction, conclusion, and middle.

### The Structure of Michelle's Interview

On our first meeting, I asked Michelle to tell me her life story. Speaking for over an hour, she talked of her life. From the 520 lines of Michelle's narrative, I assembled an abridged version to present here. I constructed this narrative through a combination of Moustakas's (1994) method of diminishing the repetitive aspects of a story through deleting every remark that has been previously stated and Bal's (1999) concept of an event, which maintains only those aspects of a story that have a subject and an object, move the story forward, and convey change. Additionally, the scenes are my interpolation. This condensed version of Michelle's story while altered from its original form, maintains the primary content and structure of the original, allowing the reader more access to the data as I discuss the heteronarrative structure of Michelle's story which functions to produce her identity. Following the narrative I constructed from Michelle's interview data, I present an analysis of the heteronarrative structure of this narrative.

#### Introduction

*Born in Gordon, Georgia. I grew up male. I chose to go to private Christian school. My parents are ultra religious. My mother teaches kindergarten at the school. My father is an auto mechanic. He is also a co-pastor of the church. My family was never very religious. My three brothers grew up without all the religious constraints. When I was three and four years old, I begged my parents to go to church. I put myself into the religious rules and practices.*

## Scene 2

*I always questioned, not gender, but sexual identity. You don't grow up with the terms you need to explain what you are feeling. Mine was always in homosexual terms that the church uses. Around seventh grade, I had my first experience with a guy. I had a couple of other experiences with a couple of guys from my church. There is more homosexuality going on in the ultra right church than anywhere. I could never act on it in the open. I would do something then feel ultra depressed. My desires and my teaching were always a dual thing in my mind. I told four or five of my really good friends I was gay or bi-sexual. I started dating this really great guy before my senior year of high school. I was not doing it as secretly as I probably should have. The principal, the school administrator, and the pastor of my church called me in. They had me read the scriptures that they use to condemn homosexuality. A lot of my friends told on me because they thought they could help me. I was the scapegoat for everyone else. There was no defense because they knew everything. I was crying infuriately. With the little courage I had, I would not deny homosexuality. I knew without a shadow of a doubt I was not going to burn in hell. I left and went to my brother's house. His wife, Casey, divorced him and has been happily in a lesbian relationship. Casey, she is like, "What's wrong. What's wrong?" "I'm gay. I'm gay. I'm gay." And she was like, "Okay, and?" My brother thought it would be good to witness to me. And out of my senior class, I think 4 out of 8 guys are now gay. The school told my parents I had some news that was going to destroy the family. I am crying, "Please love me." My mother says, "Shut-up, and tell me what, what, what." I told her and she just screamed about how awful I was and couldn't look at me. Expressionless, my father walked off. My*

*father said I was not right. The pastor of my church would come over to have therapy sessions with me. I would leave. I was gay bashed at the mall parking lot. I was literally ostracized from my whole town. Atlanta or bust? Atlanta. I moved to Atlanta with my boyfriend. We broke up. I moved out on my own.*

### Scene 3

*I am the only child who hasn't come back to mooch off my parents. I still have not talked to my father. Coming into Atlanta, you see drag queens and transgirls. I started to do drag occasionally, but did not identify that as me. One day at work this beautiful blond girl said, "Do you want to be a girl?" It was just like the angels sang and the lights flashed. She saw it in my eyes and saw my soul. I went to her doctor three days later. It had never been put onto me before. I grew up best friends with my mother. I grew up in a household of three older brothers. My aunt and uncle said, "You raised him as a daughter; shut up and accept it." I was allowed to play with Barbies. My mother told my friends, "When Michelle was young she always wanted girl clothes." I remember dreaming about a white dress, of being a bride, of being a princess. Then I knew: "Wow, that is where it has all been." Never in my mind was I concerned about being gay, because in my mind, I wasn't gay. I was a girl who was interested in guys. What was wrong with society that I couldn't be that way? I went on the Internet that night and read about hormones. I bought about 30 books at Outright [A Bookstore] on trans issues. I did power readings. I was a boy, but could pull off girl very easy. I would hang out at Outright, and lesbians would hit on me. I went to my doctor, and he thought I was a girl wanting testosterone. He says I am his best test subject. He told me the procedures; he gave me the pills; he gave me the shot. I have never looked back.*

*It was the summer of 98. People always grow up to regret it, but there are a lot of things that are not regret. I wouldn't say I have had an easy life, but I have had it a lot easier than some. I started at a younger age, had an easy transition, and somewhat supportive people. I lost a lot of friends. There is little opportunity to explore trans issues. Those that pass go into the heterosexual community, because that is who they are. I'm kinda bisexual now; I had a lesbian relationship last year. I started exploring my own sexuality. Love is not about body parts; it is about the person. I have been with other transwomen, other trans guys. I went to Buckhead, I went to straight bars, and I kinda forsaked my community. In social networks, at Outright, and at the University, I am the only trans person. Answering the questions for everybody. Even the trans-people that are active, they do not come out on a daily basis. I have just been so fortunate. I will constantly go and travel and teach it.*

#### Scene 4

*My parents found out about it. I did the whole transition without talking to my parents. She is a Mom; she will eventually come around. It is hard; she lives in a traditional household where the father makes the rules. She doesn't make contact with me. I get like, "I am over you." When I call her, she is like "Why haven't you called me?" I crashed my brother's wedding about a year ago. It was scary, and it kinda hurt. It was the first time a lot of people had seen me. My brothers were very shocked. My brother's wife thought I was wonderful. I sat in the gay section. The pastor came up and said, "Wow, long time no see. We really missed you." Right, you think I am gong to burn in hell. My father found out that I was there and skipped my brother's wedding. The hardest part was family portrait time when I was not called. My friend, a Black*



lesbian, and I joked, "Who do they hate more, the trans or the Black?" I bought a Saturn, a little bit after moving to Atlanta. My father co-signed, reluctantly. He and my mother did not know about the transition. Saturn takes your picture with your car and sticks it on a calendar. He found out by opening up a package and seeing a calendar of me. This was early in my transition and I wasn't as feminine as I would have been. My father called and asked to speak to me. He said, "Is this what you are now?" "That is who I am now." He said: "You really know how to rub glass into an open wound." "Your mother is going to have a heart attack and it's going to be your fault. I hope you are going to do something about it. Because if you aren't, I will drive up to Atlanta and do something about it for you." The letters I send him used to get returned. About a month ago, my mother said, "Your father said your letter was really sweet." I don't know who found out first. My mother found out by sending my older cousin up to spy on me. She is rummaging through my bathroom, talking to my mother about the drugs I was on. My mother started accepting me when I started dating a girl. She can see me as a lesbian easier than she can see me with a gay guy. It is interesting in looking at social atmospheres and stigmas. How lesbians are sexualized to women and how two guys are ostracized. She forces herself to use the correct terminology. She slips up and apologizes. It is a slow process. My father, I am just like, ugh...I was dating Kelly, and we were down there. It was like the first time, except for the wedding. She brought up my aunt and the cousin who came up came and her sister. It was this whole tale of women just chattering. It was just like, "We're done. This is how you have always been." It is not like that all the time. Whatever it takes to create a foundation, I am happy for. It was hard for them to have a gay boy, and then a gay boy into a girl, and

*then a gay girl who is dating a girl who is actually a boy. I think it has been about a year now that she had been using, "I love you." It was, "I can't love you. You're my child anymore. But, you still have to call me." I sent her several publications on trans issues, and she is reading them. If she was seeing me everyday, I think our progress would be phenomenal. I never want to go back to my hometown. It is really like going back into the closet for me. My whole growing up experience was living in denial of who I really was. That whole town is living in denial of who I really was. She is making huge strides.*

### Scene 5

*I was working at Ace Check Cashing. I had gone from boy to girl on the job. My boss was okay with it. I just started taking hormones. I slowly changed my wardrobe from boy jeans to girl jeans. Hormone popping is such an emotional roller coaster that it literally kills people. So it was like take it day by day. I started letting my hair grow out. I started plucking my eyebrows. I was a gay boy, so I had been sharing my eyebrows and drawing them on. The Company has a lot of diverse people. We got a new vice president from Louisiana. My name had not been changed, and he said, like, "Well, who is this?" I said, "That is me." He said, "What are you?" I started going into an explanation. He said, "Sorry, you're not company material." A memo came out that I was an example of how we should stay in line. There are no laws against that, in most any states, it is totally accepted. I went to work for one of the gay churches in town. Youth Pride offered me a fulltime position. That was like the beginning of my like really peak at heavy activism stage.*

## Conclusion

*I am daily fortunate. It could be so much worse. I see so many other girls that it is so much worse. Daily, I thank the Goddess that it was the way for me.*

*I am your cookie cutter trans. I did transition from just male to female.*

*I do now really date straight guys.*

The structure of Michelle's narrative provides interesting insight into the re/production of a transsexual body/subject. In its entirety, Michelle's narrative aligns with Roof's theory of narrative structure (1996). It begins in the heteronormative in an introduction that foreshadows the ambiguities of the middle as well as the heterological ending of the conclusion. The introductory paragraph situates the narrative in the heterosexual family. Michelle is the youngest of four children, the biologically male child of a mother and father in a conservative Christian family in rural South Georgia. But, the stasis of the Oedipal family is quickly interrupted with "I grew up male, of course." This interruption foreshadows the ambiguity of the narrative middle to come. Michelle, as a beautiful woman sitting in front of me, articulating that she grew up male, insists in the gap between her present and past, in the gap between the introduction and the known conclusion, the homology of her identity, while at the same time hints at the heterosexual conclusion. Her struggles are also foreshadowed by her position of growing up differently than her brothers. "My three brothers grew up without all the religious constraints." But her ambiguity is quickly pulled back into the heterological as she concludes her introduction with her identity as an agenic self, "I put myself into the rules and the practices." Thus, in this introduction, Michelle's ambiguous identity is foreclosed in the introduction of an Oedipal family and the conclusion of agency while she foreshadows the identity struggles to come.

Four middle scenes follow this heterosexual introduction. Each of these scenes, in relation to the whole narrative, portrays Michelle's identity as homological. She moves from and between being male, gay, a gay boy, a girl, bi-sexual, lesbian, trans, and straight. We hear Michelle articulate her homological identity most explicitly in scene 4 when she says, "It was hard for them to have a gay boy, and then a gay boy into a girl, and then a gay girl who is dating a girl who is actually a boy." These identity transformations, which were foreshadowed in the introduction, structurally and contextually mirror the Freudian perverse. (Roof, 1996). They are the struggle that must be overcome in order to be a gendered/sexed being in modernity as they simultaneously provide the narrative tension of the middle that is overcome in the valiant agency of the conclusion. As the polysexuality of the child is trumped by the heterosexual desires of the adult in the Oedipal narrative content and structure, which ultimately are one and the same, we always already know that the homological will be erased as we delight in their experience. This foreknown conclusion then actually becomes the introduction in a circular telling of our identity. We are therefore not at all surprised when Michelle's homological identity, which has found expression throughout the middle of the narrative, is staunchly in the conclusion: "I am your cookie cutter trans. I did transition from just male to female. I do now really date straight guys." Michelle thus narrates a fairly straightforward heteronarrative in which her homological identities are predominately erased in the conclusion through her expression of a heterosexual body/subject.

But the overall structure of her narrative may tell only part of the story of the re/production of Michelle's body/subject. On closer analysis, it appears that the homologic middle may not be as perverse as Roof (1996) implies, for each scene of Michelle's narrative may be read as following the same structure as her entire narrative – a heterological

introduction and conclusion and a homological middle. This increases the frequency of the containment of difference, anchoring it more tightly to the norm. It provides shorter intervals of ambiguity, keeping the perverse tethered to the Oedipal.

This pattern may be seen in the second scene, which is the first scene of the narrative middle. By reading the introduction of this scene through the larger discourses through which it is narrated, Michelle is placed within the heteronormative. Her questioning, “I always questioned, not gender, but sexual identity,” places him immediately in the homologic. But this questioning is circumscribed within the heteronormative by the limitations of his terms. She could only self identify within the discourse of his “ultra religious,” Southern Baptist Church. Within this discourse, based on such scriptures as Leviticus 18:22, “Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination,” homosexuality is a sin of choice, an unnatural act of a natural heterosexual. In such a reading, any homological implications of the introduction are an illusion. They are in fact, heterosexual productions of the “unnatural” heterosexual. Thus, Michelle’s coming out story commences within the heterosexual matrix.

Michelle’s self-questioning in the terms available to her set up the hetero/homologic tension of the remainder of the scene. As Michelle narrates her relationships with “a couple of guys,” her story quickly slides into the homologic. But this sliding is slowed as she admits, “I was not doing it as secretly as I should have.” This admission is a heterosexual moment as she takes responsibility for his homosexuality by inverting the homo/hetero power binary and usurping heteropower by taking the responsibility of heteropower’s erasure of the homologic.

As she comes out to his friends and is confronted and ostracized by the authority figures in his life, the struggles between the heterosexual discourses in his environment and his homosexual desires erupt. These struggles appear at first to be won in the homologic as she

refuses to deny homosexuality, knows without a shadow of a doubt that he will not burn in hell, and cries, “I am gay. I am gay.” But, this homologic victory of the middle is usurped in the conclusion. Michelle’s triumph can only be completed through leaving the homosexual context of his home. If she is going to maintain his homological identity and not be re-inscribed back into the heterologic center of the town, he must leave. This move forefronts her agency: “Atlanta or bust? Atlanta.” This agency coupled with his concluding position of “having a good job, my own apartment and everything,” positions Michelle as a productive, successful individual living on her own. In other words, the scene concludes in the heteronormative with Michelle as an agenic, productive, modern self.

In the third scene, Michelle narrates her identity of always having been that of a girl. This scene begins with Michelle stating, “I am the only child who hasn’t come back to mooch off my parents.” In this way, she links her heteronormative identity in the conclusion of the last scene to the introduction of this scene. She narrates herself as an agenic, productive, modern self, standing independent of her parents. This independence is reinforced through the implicit joining of her agenic acts to her “I,” as well as through the separation of herself from her brothers, as the only sibling who has succeeded in being continually self-sufficient. This “healthy” separation and independent self, quickly hits its logical extreme, throwing her identity into the homologic, in the next sentence, “I still have not talked to my father.” Read through the Oedipal, Michelle’s homosexual desire of the last scene along with the bar between herself and her father, imply that she has not completed the male Oedipal transition, separating from the mother and aligning with the father. This places her back into the homologic of the narrative middle. The ambiguity continues as Michelle is asked if she wants to be a girl. The possibility of being a girl emerges in Michelle’s narrative from the outside as discourse, it is

“put on” her, and as a function of desire, “Do you *want* to be a girl?” This intensifies the homologic of her narrative and her identity, because it keeps the “cause” of her transsexuality in the realm of discourse and desire and out of the sphere of essence.

As the homologic of Michelle’s narrative intensifies, she uses two strategies that are common within transsexual autobiographies to rein the homologic theme of wanting to be a girl back into the heteronormative. First, she retrospectively reads her past as one in which she always was a girl, “Then I knew: “Wow that is where it has all been.” Yet, this strategy fails, and the narrative remains in the homologic through the tension between her essentially being a girl, “that is where it has all been,” and having been raised as a girl “You raised him as a daughter,” the replay of the biological and environmental arguments of cause, which bring along with them the discourses of fault and sin. Second, she calls on authorities to authorize her status as a girl. The doctor thought she was a girl wanting testosterone and the lesbians at Outright hit on her thinking she was girl. These authorizations also fail and the narrative remains in the homologic, since they document a mistaken identity, “I could pull off girl easy,” and not her true inner self. It is interesting to note that these strategies which attempt to suture discourse and desire to essence occur at the moment the body transgresses its biological limits and begins its transition of becoming a girl.

The homology of middle is briefly thwarted as Michelle begins her transition; she is on a progressive, developmental path, moving forward toward the girl she always has been, having no doubts, never looking back. This heterosexual moment is pulled back, however, by her pondering “regret.” Michelle’s explicit denial of regret, encapsulated under “a lot of things that are not regret,” positions her apologetic and possibility in the repentant. She is situated in the heterological position as the shadow of the normative. The homologic is then amplified as she

discusses the shifting positions of her sexual orientation, “I am kinda bisexual now...I have been with other transwoman, other transguys,” and as she separates the body from the subject, “love is not about body parts, it is about the person.” But this ambiguity is lost once again in the conclusion as she narrates herself as the only one who is “answering the questions for everybody” and continually traveling to teach others about trans issues. In this act of teaching, as the producer and propagator of knowledge, the scene once again concludes in the heteronormative (Roof, 1996).

In the fourth scene, Michelle tells us the stories of her parents finding out about her transition. Unlike the previous scene in which the introduction and conclusion are situated in the heteronormative through Michelle’s position as a modern subject, this scene commences in the heterological through the deviance of her identity in relation to the norm of the Oedipal family. In the introductory line, “My parents found out about it,” Michelle is repositioned as the male child in the Oedipal family and her transition is placed in the metaphor of a secret. Read in tandem with the following sentence, “I did the whole transition without talking to my parents,” the transition becomes a transgression, something done without permission. This places Michelle in the heteronormative through linking her transition to a position of transgression and deviance in relation to the norm. The power of the Oedipal mother then is called upon, as Michelle states that eventually her mother will come around. Stating that it is difficult for her mother because she is under the rule of the father makes it appear that if not for the law of the father, Michelle as her transsexual position would be acceptable within the heterological, thus implying an expansion of the heterological bounds through mother love and the increased space of the homological. This homologic ground that Michelle occupies is kept in tension with the heterologic of the nuclear family through the remainder of the narrative



middle of this scene. This is seen as she attends her brother's wedding. Through being excluded from the family photograph -- the imprint of continuation and future reproductive possibilities of the family -- abandoned by the father by his absence, and seated in the homosexual space, the tension of the homo/hetero space is maintained and the homological is moved to the outside. But, Michelle's statement, "Who do you think they hate most, the trans or the Black," re-centers the homologic through linking the unacceptable perverse of trans with the mandated acceptability of the homologic of race.

The homologic of the middle is once again threatened with the heterologic violence of the father, "I hope you are going to do something about it. Because if you aren't, I will drive up to Atlanta and do something about it for you." But this is quickly released into a homologic possibility as she narrates, "Your father thought your letter was sweet." Not only is the heterosexual violence erased as its narration is quickly terminated, it is transformed in a condensed fabula to "sweet." But this transformation, although appearing to maintain the homologic, actually indicates a superseding of the heterosexual. The erasure of this tale is the death of this tale. It becomes a narrative for another time. It is, thus, productive in its reproduction of another story, a heteronarrative device indicative of a heteronarrative structure (Roof, 1996).

A homologic possibility returns as the mother appears as a potential for acceptance. This acceptance is manifested when the mother accepts Michelle dating a girl. But this acceptance which appears as an expansion of the homologic space is actually bound tightly to the heterologic as we read Michelle through the mother's eyes as her biological son, a reading that is reinforced by the failed homologic reigning strategies of essence and authorization which were used in the last scene. Thus, Michelle is read through the heteronormative

perception of the mother as a boy, albeit dressed as a girl, dating a girl. Thus the heteronormative is maintained and the homologic of Michelle identity disappears into the reality of biology of the Oedipal family. The heterologic of this moment continues into the conclusion of the scene as Michelle states that the whole town of Gordon was “in denial of who I really was,” and her mother is “Making huge strides.” She thus again relies on the discourse of a true, essential self, the modern heterosexual possibility, and she holds out the hope for a happy ending, the liberal ideal of the mother’s teleological growth toward acceptance.

The final middle scene, scene 5, narrates the story of Michelle being fired from her job because of her trans status. The first sentence places Michelle in the heteronormative as a productive self, “I was working at Ace Check Cashing.” The homological begins in the next sentence as she goes from boy to girl on the job. This ambiguity continues and is intensified with the narrated detail, “started taking hormones.... changed my wardrobe from boy jeans to girl jeans...started plucking my eyebrows.” A slight hesitation to this ambiguity occurs as Michelle states, “The Company has a lot of diverse people.” Mentioning “diverse” is a reminder of the heteronormativity to which this diversity relates. But then all ambiguity comes to a slamming halt when the new vice president says, “What are you?” The switching of pronouns from “who” to “what” not only immediately brings us back within the power of the heteronormative, it objectifies the homologic, positioning it as an object. The heteronormative is bolstered in the conclusion not only as she is fired, but as that act is legitimated as legal, thus right.

Each of the middle scenes in Michelle’s narrative begins and concludes in the heterological. The middles of these middles, to varying degrees, each express a homologic possibility. It is interesting to notice, however, that in all the scenes the homologic of the

middle is reined in and sutured to the heterologic. As we have read, the homologic is never allowed to roam very far. As soon as it reaches some invisible mark, it is interrupted with a heterological reminder. These reminders may be only moments as in scene 3 when Michelle, without a backward glance, becomes a girl, or they may be continuous boundaries as in scene 4 when Michelle's parents find out about her transition. Interestingly, it is here in scene 4 that the hetero reminders are most prominent. Reintroduced in this scene as the son in an Oedipal family, Michelle's narrative is never allowed full homologic expression. The homologic middle, and the enjoyment of the perverse which is allowed because we know of the heteronormative conclusion to come, is here an impossibility, because its expression would be the demise of the family, and thus the very structure of the narrative itself. Its expression would concede the structure a failure and could not be enjoyed, as the heteroconclusion would not be assured due to the Oedipal and reproductive collapse in father/mother son/daughter homologic relations.

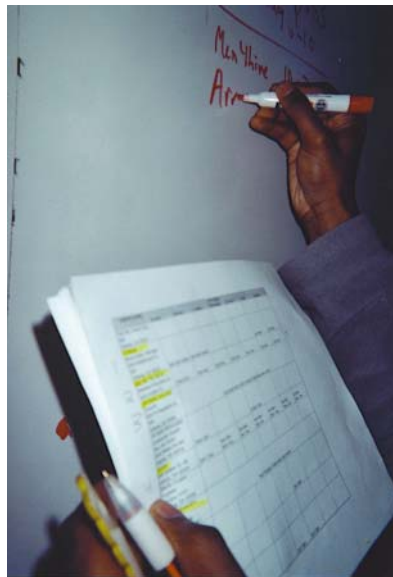
Each middle then becomes an illusion of the homologic possibility, as it is bounded at varying intervals to the heterologic. This binding only produces the homologic as the antithesis of the heterologic, always already constituted in relation to the homonormative. As the narrative as a whole and each scene repeats the heteronarrative structure, each middle mirrors the same. The narrative components thus become a hologram of the entire structure, containing the narrative in the heterological in ever more minute components.

#### The Structure of Michelle's Photo Elicited Narrative

Narratives and their accompanying structure can be read in multiple forms, including photographs (Bal, 1999). By linking the meanings of each consecutive frame, photographs can become a fabula. We read photographic fabulas frequently, in film, picture books, or the

family photo album. This alternate textual form presents different data that may be read for its hetero/homonarrative structure

Below is a photo story I have constructed from the elicited photographs Michelle took in answer to the question, “What does transsexuality mean to me?” Following each photograph is her description of it. I have abridged her words documenting the photographs using the same method mentioned above. Each of the photos appears in the order that she chose to discuss it during the photo elicitation interview, which in this case is the order in which she took it. I am reading the first photograph and her description of it as forming the introduction of the narrative, the following 11 pictures and their documentation as constituting the middle, and the last photograph and its fabula as composing the conclusion. Following this photo story, I present an analysis of the homo/heteronarrative structure of this story.

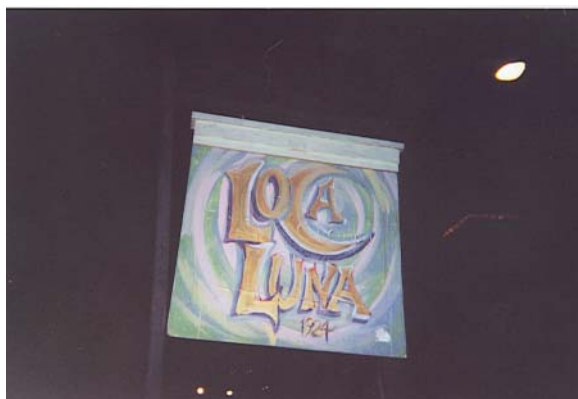


*This is in a work meeting of me and my fellow co-workers. I saw the different hands. There were supposed to be multiple hands, an Asian person, a Black person, a White person. I sorta saw the diversity that my life is. Definitely not the norm. I also like the writing on the board, because I see my life as sorta that board. I write, and maybe I*

*will erase the whole board and start all over again. It is always a diversity of a work in process. My life is never by myself. My parents always said, whatever you do, it always has ripple effects. My decisions, even my choices of being who I am, wasn't really just my choice. I just thought about the diversity of my life at the time, and how I would incorporate that diversity of my life, and what the board would look like when I am working on it.*



*This is me driving. I saw the Busch sign, because I drink, and I like to drink, and I like to party. I just saw the socializing, the bars, the clubbing, the partying my life consists of now, and probably will in the near future. Most of this is in Mid-Town, which is where all the clubs I go to hang out.*



*This is a sign of Loca Luna. It is a restaurant club. I have only gone to this place a few times, but it is in between two clubs I really go to a lot Peaches and Castles [Gay Clubs]. And I just love the sign. I just love the colors. And just being a sign where I hang out and socialize. My life isn't stuck at home, and it's not stuck in my own world, and my identity isn't stuck in my own world. So I have to transition, I also have to incorporate my transition into the world. This is actually a straight place. I want to incorporate my life as I saw it was suppose to be born. And so I go to straight places too and just be the girl next-door. I just wanted to convey that my life outside my identity as a T. I enjoy giving lectures and conferences about it, but a lot of times you see me going into Loca Luna, where people don't know the "T," where they just see me as a girl, though I may only talk to one person; I may hang out with just one friend. I have gone a whole night just being a girl, not being a transgirl.*



*This is inside the bar, the Peaches. It is a painting they have on their wall. A fairy floating, flying through the air. And it is the most beautiful painting that I have ever seen. But, I just really loved it, really like the beauty of the woman, the figure, the flowing, the sorta the wind in her hair, the breeze of her, the wrappings around her body, the no shoes, the really no clothes except for that one cloth. Very exposed, very*

*free. And I just saw that and thought that that was just so beautiful and just works for, and just take a picture of it.*

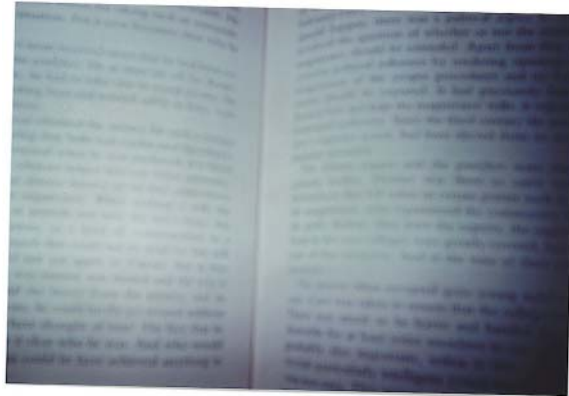


*I spend a lot of time in my car. It is sort of a detachment from home. I leave home and go in my car and then that is home. Oh, I have a full tank of gas; that is smart of me. I like to travel, and my work takes me from spot to spot to spot. My car is a mess; it always has clothes in it, and I am changing in it, and things like that.*



*It is a Caribou coffee cup. I am always having coffee, which is like so bad for me. I have had some long moments over coffee, too. The first time I picked up a trans book, was at a coffee shop. The first time I told my friends was at a coffee shop. The first time I met my roommate was at a coffee shop. The first time I met other people was at a*

*coffee shop. There are so many things that happened at a coffee shop. It is like either over a martini or a cup of coffee that things happen.*



*It is an open book, which really has two meanings. My life is very much an open book as far as what I do with it and how I work for the community. I don't do the trans organizations. I don't network with a lot of the other trans people, the transvestites, the cross dressers. I do my own part. I will answer any question. I have gotten to the point where not even nudity bothers me. If somebody is that interested in knowing how my body looks after six years of hormones, I am not afraid of it; I am not ashamed of it. I am empowered by it. I get trapped by it at times, which is my double-edged sword. I like to read. I read a lot of books before starting my hormone process. I still wanted to be sure that I was not going to be deteriorating my body as much as I am going to be. I read other people's stories, and so, coming to my identity was a lot about educating myself.*





*This is Jasper, my old girlfriend's dog. Kathy and I had a really bad relationship, so I don't see her per se as companionship, but I see just man's best friend, a dog, companionship. And so, my friends play a big part, and I am single now and I am always single it seems like, but I do like companionship, the dates, and the kissing, and the hugging, and having a boyfriend. Kathy was the first girl I ever dated, and the only long-term relationship I have had as Michelle. For the first time I really questioned my boxes. I was always so clear-cut that I was always who I was that I had grown up not interested in girls. Then, I put into play that I can think of my boundaries and overcome my own hurdles. It makes me frustrated that guys are not interested in me because they have too many hurdles to come across, when I have crossed the same hurdles. My relationship with Kathy was horrible and probably scarred me from ever having another female relationship. You only get only one life on this earth, so you should try everything. I wanted to live life knowing that at least one time I had sex with a girl, I had sex with a vagina. I think a lot of it was sorta a worship factor, too. It is a body part that I will never know on myself. So I have come to the philosophy that although I claim heterosexual, I think everyone is bisexual. I so think that sexuality and gender is such a construct. In ancient times it was such an open and free thing. Religion has labeled it as wrong. Our natural instinct is to explore and understand the unknown.*

*Well, the other sexuality and your own sexuality are unknown, if you have never explored them. And your instinct is to explore it and to understand. High school boys will experiment, having sex with other boy, but when they grow older they say it was wrong and they just did that growing up. Jasper, I just loved that dog. I miss the dog, but I don't miss Kathy.*



*It is supposed to be a picture of an Atlanta skyline. I took two pictures of Atlanta, because I love Atlanta. It is my city to become me.*



*I took two, just in case one didn't come out. This is my winter closet. My summer wardrobe is in storage. And I have two dressers. I love clothes. And I love shoes, too.*

*This community uses closets so much: come out of the closet, freedom from the closet. When I started hormones, I took a shot. When I had to tell and deal with my parents, my friends, my job that was one thing. There was also the thing of having to change your whole friken, wardrobe. It is expensive. This was a huge change in my life -- clothing. The outward. I was battling my inward. I was changing my physical outward, but my clothing outward, my adornment had to change. It wasn't as if I had a couple of thousand extra dollars to spend to buy a whole new wardrobe. I wanted to show the extent that it takes. It was a process. And I have finally come to a point in the process where my closet is that of a girl's. I have labels, and I have Wal-Mart. I love my Wal-Mart sweater. It is so comfy. It has big holes in it. A far away picture and one up close. Just to make sure I got it.*



*This is outside my apartment. I have like 30 odd trains coming in and out all day. My father is a model railroader. We would always go to the rail yard in my hometown and hop on a train, and ride back and forth. This is a picture I would love to send my father, if my father talked to me. He would love to know, if he liked me, that I was living outside a train yard. I still see my past every time I see a train. It is like a continual reminder to try to keep working on my parents. When friends come over they say, "How do you sleep?" Because they are coupling and uncoupling, and all day*

*slamming all these tons of cars together, and the house vibrates. I just love the sound.*  
*When I am trying to sleep, I don't hear it. It is music to my ears.*

Michelle's photo elicited text predominately follows the heteronarrative structure. But this alignment is not complete. As I will discuss in the following analysis, although the text as a whole corresponds with the heteronarrative structure, the homologic possibility of the middle is occasionally lost as a photograph and its description remain in the heterological.

The introduction of this narrative, following a heteronarrative structure, begins and concludes in the heteronormative as well as foreshadows the forthcoming ambiguity and its erasure. The story commences in the heteronormative context of work. The ambiguity of the middle to come is then foreshadowed through the embedded narrative of diversity. This fabula of diversity does not have a singular function, however. It simultaneously links Michelle to the homologic and the heterologic as it hints of the ambiguous to come and aligns her with the heteronormative by narrating her as an agenic individual choosing her identity, freely writing on and erasing the white board that constitutes her life. This dual function is a foreshadowing of the tension to come, the struggle between the ambiguous and the unitary, the hetero and the homo. She then narrates her life as a work in progress. As a work in progress, her life, her narrative, is a continual story, always re/producing another identity, another story to come. This promise of another tale forthcoming is heterologic in its function of re/production (Roof, 1996). The introductory function of foreshadowing then continues as the heteronormative conclusion of the entire narrative is indicated when she mentions her parents and the consequences of choice, "My parents always said, whatever you do, it always has ripple effects." Foreshadowing the essential and discursive arguments of cause that underpin the narrative as well as the hetero/homo tension these themes produce, her previously established

agency is removed from the realm of free will, “My decisions, even my choices of being who I am, wasn’t really just my choice.” The introduction is then concluded in the heteronormative, while it also hints of the homology to come, thus mirroring the heteronarrative structure. This sentence reads: “I just thought about ...how I would incorporate that diversity of my life, and what the board would look like when I am working on it.” This concluding sentence terminates in the heteronormative because diversity can only be constituted in relation to the norm and its incorporation can only occur within the heteronormative. But the very last phrase of this sentence, Michelle’s wondering what the board will look like in the interim, is a foreshadowing of the homologic aspects of her story. Even though this phrase hints at homology, however, it also is already contained within the heterological as it is a wondering which occurs along the journey that is already told to commence in the heteronormative through the incorporation of diversity. Consequently, this hinting remains in the heteronormative and mirrors the heteronarrative as it is only a foreshadowing of the safe (because of its already documented heteronormative end) enjoyment of the perverse that will follow.

The conclusion of the entire narrative, the fabula of the train, remains in the heteronormative. Trains sign multiple references through their signifying links – industry, commerce, travel, the Depression, minority labor, et cetera, all of which may not only be encapsulated under the sign capitalism, but are also heteronormative in their connotations. The middle of this conclusion continues within the heteronormative: the family riding on the train together, the father and his banishment of that which transgresses the Oedipal positions of the family. Without surprise or contest the fabula ends in the heterological as the sound of the train is music to Michelle’s ears. But what is more, this conclusion links the Oedipal family, capital re/production and the romantic ideal. The photograph, the train on a subtle rise, backlit

by the morning sun, and slightly veiled by the brilliance of the light, conveys a dramatic and romantic image of the conjoining of nature and capitalism. The language used reinforces this conjoining and romantic tone, “They are coupling and uncoupling, and all day slamming all these tons of cars together, and the house vibrates.” Thus, not only is romance as tone linked with romance as an act, romance, the family and capitalism are concluded as natural and heterosexual. This concludes not only the concluding fabula, but also the entire photo narrative within the heteronormative, completing a heteronarrative framework for Michelle’s photo text.

The second photograph and its description constitute the first event of the middle of Michelle’s photo elicited narrative. It is here that any divergence from the traditional heteronarrative is noticed. Beginning with “This is me driving,” Michelle is an agenic, modern individual. She is in control of her life, steering the direction of her journey. Situating herself in the present as enjoying partying and projecting this desire into the future, Michelle maintains a linear progression of herself. Her last line, “Most of this is in Mid-Town, which is where all the clubs I go to hang out,” shifts the heterologic emphasis to the homologic space of the gay section of Atlanta. This shift to the homologic space of Mid-Town is not, however, a homologic conclusion. Mid-Town is a space which functions in a similar manner to the middle of the narrative. It is permissible because it is already contained. Its heterologic outcome is already determined by heterologic space by within which it is confined. Thus the homology of this ending is an illusion. It is an enjoyment of the perverse exactly because it is already limited within the boundaries of the heteronormative space of Atlanta. It is the perverse space of adolescence, which is not perversion at all, because it is the needed tension for the heterologic victory. In this way, this middle event remains in the heterologic. The first event

of the middle, in not representing the ambiguous, diverges from the expected structure of the heteronarrative.

Continuing in the middle, the following event commences in the heteronormative with a photograph of a sign advertising Loca Luna, a straight bar. Interestingly, however, this straight bar is physically located between two gay bars that Michelle regularly frequents. This brings us back into the homologic, as Michelle is traveling in and between straight and gay worlds, passing through one on her way to another. The homologic movement is soon stabilized at the Loca Luna, where she is not only a girl, but the “girl next door.” Living “beyond the “T,” she is completely incorporated into the heterosexual space. Here again the expected homo/hetero combination is achieved.

The following event is of the picture on the wall in Peaches, one of the gay bars between which the Loca Luna is located. This situates the introduction of this middle in the unstable place as the boundary to the heterologic. Its homologic presence, like Mid-Town above, is only homologic, however, in its implicit relation to the heterologic center. Thus, this event only provides the false impression of a homologic introduction. The painting of the fairy is located on the wall of the bar, once again constituting a boundary of the homologic space. The fairy on the wall is idealized as woman/goddess, “the beauty of the woman, the figure, the flowing, the sorta the wind in her hair, the breeze of her, the wrappings around her.” The fairy/goddess then, appears to be the limit of the homologic space of trans signification, the wall at which the homology of trans must stop and/or begin a journey back to the heterologic of becoming a girl. Within the complex space of the borders of the homo/hetero space, this event’s conclusion is interrupted, “I just saw that and thought that that was just so beautiful and just works for.” Hanging, not knowing why it works and for whom, the direction of the

narrative is readjusted and grounded in the neutral and safe space of anonymity, “and just take a picture of it.” The structure of this middle fabula begins and ends as expected in the heterologic, but its middle, representing borders, constitutes a homologic space unlike we have seen thus far. This space is so complex in its ambiguity that any conclusion becomes impossible. So, the end must be stopped midstream and rearticulated within the heterologic.

The following fabula remains primarily in the heteronormative. She begins once again in her car; she has a full tank of gas and is ready to go. She is an independent self, on her journey, in control of her journey and possesses the means to reach the journey’s end. The only homologic moment occurs in the concluding line, “I am changing in it.” But this changing only becomes homologic in the context of her trans position. It is not homologic in and of itself; it only becomes so as we read it through the other nebulous texts of trans that we maintain in our interpretive lens. Thus, we once again have an event that remains within the heteronormative.

In the next scene, the Caribou coffee cup, a commodity, and thus heteronormative product, comes to symbolize pivotal trans events in her life. These trans events -- picking up her first trans book, telling her friends, meeting her roommate—are homologic, but are represented by the commodification of coffee. This heterologic symbol of homologic interactions is then abruptly linked to the martini. Through the signifying links of the martini – the drink over which business deals are made—a cup of coffee is pulled even more explicitly into the re/productive realm of capitalism. Thus, this scene reflects the heteronarrative structure through the signifying links she utilizes.

Opening the next fabula with “My life is very much an open book...” begins this event in the heteronormative. As a metaphor, a book aligns Michelle’s life with knowledge, as well as implies that there is something there to be read, a material essence to Michelle that may be



accessed through correct decoding. The heteronormative is continued in the individualism narrated, “I don’t do the trans organizations. I don’t network with a lot of the other trans people, the transvestites, the cross dressers. I do my own part.” The narrative of a modern self continues as she will answer all questions, expose all of herself, implying that there is an inner truth tell (Foucault, 1990). Staying within the heterological, the fabula switches to the second reference of an open book. She gathers knowledge on hormones and how other’s live. The heterologic of finding herself through knowledge is continued, but there is also the simultaneous inventing of herself through the discourses available. Choosing her identity is portrayed as an act of free will and agency, a choosing that is a match of an identity category to an essential self-made possible through the gathering of knowledge. This fabula is therefore heterologic in its entirety.

The next middle event begins in the heteronormative as Michelle disparages her lesbian relationship and holds up “man’s best friend,” as the ideal of companionship. The relationship between “man” and his dog is emphasized through the focalization of the camera. The photo is taken angled down, giving dominance to the narrator. The fabula then moves into the homologic middle as Michelle speaks of questioning her boxes. But this is pulled back into the heterological as she relies on her own agency to over come the stereotypes of heterosexual identity and wonders, aloud, why others cannot do the same. This wondering relies on the heteronormative of knowledge as well as self-efficacy, a “pulling yourself up by the boot straps” myth. The homonarrative is also pulled into the heterologic by her once again mentioning the “horribleness” of her relationship with Kathy. The narrative then moves into a new type of homologic moment. In what appears at first as a heterologic and misogynistic technique, fragmenting the body “vagina” from the subject “a girl,” is in a fact the homologic

understanding that the body and the subject are not one and the same, nor do they correspond to each other along gender lines. Having sex with a girl does not necessary constitute having sex with a vagina; the girl, gender, may very easily be in the body of a biological male. Thus, this subtle line “I had sex with a girl; I had sex with a vagina,” is probably one of the most explicitly homologic pieces of the entire text. This becomes increasingly so as we remember from Michelle’s interview that Kathy “was a girl who used to be a boy.” The homologic of the fabula is abruptly stopped as Michelle narrates herself as heterosexual. The continuing philosophy of bisexuality has simultaneous homo/heterosexual underpinnings. While on the one hand she is advocating for the possibility of a natural bisexuality, she is placing this argument in the metaphors of nature and exploration, heteronormative signs. Continuing to pull the homologic tendencies of this argument toward the heterologic, the data used to support the “naturalness” of bisexuality is that of gay relations. This links Michelle to the male relations she had as a gay boy in the previous narrative, encouraging us to read her identity through transsexuality, a girl who was a boy. The story ends in the heterosexual as she reiterates her love for the dog and her lack of desire for the company of Kathy. This scene thus follows the structure we noticed in the previous narrative.

The following fabula is only three sentences long. After telling us that the photograph is supposed to be of the Atlanta skyline, she notes that she has taken two of these photos because she loves Atlanta so much. Atlanta through out her narratives has signified both a homologic and the heterologic space. It has been the context in which she was introduced to trans and found a place to live, worked and socialized as trans. But, it is also the space where she was fired for being trans as well as the heteronormative boundary surrounding the homologic space of Mid-Town, as discussed above. Thus, on a closer reading, it has not been

Atlanta proper that has symbolized a heterologic space, but the confined space of Mid-Town in which the homologic has proliferated. Read in this manner, the skyline of Atlanta is a heterologic beginning to this introduction. When Michelle says, “I love Atlanta,” we are easily convinced that she is not speaking of Atlanta proper, but the homologic space within Atlanta. This love, however, is set in the teleological parameters of becoming me, a developmental becoming toward the essential self. This development is reinforced by the architecture of downtown, the modern constructed space. This fabula thus remains entirely in the heterologic.

The final middle scene is that of her closet. It is interesting to note that here, as with the fabula above, Michelle narrates a tale of becoming, and it is these tale of becoming that she insists on photographing twice, making sure that they do not become lost events in the story. As the length of a fabula often indicates its importance (Bal, 1999) this double exposure documents the importance of this becoming to Michelle’s text. Feeling this emphasis, we know we are encountering an important event. This event begins very simply, “This is my winter closet.” It continues within the traditional, mentioning her larger wardrobe and her love for clothes. This simplicity is only on the surface level, however, for we already are reading the closet as a homologic space from its much used metaphoric rehearsal. Within this context the picture of the closet is already ambiguous: the metaphor of coming out of the closet and the theme of clothes and dressing in homosexual and transsexual narratives. Thus, what appears as a heterosexual, straightforward, introduction is already homological from our reading this space through its metaphors prior to their explicit introduction. Then moving explicitly to the metaphor of the closet, the homologic of the introduction is stanchied, because the metaphor is seen for being heterologic, it is a heteronormative theme only possible in a heterosexual frame of reference; the telling of a true identity to the heteroworld. The story then states the necessity

and expense of changing a wardrobe. The inward, bodily outward, and adornment outward, all must be aligned. These aspects of the inward/outward dichotomy are cohered through the capitalistic purchasing of an identity. Thus through production, the body, subject and presentation are brought into the hetero alignment of in/out. Once again, the homologic theme of ambiguity is simultaneously present with and presented in heterometaphors and language. Heteroideology succeeds at the conclusion, as her process, a teleological journey, is complete. She has now arrived at heteroalignment and is the “owner” of a girl’s closet. It is through the metaphors of capitalism, production and consumption, that this alignment is possible. The identity, symbolized by the clothes that adorn her body, may have holes in it, but it is “so comfy.” It fits. The final sentence, reinforcing this heterologic identity and the importance of its becoming is reinforced by the reiteration of her taking two photographs of the closet, one close up shot allowing inspection, one panoramic shot to allow a comprehensive view. In this reading the final middle begins and ends in the heteronormative and presents a middle which functions simultaneously within the homo/heteronormative.

Michelle’s photo elicited narrative, in its overall framework, adheres to the heteronarrative structure. The middles, however, tend to be much more heterologic in their construction than was the case in Michelle’s interview story. Often they remained in the heterologic or made only momentary passes at the ambiguous. But also, the middles in this story presented complexities that were not previously noticed: the simultaneous appearance of homologic and heterologic functions, the complexity of the boarder between the homologic and heterologic, the explicit noting of the separation of body and subject, and the implicit representation of the relations between production/capitalism and narrative/identity. Thus

while the photo narrative had the propensity to remain in the heterologic, it also exhibited more convoluted homological spaces.

### Structure of Michelle's Yahoo Profile Narrative

A Yahoo profile is an online opportunity to present oneself. On a preformed web page, a participant inserts a photograph of herself and fills in basic personal information -- name, location, age, marital status, gender and occupation. Each profile is linked to a photo album where the participant may display personal photographs. Yahoo profiles and their accompanying photo albums, understood as a text, may be read as a narrative.

Michelle has a Yahoo profile that she continually updates. Although the text on the front page primarily remains the same, the photograph is frequently changed. She adds current photographs to her photo album regularly. Each time I enter the site more photographs have been posted. Organized chronologically, she has seven file folders, dated 1998 through 2004. Each of these folders contain between two and sixteen captioned photographs. From this data, I have constructed a narrative, mirroring the site as closely as possible. Beginning with the front page of her profile and continuing with the photographs in her photo album, keeping the captions in place, the original size, and the order in which they appear in the photo album, this narrative can be read below. Following this narrative, I will present an analysis of the heteronarrative structure of this text.

[Yahoo!](#) [My Yahoo!](#) [Mail](#)  
**YAHOO!** MEMBER DIRECTORY  Welcome, **jodivoivo**  
[\[Sign Out, My Account\]](#)

Search the web   
[Member Direct](#)



Search:  for

**Profile Stats**

Last Updated: 01/08/2004

**My Email**


**On Yahoo!**

- [Add to friend list](#)
- [Messenger](#)
- [View my photos](#)
- [Photos](#)

**Basics**

Yahoo! ID:  
 Real Name: **Goddess**  
 Location:  
 Age: 23  
 Marital Status: **Single**  
 Gender: **Female**  
 Occupation: **full time Goddess**



 [Send me a message](#)

**More About Me**

**Latest News:** New pictures in in my photo folders. Halloween and Philly trip.

**Links**

[Create your own home page at GeoCities!](#)

- Home Page: <http://www.hotornot.com/r/?eid=GRRRNYYE&key=WHV>
- Cool Link: *No cool link specified*

[View](#)

ADV

- 
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1998



Blurry Costume



Gold Thong at Youth Pride



Piedmont Park 1



Piedmont Park 2



Piedmont Park 3

1999



Party Like It is 1999



Pride Costume 1



Pride Costume 2



2000



On the Corner



Innovox 1



Innovox 2



Innovox 3



Innovox 4



Innovox 5



Innovox 6



Innovox 7



Innovox 8

2001



Innovox



Me and John

2002



Hangover



Me and Debbie



Fan 1



Fan 2



Janice, Peter and Me



Fan 3



Me and Kevin

2003



Just Me!



Purple 1



Purple 2



Purple 3



Late Night - Strange Night



Late Night - Strange Night



Speaking at a college 1



Speaking at a college 2



Speaking at a college 3



Me and Mark



Me and My Friend Jack



Me and My Friend Jack



Cow Parade 1 Ride Um Cow Girl Yee Ha!



Cow Parade 2 This Cow Would Make Halloween  
Some Lovely Boots, and Maybe A  
Matching Purse Even! Hummmm

2004



25edited



26edited



27edited



28edited





29edited



32edited



Mirror 1



Mirror 2

Construing the front page of Michelle’s profile as the introduction, the 2004 file as the conclusion, and the remaining files as the middle, this narrative follows a heteronarrative structure, beginning and ending in the heteronormative and presenting homologous events in the middle. The introduction of this narrative begins firmly in the heteronormative. The photograph of Michelle presents the image of the “girl next door.” With minimal make-up, a

form fitting t-shirt, a scarf pulling back her hair, looking straight into the camera, Michelle radiates a natural, healthy look. Self described as a single, 23 year old, female Goddess, Michelle is assumed to be a heterosexual, biological female as no signs to the contrary are offered. All of this is caught under an advertisement for Weight Watchers. Corporate America is thus providing the literal space for the re/production of Michelle's narrative. This page is reinforced as a heterosexual space through the linking of the offer to "send me a message" and her position as a single female. Taken together in the context of her heteronormative identity these signs work to reinforce the heterology -- the logic of the heterosexual matrix, the underpinning re/productive logic of capitalism and the modern individual, and the logic of sex/gender/sexual orientation alignment (Roof, 1996) -- of this introduction. But it is also here that a hint of the enjoyment of the perverse enters. Positioned as the object of desire (the position of a woman linked with "send me a message") for the viewer's gaze, a gaze that is anonymous and cannot be returned, this introduction becomes a homologous space. Further down the page, the position of the modern individual, standing unconnected and alone, is reinscribed through the lack of "cool links" specified. This is especially noticeable when read through the individualizing statements of the photo-elicited narrative, "I don't do the trans organizations. I don't network with a lot of the other trans people, the transvestites, the cross dressers. I do my own part." This introduction thus follows the heteronarrative structure. It begins and ends in the heteronormative and foreshadows the homology of the middle. However, unlike the previously noted ambiguities, this homology is only a possibility whose details are absent, since it is narrated solely through her position as the object of desire of an anonymous gaze and not through any implication of events to follow.

The conclusion of the photo narrative consists of 8 photographs. The first 5 of these, read in a series, tell the story of female victimization to the male gaze. Standing in the corner, a space metaphorically and physically of no escape, staring directly into the camera, one hand on a cocked hip, the woman is provocative in the first photograph. Dressed in a short dark skirt, tight top and black boots, she is object of a heterosexual male gaze which then becomes the focalizer. A tone of sadomasochism is emphasized by the black and white effect of the photo. In the second photograph, she becomes more vulnerable, arms raised, head lowered, hips increasingly off-center. After moving from a come hither look over her shoulder, she is slightly crouched in the corner, holding her skirt to her thighs, angled as if ready to flee. She is caught by the focalizer with no escape. In the next event she is against the wall, head angled downward, hand to her temple; looking at her focalizer with the lower half of her body angled away, a pose of reluctant submission. This heteronormative fabula shaded with heterosexual violence is concluded with a close up, frontal, headshot. Staring into the camera, the focalizer has changed. It is no longer the male gaze/perpetrator, but us, the reader of the fabula. Looking at us with no expression, we don't know what she is thinking or what she had experienced. The missing events of photographs 30 and 31 emphasize our lack of knowing. But this knowledge is not lost, but kept secret in the face/body of the woman.

This all too familiar heterosexual fabula is followed by two pictures of Michelle reflected in the mirror. According to Prosser, (1998) mirror scenes are a convention in transsexual autobiography. Used to illustrate the split between the body and the subject, the mirror scene, through the retrospective reading of autobiography, allows the gender of the psyche to have been there all along. Here, however, the mirror does not reflect an alternate gender, a split in the body/subject of Michelle, nor does it, at first glance, appear to occur prior

to the conclusion where it can serve the function of enabling a reading of always having been the opposite gender. As Michelle is continually adding photographs to her website, these mirror images do not constitute the end of the story, but are forebears of more to come. And reading the entire narrative as a becoming, not a becoming of that which she was not, but a becoming of that who she is, the indication of a body/subject split, even when both aspects of that split are of a similar gender, is the mark of the “interreflective dynamic” Prosser (1998, p. 103) mentions between autobiography and transsexuality. Concluding with the reflection of the unification of the body and the subject in the mirror, this narrative closes in the heteronormative.

The middle of this narrative, unlike any thus far, begins in the homologic. Whereas Michelle as Goddess was determined to be heterologic in the introduction, here it is homologic, because it is not the Goddess, but Michelle in the costume of a Goddess. It is a facsimile, a simulacra, a copy of the copy. The homologic continues as Michelle dances in a gold thong at a Youth Pride event. Youth Pride, a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, question youth advocacy and support group, sets this photograph in a homologic context. Additionally, the costume itself is homologic, displaying an underlying theme of sadomasochism through the linking of the thong and the chains. The perverse is immediately halted in the next frame, as Michelle appears dressed in girl jeans, sweater, make-up and hairstyle. Looking at the “girl next-door” image, we think we are in the heterological, but reading the caption we find we are in Piedmont Park, in one of the “gay” spaces of Atlanta, thus the solid ground of normality is shaken and the ambiguous presents itself through the contextual setting. The story of 1998, differing from any scenes previously encountered, is homologic from commencement to conclusion.

The following scene, 1999, shows Michelle partying with a mixture of male and female friends on New Year's Eve. Without other significations, this appears to be heterologic, but in the context of the preceding frames, the space becomes unknown, thus ambiguous. The concluding photographs are of Michelle once again in the costume of the Goddess. Here, as above, as costume, the photograph represents the homologic. Thus the story of 1999, as the scene above, is homologic throughout.

The third middle, the year 2000, begins with what appears to be Michelle out on the street late at night. Striding forward, looking up at the camera, with the lights of the city behind her, she depicts the isolation and alienation of the modern individual. Simultaneously, however, she mentions the homology of that same position as a female dressed in girl/ boy clothes on the streets alone at night. The introduction of this scene is thus homologic, but not in the same manner as the homo/transsexual, but through the disregard for the normative role of woman. The following eight photographs are captioned "Innovox." As a gay friendly coffee and connection lounge, the caption "Innovox" immediately sets the following fabula in a homologic space. Yet, the content of each photograph is heterologic. Thus, a tension is produced between the homologic context and the heterologic content. In "Innovox 1," the tone of isolation of the first photograph is continued. In this picture, her vulnerability is increased as she has her back against the wall, is crouched down, looking up through lowered lids to the camera. This sense of vulnerability, emphasized by the black and white film and gold cross around her neck, has the propensity to pull her back into the heteronormative, but the homology of the space constitutes an ambiguity, thus the narrative is here homologic. With the same top/down focalization, background, and black and white film, the following close up relays the same message as the previous photograph with the same homologic result. The focalization

and context shifts in the fourth photograph, altering the sense of vulnerability and isolation to posed seduction in the fourth and sixth photograph. The color and tightened jaw of the fifth photograph lead the viewer to perceive anger and/or defiance. These shifts change the mood, but have no effect in altering the heterologic message of the content of the narrative or the homologic outcome as a function of the homologic space. The second to the last photograph lessens the intensity of the previous photos, adding color and showing Michelle laughing. The color and the laugh soften the lines of the modern alienated, vulnerable subject, making the viewer more comfortable. The final scene abruptly leaves the heteronormative content. Michelle is positioned in a heterosexual stance, against the wall with one hand on her chin and the other on her thigh, gazing down into the camera, in an obviously staged pose. This posing is a re/production of a re/production of the discourse of being female. As such the apparent heterologic is homologic as it is read as a simulacrum. (Baudrillard, 1988) This narrative middle thus is homologic through out.

The following year, 2001, is a narrative with only 2 pictures. In the first picture, one of the only photographs of Michelle wherein she is not looking directly into the camera, Michelle is the epitome of the proper female with straight posture, red lipstick, black skirt and matching hose, holding her teacup precisely in front of her, Michelle is the genteel Southern woman. In the next photograph, presumably standing with a date, Michelle again represents the heterosexual female. Throughout this short fabula, the narrative is firmly established in the heteronormative.

Reading on into the next fabula from the previous heteronormative scene, the photograph of Michelle standing in her pajamas with her dark glasses on over the caption “Hangover,” presents little ambiguity. The following scene, introduces the homologic through

the Youth Pride context. This subtle and partially obscured reference is erased in the following two photographs as Michelle poses with an Oriental fan. As a prop, this fan reiterates the heteronormative; it aligns more closely with the signs of gender through articles of adornment rather than the masking of gender through costume. The following photograph continues within the heteronormative framework, as Michelle and friends gather around a Christmas tree. As one of the core symbols of Christianity, and thus heteronormativity, this photo leaves no doubt about its underlying ideology. The following photograph reintroduces the homologic through its display. As a double exposure, this photograph is contextually ambiguous. The scene then concludes in the heteronormative as Michelle and a male friend are posing side by side. The year 2002 is primarily heterologic in its presentation. However, through the partially erased sign of Youth Pride and the ambiguous context of a double exposure, homologic moments do appear in the middle of this middle scene.

The final middle year, 2003, is longer and more complex in its presentation. It begins with the homologic, “girl next-door” picture that was presented on the front page of the profile. Three pictures of Michelle in a dance hall girl costume follow this. But, unlike the goddess costume that signifies homology through its play with gender, this costume gives no indication of gender alternation. As a costume, it is also a replication, but it is a re/production that remains within the heteronormative. The following four photographs disrupt the heterologic not with their content, but with their display. Rotating the same image in 45-degree increments, literally positions the subject in the main directional quadrants, facing multiple directions in immediate sequential order. She is thus disrupted by her own re/production. This disequilibrium is emphasized by the negative photo quality and the caption, “Late Night, Strange Night.” This ambiguity is dislocated in the next three photographs picturing Michelle

lecturing at a college in the South. These images, positioning her as knower within the context of knowledge sharply retrieve the heterologic of the last four photos. The heterologic is maintained in the next several photos as Michelle poses with male friends, and continues in this space as she poses on the back of a pink cow, teasing about what a great pair of boots she would produce. The final photo, Michelle with her arm around a male companion on Halloween, concludes this scene in the heteronormative. This fabula then remains predominately in the heteronormative. Its homologic moment comes not from content, but from display, the disruption of the top/down linear structure of the narrative.

Michelle's photo narrative produces a slightly altered structure from that which was evident in her interview narrative and photo elicited narrative. The homology of the introduction is not presented through the foreshadowing of concrete events to come, but as a possibility suggested through her position as an object of desire to an anonymous gaze. Like the conclusions of the previous narratives, this conclusion remains through out in the heteronormative. Differing from the previous heteronarrative structures, the first three middle scenes remain entirely in the homologic. The fourth middle scene continues to disrupt the heteronormative structure by representing only heterologic events. In the final two middle scenes, the homologic events appear not as content, but as structural disruptions. The first disruption is done through the presentation of a double exposure, which illustrates the reading of events through events, texts through texts, identities through identities. The final middle dislocates the heteronormative through the fragmenting the linear narrative structure by rotating the photograph to face the major quadrants. Thus, the photo narrative offered different strategies: homologic events as possibility, entire homologic and heterologic scenes, and homologic structural disruptions.



## The Body and Subject in Michelle's Narratives

The structure of a narrative is inextricably linked to the content of a narrative. Neither can be disentangled from the other. Following Roof's (1996) theory of narrative, the emergence of the heteronarrative structure is simultaneous with the heterosexual/heteronormative triumph over the normal/mandatory homosexual desire/tension of the middle/adolescence. Functioning in and through each other, structure and content re/produce the transsexual body and subject. In the following, I analyze the content of Michelle's body and subject as narrated in the constructed narratives of her interview, photo elicitation, and published photographs. Specifically, I examine her body and subject narrated as essence –the essential self at the core of the modern individual -- inscribed, (Foucault, 1980, 1984a, 1990) discursive, (Butler, 1993, 1997, 1999) and becoming. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987)

### The Body and Subject in Michelle's Interview Narrative

In the introduction to Michelle's interview narrative, she narrates herself as an essential individual. She is a member of an Oedipal family, the child of a traditional mother and father and the sibling of three brothers. She is agenic, noting her "choosing" of private school and her responsibility for the religious environment of her life. But, this essential self begins on slippery ground. In the first sentence, she deletes the "I," "Born in Gordon, Georgia." "I" is a subject position constituted into a self in language through the linking of attributes and actions to the position (Butler, 1997). Through the absence of Michelle's "I" in the introductory sentence as well as her introduction into this world, Michelle commences her narrative and her life with the absence of subject position. Thus, in the middle and end of this introduction, Michelle presents an essential self, but she commences with her presence being documented by her discursive absence.

The conclusion of Michelle's interview narrative begins with the line, "I am daily fortunate. Positioning herself as "fortunate," allows Michelle an affirmative stance in the world and in the relation between the gods and the world. In the Western myth, fortune has often indicated morality. Those blessed are in line with the teachings, and thus knowledge, of God. There is an inversion, here, however, as Michelle attributes not God, but the Goddess for the ease of her journey. This attribution does not alter Michelle's stance as a modern, essential self, it only inverts the terms of the binary in the same structural relation. The calling of the Goddess does link Michelle's identity to the order of the Goddess which in pagan teachings was overthrown by patriarchy and will return. The implication of the return of the matriarchy along with the morality of Michelle's stance places Michelle's identity outside the current center, but as a higher truth which will return and gain ascendancy. After placing her identity in the higher order of that which was and will be again, Michelle alters the heteronormative grounding of her identity, naming her becoming as one essential gender/sex to another and her desire as heterosexual. In the conclusion, then, Michelle's identity is essential throughout.

The first middle scene, begins strongly with "I." This "I" is a self who is agenic, questioning the identity positions available to her. The second sentence, "You don't always grow up with the terms you need to explain what you are feeling," begins to hint of a discursive subject. But, this is only an implication, for the terms she seeks to find are not in order to invent a subject position, but in order to name a self that is already present; it is an inscription, a writing on the body that which already exists. The next sentence, "Mine were in the homosexual terms the church uses," increases the possibility of a discursive subject through the naming of the language/terms she has available. By sharing the label of her terms, she indicates that there were other alternatives that were not available. These discursive

alternatives imply a writing of the self, possibilities of sexual identities heretofore invisible. Additionally, mentioning that she had not, as of yet, questioned gender, undermines the essentiality of the category. Thus, her identity is disassembled; it is a becoming. Her questioning opens her up to the possibility of aligning with different trajectories of being, connecting with discursive lines that inscribe the body into becomings. Becoming continues, as she conjoins with “other guys.” The possibility of becoming shifts directions as these meetings are forced into closed spaces. Mandating that homosexual relations be contained in closed spaces does not foreclose the possibility of becoming, because this space continues to offer lines with which one can merge. But this shift does rely on the discursive, homosexuality as evil and that which must remain hidden. This pull between herself as becoming and herself as inscribed, ends with her feeling “ultra depressed.” Within the discourse of the modern individual, in a battle between desires and teachings, id and ego, self and society, a psychological inside and a physical outside, she is once again an essential self. This first middle scene, then, begins and concludes with an essential body and subject, and represents in the middle a becoming and a becoming/inscribed body and subject.

Michelle continues to narrate an essential identity as she confronts the homosexual allegations. This is seen as she is “the scapegoat for everyone else,” especially when read through her forthcoming philosophy of universal bisexuality, her announcement that she is gay, and the leaving of her hometown. Her essentiality is not entirely formed, however, through self identifying statements. The church said “I had news that was going to destroy the family”; the mother screamed, “How awful I was;” the father said, “I wasn’t right.” Each of these responses constitutes Michelle as an essential self, a being through the Baptist discourse of homosexuality as choice, who has chosen to live a life of sin. A “self” who in order to save itself can leave the

heterologic space of Gordon for the perceived heterologic space of Atlanta. Michelle's body and subject is essential throughout this scene, but its constitution is, at times, explicitly formed by others.

Michelle begins the third scene as a modern individual, agenic, independent, productive, and isolated, "I still have not talked to my father." Thus isolated and alienated, Michelle contains the predominate themes of modernity (Bal, 1999). Encountering other possibilities of being, alternate discourses and chance becomings, "drag queens and trans girls," she remains an essential self, recounting that as not me. The true essence of Michelle's identity is then found when Kathy, who in my reading is the "girl who was a guy" and becomes Michelle's girlfriend, asks her if she wants to be a girl. Linked as essential through the astral beings and metaphoric light of knowledge, Michelle is a girl. Then the essence of this being is called into question, "It had never been put onto me before." The discourse of being a girl had never before been presented as an option; it had never been put on her, inscribed on her body as truth or possibility. Michelle continues, constructing this inscription in retrospect as self, "Wow that is where it has all been." Through knowledge, books, lesbians, and the doctor, her essential identity as girl is reinforced. Her identity as essence is then presented as becoming: "He told me the procedures; he gave me the pills; he gave me the shot." In the body of boy, housing girl, Michelle eats the chemicals of girl, becoming body of girl (plus wilting penis), chromosomes of boy, gender of girl. Through experimentation, "I have been with other transwomen, other trans guys," this becoming appears to continue, but in actuality it does not, for she is exploring not sexuality, but her own sexuality. By stating that it was her own sexuality that she investigated, she indicates a searching for the truth of that which she has, that which she is. This essentialization continues as she perceives herself as forsaking her own

community, giving an essentiality to trans identity. As the only trans person in her environment, emphasizing her isolation and alienation, along with her portrayal as the holder of knowledge, Michelle is narrated as having an essential self. Thus, in this middle scene, the body and subject begins and concludes as essential and is represented as inscribed in the middle.

The fourth scene begins not with an “I,” as did the second and third scenes, but with her identity positioned through her relations to parents, “My parents found out about it.” Unlike the introduction wherein she was marked in a homologous position by absence, here Michelle is marked as a child in an Oedipal family. Additionally, she is marked by her secret. This constitutes her as an essential being with a psychological inside and material outside through the mark of confession (Foucault, 1990). Michelle’s essential position is reinforced through positions of her mother and father. The father, as law, is making all the rules; he is the personification of patriarchal power. The mother is forever accepting, the moment for her “coming around,” only impeded by the father. In the midst of these Oedipal dynamics, Michelle’s identity remains essential. The essentiality of her identity is reinscribed at the wedding where she identifies as gay. This position is reinforced as essential as she sits in the homosexual section, is not called for family portraits, and her father skips the ceremony. Constituted in a binary relation to and outside of the heterosexual matrix reinforces her identity as essential. Solidifying her position as outside, and thus that which is necessary for the constitution of the normative, she jokes, “Who do they hate more, the trans or the Black?” The essential nature of her identity is then threatened as a becoming in the next short fabula when she states, “This was early in my transition and I wasn’t as feminine as I would have been.” In the process of transitioning, she is in the space of becoming. This becoming is evidenced by

her father's words: "Is this *what* you are now?" Refusing to accept a becoming beyond the human, Michelle replies, "This is *who* I am now." As quick as the becoming entered the narrative, it is closed as her father narrates her as a member of the Oedipal family, responsible for her changing her presentation to align with the normative and positioned under the power of the father: If you aren't going to do something about it; I will.

In relation to the mother, her identity is assumed to be an essence as it is a secret, a cloaked truth. But the cousin tells the mother not of an essential self, but of a becoming, "She is rummaging through my bathroom, talking to my mother about the drugs I was on." This becoming is not a true becoming, however, because it has already been established as truth/knowledge through its containment in a secret. A becoming is not truth or knowledge, consequently, "the drugs I was on" is read as an inscription, chemicals that write on the body, forming, shaping it. Michelle is then narrated as a discursive position as it is easier, in relation "to the social atmospheres and stigmas," for her mother to see her as a lesbian than with a gay guy. Here, Michelle is not these positions, but these discourses are subject positions which she may fill in order to find mother love. Michelle slides into the position of female as she mentions that her mother "forces herself to use the correct terminology." Michelle continues as an essential female identity, stating "This is how you've always been." But this essentiality is undermined with the next sentence, "Whatever it takes to create a foundation." Her identity is no longer a truth, but a discourse, a position maintained for the results. Yet, we know that this is not entirely true, or she would be boy. Thus, there is a convoluted twisting of options. It is as though the identity opportunities which exist in this relationship range between the subject positions which Michelle can perform and the ideological parameters of her mother's tolerance. This is substantiated in the next line where Michelle documents her becomings in a series of

discursive positions followed by her mother's burgeoning acceptance. The negotiations between identity as discursive positions and becomings immediately halts as Michelle states that her "whole growing up experience was living in denial of who I really was," thus once again concluding herself as an essential self. In the fourth scene, then, Michelle's identity commences and concludes as an essential position, while it is occasionally and briefly stated as becoming, inscribed and discursive in the middle.

In the first sentence of the next scene, Michelle is a modern individual, working, productive. That quickly changes in the next sentence when she states, "I had gone from boy to girl on the job." But this becoming is between two discursive categories of essential being, girl and boy. The transition that follows, however, allows an ambiguity of in-between, on a continuum of becoming, "day by day," where part of the becoming started prior to the transition, "I was a gay boy so I had been shaving my eyebrows and drawing them on." This out of sequence becoming, a becoming which was forgotten as non-sequential, positions her in the complexity of becoming. This becoming is stopped as she tells us that the Company had a lot of diverse people. As one of the diverse, she takes a discursive position in relation to the normative that allows the production of diversity. The essential nature of her identity continues to be narrated as her boss asks, "Who is this?" and she answers, "This is me." A moment of inscription is then heard as the boss asks, "*What* are you?" This *what*, presumably asking what is the nature of her being is not indicating an essential self, for the essential self is always already constituted through a corresponding link between sex and gender. Thus, in asking what she is, her identity is queried on its inscription, what is the writing on this body? She then re-establishes her identity as essential in the closing line, "That was like the beginning of my really peak at heavy activism stage," narrating herself as the agenic possessor of truth. This

final middle scene begins and ends with the narration of an essential self. The middle indicates a brief becoming, stanching by an essential self, and then portrays an inscribed position.

The formation and narration of Michelle's identity in her interview narrative is intertwined with the structure of that interview. The relations between the two function almost, but not entirely, as a one to one correspondence, when I read an essential self as heterologic, an inscribed self as heterologic when the writing is presumed to be etched on an essential body and homologous when imprinted on a discursive body/subject, and heterologic as a discursive body and subject and becoming.

Read in this manner, Michelle begins her narrative with a discursive, and thus homologous, self. The introduction then switches to and concludes with an essential, heterologic self. The homology of identity in the introduction does not come in the middle as the seen in the analysis of structure, but it does foreshadow the narrative to come. Through beginning as a discursive subject and ending as an essential self, Michelle's identity transition is foreshadowed as a linear development, a progression which is mirrored in the text. In the conclusion, Michelle's identity is presented throughout as essential. This aligns with the structure of the conclusion which is completely heterologic.

The identity narrated in the middle of this fabula follows the heteronarrative structure. It is essential in the beginning and ending of each middle scene. A homologous identity is presented in the middle of each middle. But, as with the structure, wherein each homology was quickly reined back in to the heterologic, each discursive and becoming body and subject is soon pulled back to an essential self. It appears that an identity may slide from essential to discursive or becoming, but it is then interrupted and pulled back to the essential. The only moment that a possibility of an identity moving between two homologous positions was the hint



at the possibility of a discursive subject coming after a becoming possibility in the second scene. In every other incident, identity was pulled directly and immediately, without further slippage, into the heterologic of the essential self. Mirroring the pattern of the heteronarrative, identity is allowed very little movement. The perversity of the middle is basically an illusion, for each time it is narrated as homologic, it is quickly reinscribed as essential.

#### Body and Subject in Michelle's Photo Elicited Narrative

The photographs and text that compose Michelle's photo elicited narrative work together to re/produce Michelle's body and subject positions. Read as a text, these photographs tell a story of the constitution of the body and subject presented. In the following, I examine the heterologic and homologic formation of the body and subject presented in Michelle's photo elicited narrative.

The introduction to the narratives begins with a photograph taken at work, thus substantiating immediately Michelle as a modern subject. Interestingly, in the introductory sentence, as in the first statement of the previous narrative, there is no "I." However, unlike the interview narrative where no self reference was made, here Michelle is the subject of the prepositional phrase "of me and my co-workers." As such, the focal point of her identity is work, but at the center of this environment/identity is "me" around which the context is set. The subject of the sentence thus becomes subordinate to the "me" around which this context is situated. She then narrates her identity as diverse, an essential position, as previously discussed, in relation to the norm. Representing this diversity through the signifier of race, links through a signifying chain race and gender (Torfing, 1999). But this linking is only race as non-white with gender as non sex/gender/sexual orientation alignment, because the signs have already been placed in a relation to the norm through the sign of diversity. The essentiality

of Michelle's identity is thus maintained as it is constituted as outside (Butler, 1999). Then through using the metaphor of the whiteboard as the board on which she writes and erases the identities of her life, Michelle documents a discursive identity. Her identity then appears to slide for a brief moment into a becoming: "a diversity of work in progress." But this is not a becoming, due to its positioning to the norm through diversity as well as its teleological direction, "progress." And like a rhizome, becomings are not progressive, they just are; they are transformations of transformations. She then begins to shatter the alienation and isolation of her position, noting "My life is never by itself." This is stopped, however, as she mentions her parents, linking her life to the consequences of the Oedipal. But then she narrates explicitly a discursive subject: "My decisions, even my choices of being who I am, wasn't really just my choice," implying the illusion of agency, and allowing choice to be not of essence, but of the options between the discourses available. She then pulls back into an essential identity, contemplating the diversity of her life. The final sentence, "what the board would look like when I am working on it," puts her identity back as essential through the foreshadowing of the end which we already know to be heterologic. Mirroring the structure of the heteronarrative, in the process of reading "What will it look like while I am working on it," her identity is a homologous inscription, a writing/erasing on the board of her life/the material of her body. Yet, interpreted in retrospect at the termination of the sentence, the point at which meaning is constructed (Dor, 1998) her identity is essential as we interpret it through the conclusion of the narrative which we already know to be essential/heterologic. The body and subject narrated in the introduction thus follow the heteronarrative structure. She is introduced as a modern individual and concluded as the same. The struggles of her identity as well as the outcome of

those struggles are foreshadowed through the whiteboard, while the middle narrates both a discursive self and a modern self.

The concluding scene of this narrative is that of the train behind Michelle's apartment. Michelle's identity remains in the heteronormative in this scene. Situating herself near the railroad tracks immediately positions her as belonging to a lower economic class. As a manifestation of modernity, this classification establishes her as a modern self. Linking herself to her father continues her identity as a modern self, setting her in the Oedipal. Continuing on to connect her present to her past "I see my past every time I see a train," she maintains her status as an essential self, struggling to complete the Oedipal transition and reunify the family. She concludes with an essential, modern self as the heterosexual sound of the trains "coupling and uncoupling," is music to her ears.

The second scene, the first middle, in this narrative begins with an essential/modern self. She is driving, at the wheel, an agenic self in control of her life. Based on the activities in which she is engaged – drinking, socializing, partying and the projection of this identity into the future, this self is continued. But, this reading is challenged in the concluding sentence which identifies Mid-Town as the context. By stating that Mid-Town is the place "I go to hang out," Michelle's identity becomes uncertain. On a closer reading, however, the essential self that has stood in for the "I" up until this point in this scene slides to fill the position of the "I" that hangs out in Mid-Town. In this scene, Michelle thus continues as an essential self through out.

The next scene begins with the identification of a sign for Loca Luna, a straight club located between two gay clubs. This sign is immediately linked to her identity, "I love this sign." Her identity then becomes a position of straight situated between alternate positions of

gay. She is the straight, heterosexual female, sliding between homologous signs. Her identity as a heterosexual female is then reinforced as the *Loca Luna* sign and her identity are again linked and then attached explicitly as a sign of the place where she goes out to meet and mingle with people: “And just being a sign where I hang out and socialize.” The “I” of the position is an essential self, going here and there, not stuck at home, but this is soon disrupted, “my identity isn’t just stuck in my own world.” By narrating that her identity is not a figment of her imagination, she in fact narrates the possibility that her identity as a heterosexual female may be an illusion. This disallows the “natural” nature of this identity. But, it does not necessarily produce a homologous identity, because the statement that it is not in “her own world” directly links this identity to the discourse of psychology. This joining produces her identity as a psychological disorder of an essential self. The mandate that follows, “I have to incorporate my transition into the world,” is then the heterosexual law of sex/gender/sexual orientation alignment. But this alignment is not possible, for it is always already situated within the “T,” “I just wanted to convey my life outside of my identity as T. As such, she remains an essential self, constituted as the outside of the heteronormative. Stating that she “enjoy[s] giving lectures and conferences about it, continues her essential identity, but moves it to the left side of the binary, as the possessor knowledge. She ends this scene with “I have gone a whole night just being a girl, not being a trans girl.” This firmly establishes her identity as performance, read as illusion. She is at a bar with a friend and being read by the other patrons as girl, because they do not know her “T.” She is thus an essential self in drag. Through out this scene, Michelle narrates an essential self.

In the next scene, Michelle introduces the reader to a picture that hangs on the wall of a gay bar she frequents. Through her lived desire to be a woman and her expressed desire/love

for the painting, Michelle's identity is coupled with the identity presented in the painting. The metaphoric position between woman and fairy for a body born biologically male, cannot be ignored. This place between woman and feminine gay, also read above, is very interesting, especially when read through her interview story wherein she narrates trans as a failure of gay, "Lots of gay guys thought I could not make it as a gay guy so I wanted to be a girl."

Positioning trans as a failure of gay, follows the heteronormative continuum of deviance, centering heterosexuality and moving through gay to the furthest reaches of deviance, trans. Thus narrated, trans is an identity category constituted in relation to and as the furthest outside of the norm. This situates trans as an essential, but "sick." But soon, all mention of fairy is lost, and the being in the painting is a woman. As Michelle's desire, the fairy is/becomes woman. This is a discursive self, a subject constructed of dreams and myths, of desires and goddesses. And if I read between the juncture in the last sentence, "just works for," and "just take a picture of it," the swallowed words replaced by the comma, I interpret "This picture just works for answering the question, 'What does transsexual mean to me?'" Here then, Michelle is a discursive subject, but this subject teeters on being an essential self, as it is narrated in the tone of a dream, the dream of flying and the dream of being. But hinging between an essential self and a discursive subject is perhaps a possibility of becoming, of intersecting the line of flight of the woman/fairy with the woman/trans and becoming the wind blowing in her hair. Beginning as an essential self, this scene concludes with a discursive subject balancing between the opportunities of being an essential self and becoming.

In the following scene, Michelle physically positions herself in her car, which she defines as a home away from home. Her car then becomes an extension of herself, a sign of her modern identity. With a full tank of gas, for which she was responsible, she is an agenic

individual propelling herself through time and space. But then the narration shifts, and her identity begins to change, moving from essential to becoming. Stating that “work takes me from spot to spot,” is first read as a continuation of a modern self. But, within this moving, she is always changing, “it always has clothes in it, and I am changing in it.” This changing indicates a possible becoming, a becoming that is not named, but only indicated as potential, “and things like that.” In this scene she begins with a clearly stated modern/essential identity and abruptly shifts to presenting the possibility of becoming.

The next middle scene, the photograph of the Caribou Coffee cup and the accompanying discourse, begins with Michelle as an essential self. When read closely, however, the “I” of this self is trans from the start. The medical literature suggests that drinking coffee may cause health risks while ingesting female hormones. Thus, “which is like so bad for me,” becomes a reference to her trans identity. Her identity as trans continues as she lists the conversations and experiences she has had over a cup of coffee. Her identity then becomes elusive in the last two sentences, “There are so many things that happen over a cup of coffee. It is like either over a martini or a cup of coffee that things happen.” In these two concluding sentences her identity disappears; it can only be read through context. “That so many things can happen,” implies a homologous subject, existing between discursive options and/or merging with planes of emergence. The last sentence pulls her identity back somewhat. The homology of the subject is situated between the martini and the cup of coffee. The first linking her, as mentioned previously, to the discourse of capitalism and the later, read through the previous sentence of potential happenings, to the possibilities of becoming. Sitting on the line between the binary options of essential self or becoming subject, pulls her back into an

essential identity through the binary construction of her options. Thus her identity moves from essential and trans to the brief hint of a becoming and concludes as essential.

Michelle narrates her life as an open book in the following scene. As such, she is an essential subject, able to be read. This modern position continues as she presents herself as an individual, not connected to the trans networks, doing her own part. Further emphasizing her essential nature she offers a reading of her body, “not even nudity bothers me.” This linking of the modern position of her self to the prospect of reading invites the interpretation of her body and subject as inscribed. Literally inscribed, her body has been formed and reformed through the use of hormones. Aligning with the status of the modern individual, this inscription brings empowerment, a sign of the modern, agenic individual. This self then is the self of modernity who invents herself (Foucault, 1984b). The metaphor of the book is then read through the other side, as gaining knowledge through reading. This, at first glance, continues the presentation of a modern self; however, reading of medical options and the lives of other trans people, illuminates the possibilities available. This presents then a discursive subject, choosing among myriad discourses to constitute an identity. But this discursive subject is halted in the very last phrase, “coming to my identity was a lot about education myself.” Coming to her identity was a conscious choice, an agenic act; thus, she concludes standing as an essential self. In this scene, Michelle begins as an essential self, moved to a position as an inscribed modern self, momentarily presented a discursive subject, and in the last phrase concluded her identity as a modern essential self.

Following the picture of Jasper, her ex-girlfriend’s dog, Michelle speaks of her identity in relations. Though the angle of the camera, Michelle as the focalizer is positioned as a self. As mentioned above, she is looking down at the dog, who is categorized as “man’s best friend.”

Thus, she is an essential self positioned in the category of patriarchal thus heteronormative power. This position shifts as she mentions she desires a human male relation. She has thus shifted her position from male as related in man's best friend, to female in desiring a boyfriend. But, through this shift, read in continuity, she maintains her status as essential, she has only shifted sides of the sex/gender binary. Her body/subject position is then abruptly shattered. She is no longer the boy and no longer the girl. She is subject questioning. This questioning through the possessive "my" maintains an implicit essentiality, but it also suggests a discursive subject, questioning, challenging, and over-coming identity categories. The discursive subject is ended a few sentences later, when she suggests that "Kathy...probably scarred me from ever having another female relationship." Scarring as a permanent feature is a phenomena possible only to the essential self. Her self as a body and subject becoming follows. She wanted to have sex with a vagina, body parts floated, detached from a self, becoming their own subject. This becoming is then limited as the possibility of vaginas on her body is negated. Her essential heterosexual/bisexual nature returns briefly before it is once again opened to exploration. This exploration gives the opportunity of a becoming, but is halted as the possibilities of this exploration are stopped in the heteronormative with hetero and bisexuality. Additionally, the argument is grounded in its natural position, as "your instinct is to explore." Continuing in the essential, she re-identifies with "man's best friend," and erases her female desire. This scene, then, begins and concludes with an essential body and subject and presents a body and subject becoming in the middle.

In the following picture of an Atlanta skyline and the three sentences that follow, Michelle is not, as it would seem, a becoming. She is an essential self. Identifying with Atlanta skyline, she is the heteronormative modern environment, which contains homologic



elements. This description of the self provides her the space to “become me.” This becoming is not a Deleuze and Guattarian becoming, but an establishment of a self that exists before the journey commences. She thus presents an essential self through out this scene.

In the next scene Michelle begins with an essential, agenic self, noting that she took two pictures of her closet. She continues narrating in twos – two pictures, two wardrobes, two dressers and shoes. This coupling implies heteronormativity. She then identifies with her clothes, “I love clothes.” This identification allows the reader to interpret her body as self and her identity as garments that may be put on and taken off, as the writing on the board in the first photo scene. She is then narrated as a fractured self, constituted by an adornment outward, a physical outward, and an inward. This is a fracturing of the modern self, as she moves toward realigning the pieces to form a heteronormative whole. The teleological destination sutures the self to the essential; however, her body and her subject caught in moments of transition are discursive becomings as she is unhinged from the past and/or future and offers the possibility of being read outside the fe/male binary of heteronormativity. By continuing on to narrate the expense of realigning the three aspects of herself, she once again is an essential self, agenic in the pursuit of her goal of alignment within the sex/gender/sexual orientation links of the modern individual. She maintains her status as a modern individual as she notes that she is now at the point in the process that her closet is that of a girl’s; she is a heterosexual female. A moment of homology enters as her identity as a female, read through the signifying link of her clothes and her identity, is “so comfy [and] has big holes in it.” Not only is her identity here narrated as an adornment, a comfortable garment that can be purchased, it is constituted as an identity that is not a cohesive whole, but contains holes -- gaps and fissures. The scene closes with her noting that she not only took two photographs to make sure she “got it,” but that she

also took two different perspectives of the closet – “a far away picture and one close up.” She thus brings to the fore that she is agenic not only in production of this story, but also in the construction of the perspective presented. Thus, this in this scene a modern body and subject are represented in the introduction and conclusion and a homologic body and subject appear in the middle. Michelle’s narration of her body and subject within her photo elicited narrative is introduced and concluded as essential and illustrated as ambiguous in various moments in the middle of the story. Directly following the heteronarrative structure, her identity in the introduction begins and concludes in the heteronormative as essential, is briefly noted as discursive in the middle, and is foreshadowed as a struggle and a modern. As with the structure of the previously analyzed narratives which remained in the heterologic in the conclusion, her identity in this conclusion is narrated only as essential. The narration of the body and subject in the middle scenes, however, does not necessarily follow the heteronarrative structure. In the sixth, seventh, eighth and tenth scenes, Michelle’s identity aligns with the heteronarrative structure; she is introduced and concluded as an essential modern subject and illustrates moments of a discursive and/or becoming body and subject in the middle of each scene. In the second, third, and ninth scenes, however, she narrates herself entirely as an essential self. On the other hand, in the fourth and fifth scenes she concludes with the possibility of becoming. Thus, although the photo elicited narrative predominately re/produced a modern heterologic identity, it did illustrate in the fourth and fifth scenes the possibility of the re/production of a homologic body and subject.

#### The Body and Subject in Michelle’s Yahoo Profile Narrative

The photographs which Michelle has published on her Yahoo Profile can be read as a narrative. I structured this narrative as consisting of seven scenes: the opening page

constituting the introduction, the 1998-2003 folders each standing as a middle scenes and the 2004 folder forming the conclusion. Within this structure, Michelle's body and subject align with the heteronarrative structure; they are narrated as essential and heterologic in the introduction and conclusion and exhibit alternate moments of essentiality and ambiguity in the middles.

In the introduction, Michelle is narrated as an essential self. As mentioned above, her identity read through the photograph which images her as "the girl next-door" linked with her self identification, "single," "female," "goddess," and the request "send me a message," positions her as a heterosexual female, and thus a modern subject. This identity is reinforced through the corporate sponsorship of the page and her distinct lack of connections which focuses her as an individual. Positioned as the object of the male gaze seeking to fulfill her heterosexual desire a bit of homology enters; however, this ambiguity is focused on possible activities to come, not on her identity formation. Positioned as a heterosexual female within a heteronormative space, her modern identity is not questioned, in fact as the object of the male gaze and the potential fulfillment of male desire, her status as a heterosexual female is heightened. Not foreshadowing any tensions to come or representing any homologous body and/or subject positions, the introduction represents solely a modern body and subject.

The conclusion, the photographs contained in the 2004 file folder, begins with the fabula of female victimization, as discussed above. As the target of male sexual violence, she is most easily read as a modern subject – an essential, heterosexual female in a physical body that is subjected/subservient to male power. But, other readings are possible. If the focalizer is not an external male gaze, but is internal, represented by Michelle, then the body and subject portrayed becomes discursive. In this reading, Michelle as female is the focalizer of her fabula

in which she performs female victimization. Thus, the body and subject are simulacra, discursive positions. This fabula is followed by two mirror shots which function to align the body and subject since the body and subject being reflected and the body and subject reflected are already heterosexual female. The unification of the identity fragments produce a modern body and subject corresponding to the heteronormative sex/gender/sexual orientation alignment. However, this re/production of her body and subject as modern phenomena is undermined by the possibility of more photographs to come. While the possibility of more stories to come is considered heteronormative in its re/productive function (Roof, 1999), it holds out the carrot of a future ambiguity. The introduction forewarns us that her identity will remain in the heterologic, yet as in the manner we enjoy the perverse of the middle, the possibilities of more photographs to come, holds out a homologous possibility. But, this hope is in fact a propelling force of the heteronarrative and heteronormative – the mirage of an answer in that which will come. Thus, the conclusion begins and ends with a modern body and subject, but is interrupted with a discursive body and subject. This is the first conclusion read that has not presented solely a modern body and subject.

In the first middle scene, the photographs from the folder 1998, Michelle is photographed in the costume of the goddess. Dressed as goddess, she is a simulacra as discussed above, and thus presents a discursive body and subject. This representation of a discursive body and subject continues as she is dancing at a Youth Pride event, dressed in a gold thong and chains. The hint of perversion represented by the thong and chain does not alter her discursive constitution. The content of the simulacra does not impinge on the constituents of the body and subject, it only influences its function. Thus, the sadomasochistic implications of the performance allow the body and subject to appear modern in its deviance from the norm;

however, as a copy of a copy it remains discursive in its composition. The final three photographs of Michelle posed at Piedmont Park form their own fabula as they at first appear to present an essential body and subject. On a closer reading this is a discursive body and subject performing a heterosexual self and/or a becoming. Set between the discursive position of the first two photographs and the caption of Piedmont Park of the last three photographs, any essential reading of the body and subject presented in the last three photographs has been evoked. Read as a female posing in Piedmont Park, Michelle is a discursive body and subject. Yet, she may also be read as a becoming. Between the goddess and the thong, merging with the simulacra, becomes body and subject with dark eyes staring into camera. In this scene, Michelle begins as a discursive body and subject and commences as a becoming.

Michelle as a discursive body and subject continues through the next scene. Read in isolation, Michelle partying in the first photograph is a modern self, as there are no clues to the alternative. If, however, I continue to read the scenes through each other, the first photograph is unstable due to her discursive presentation in the previous scene and the following representation of herself in the costume of the goddess. In the same manner above, the body and subject presented as goddess are a simulacra and thus a discursive. Therefore, Michelle narrates a discursive body and subject throughout this scene.

Depicting an isolated and alienated individual in the first photograph of the year 2000, Michelle presents a modern, essential self. At the same time, she hints at the discursivity of this position as she flaunts the mores of female inscription being dressed in boy clothes and being present alone on the streets at night. In the following eight photographs, entitled “Innovox,” the body and subject represented is pulled in a tension between context and content. As a gay friendly lounge, Innovox situates the photographs in a homologic space.

Consequently, the modern alienated, vulnerable, female identity presented in the context of the photographs is re-read through the homologic space. The constituents of the body and subject portrayed become unclear. Is this an essential female in a potentially homologic space? Is this a discursive body and subject represented by the simulacra? Is this a body and subject becoming? While the homologic function of the space is clear, the constitution of the body and subject is opaque. Thus, in this scene, the body and subject are predominately essential in the introduction, although they imply a possible discursivity, while they represent some type of homologic constitution in the conclusion.

The following scene, the year 2001, contains only two pictures. The first is of Michelle at tea, and the second is that of Michelle presumably leaving for a date with a young male. Both of these photographs present a modern body and subject, a heterosexual female identity.

The seven photographs that make up the following scene represent both a modern and a homologic body and subject. In the first photograph, "Hangover," with no clues to the contrary, Michelle represents a modern body and subject. The second photograph portrays Michelle standing in front of a Youth Pride table with an African American woman. Linked to the homologic through the alternate alignments of sex /gender/sexual orientation signified in the sign of Youth Pride and through race, Michelle's identity becomes blurred. But, the underpinnings of this blurring are uncertain – discursive, becoming, or deviant modern? The status of the normative has been disrupted, but in isolation, a reading of this disruption remains impossible. In the following two photographs of Michelle holding a fan, the body and subject represented appear to be essential. Not forming a mask or an indiscreet performance, the fan used as an accessory reinforces the heterosexual female identity of its holder. After presenting a modern body and subject standing in front of the Christmas tree with friends, this position is

disrupted through a double exposure. Placing one picture on top of another allows each body and subject to be read through one another. Insubstantial, opaque the notion of essentiality is lost. Each exposure becomes a text written on the other body and subject, de-centering focalization and functioning as a becoming. The final shot of Michelle and Kevin present a modern heterosexual body and subject. The scene of 2002 begins with a modern body and subject, illustrates a homologous body and subject of unknown construction, and then a modern body and subject. This is followed by a body and subject becoming through inscription on the body which is produced through altering the structure of the photograph. The scene concludes with a modern body and subject.

The final middle scene, 2003, commences with the photograph that is displayed on the front page. As the “girl next-door,” Michelle is represented as an essential, heterosexual, female identity. The following three photographs show Michelle dressed in a purple costume. As a costume, these photographs represent a simulacra, and thus illustrate a discursive body and subject. In the following four photographs, captioned “Late Night, Strange Night,” the modern body and subject is disrupted through the structure of the layout. Formatted/inscribed in alternate positions on the page, the body and subject are represented as inscribed. The following fabula which shows Michelle lecturing a college in the South, presents a modern body and subject, an essential self in possession of knowledge. The modern body and subject are portrayed throughout the remainder of the scene as Michelle poses with her male friends and on the back of a pink cow. In the latter, the caption mentioning the accessories that could possibly be made from the pink leather emphasizes the body and subject as a modern body and subject – heterosexual in its consumption and production. In this final middle scene, the only

presentation of the body and subject outside an essential construction is achieved through disrupting the structure of the layout.

The body and subject presented in Michelle's Yahoo Profile narrative vary from the anticipated heteronormative articulation. In the introduction the body and subject remain essential and do not offer any foreshadowing of an alternate body and subject to be narrated in the proceeding scenes. In the conclusion, an essential body and subject are present at the beginning and ending of the scene, but a discursive body and subject is noticed in the middle. The body and subject remain homologous throughout the second and third and possibly the fourth scenes. An essential self is narrated through out the fifth scene. The anticipated constitution of an essential body and subject interrupted by a homologous body and subject is narrated in the sixth and seventh scenes. The homology of the body and subject in the latter two scenes is constituted through the disruption of structure and not content, however. Thus, in this narrative, I read the body and subject differently than it has appeared previously. It is heterologous throughout the introduction, homologous throughout several middle scenes, constituted as homologous through the disruption of structure, and momentarily homologous in the conclusion.

### Conclusion

Examining the heteronarrative structure and the body and subject narrated in Michelle's interview narrative, photo elicited narrative, and Yahoo Profile narrative exhibited how the re/production of the transsexual body and subject differed slightly according the mode of narration. The interview narrative predominately followed the heteronarrative structure. However, the homologous possibility of the middle was an illusion as the homologous was sutured to the heterologous in minute intervals. The photo elicited narrative also adhered primarily to the



heteronarrative in structure. The middles, however, tended to be much more heterologic in construction than in the interview, as several middle scenes remained in heterologic or made only momentary references to the ambiguous. When presented, however, the homologic in the middle scenes of the photo elicited narrative was more complex, noting separation of the body and subject and an implicit representation of the relations between production/capitalism and narrative/identity. The structure of Michelle's Yahoo Profile narrative differed slightly from those mentioned above. Except by implicit possibility, the introduction remains in the heterologic. While the conclusion, following the pattern of the above narratives, remains in the heterologic, the middles offer several alternatives: entire homologic scenes, middle scenes introduced and concluded in the homologic and interrupted in the heterologic, and homologic moments constructed through the disruption of structure.

The re/production of the transsexual body and subject altered across the three different modes of narrative. The body and subject narrated in the interview narrative align with the heteronarrative structure. Beginning with a discursive body and subject and ending with an essential self, the body and subject in the introduction foreshadow the linear development of the transsexual body and subject to come. With each middle presenting an essential self in the beginning and end and a homologic body and subject in the middle, and the conclusion of the narrative articulating an essential self, the body and subject in the interview narrative is bound to the heteronormative. It is allowed little slippage into the heterologic, mirroring the pattern of the homologic in the heteronarrative. In the introduction and conclusion of the photo elicited narrative, the body and subject is narrated in a similar manner. It begins and ends in the heterologic while foreshadowing the identity struggles to come in the introduction and remains in the heterologic in the conclusion. The photo elicited narrative, however, offers alternate

constitutive possibilities for the body and subject in the middles. While an essential body and subject are narrated through out three scenes, in two scenes the body and subject conclude as a becoming. The body and subject found in the Yahoo Profile narrative also shift in different patterns. Remaining in the heterologic in the introduction, a homologic body and subject are found for the first time in a conclusion in this narrative. This narrative also illustrates for the first time the narration of a homologic body and subject through the disruption of structure.

The structure of the narrative and the narration of the body and subject within a narrative often exhibited parallel inclinations. Within the interview narrative, the alignment between the heterologic moments and an essential body and subject and the homologic expressions and an discursive and/or becoming body and subject were quite consistent, aligning the heterologic strands of text and the articulation of a modern subject, as well as homologic strings with postmodern subjectivities. While the structure and the re/production of the body and subject in the photo elicited narrative were predominately heterologic, each offered the most complex homologic moments. Although found in different middle scenes, this narrative illustrated the separation of the body and subject and the link between capitalism and production as well as concluded two of its middle scenes with homologic becomings. While the Yahoo Profile narrative presented a homologic moment in the conclusion which was not mirrored in the constitution of the body and subject, this narrative did illustrate the possibility of presenting a homologic body and subject through disrupting the structure of the narrative, linking the structure of the narrative to the re/production of the body and subject. Thus, while it appears that heterologic moments in the text and the re/production of an essential body and subject often mirror each other, and homologic moments and a discursive and/or becoming body and subject are often found in correspondence, this relationship is not exclusive.

Within these narratives, the re/production of a transsexual body and subject appears to be constituted primarily within the heteronormative through the heteronarrative structure and the heterologic construction of a modern body and subject in the conclusions. The re/production of a homologic transsexual body and subject does exist at various instances in these narratives, but in each instant it is sutured to the heterologic prior to the conclusion of the narrative. Reading these ambiguous instances as isolated fabulas, a homologic transsexual body and subject is possible, a snap shot outside of foreclosure. However, it appears that read as a narrative, linking sequentially one fabula to the next, the re/production of a transsexual body and subject is circumscribed to the heterologic.

## CHAPTER 5

### JESSIE' NARRATIVES

Jessie is a female who was born genetically male. Raised in central Georgia, Jessie grew up always feeling different. She began her transition in 1998 at the age of 26 years. Four years later in June of 2002, she had sex reassignment surgery. Jessie is currently a practicing attorney in Georgia.

Jessie provided two narratives for this study, a biographical interview and photo elicitation. In the following, I examine the narrative structure of these data sets, analyzing their alignment to a heteronarrative structure (Roof, 1996). I then analyze the representation of the body and subject in these narratives, reading the constituents of Jessie's position through the theories of Foucault, (1980, 1984a, 1990), Butler (1993, 1997, 1999) , and Deleuze and Guattari (1987) .

#### The Structure of Jessie's Narratives

From its emergence in the West, to be a transsexual is to narrate oneself as a transsexual (Prosser, 1998). As a narrative act, the transsexual position is re/produce in and through the structure of narrative. Roof (1996) suggests that our narratives follow a heteronarrative structure. Commencing and concluding in the heteronormative, foreshadowing in the introduction the struggles to come, and presenting homology in the middle, narrative staunches the continuation of the ambiguous. In the following, I present an analysis of Jessie's interview and photo elicitation for their alignment to the heteronarrative structure.

## The Structure of Jessie's Interview Narrative

Jessie and I met one evening in January 2004. Over dinner, I asked her to tell me the story of her life. With few interruptions, she spoke over 2 hours, sharing 12, 426 words. From this interview, I constructed a condensed narrative using a combination of Moustakas's (1994) method of diminishing the repetitive aspects of a story through deleting every remark that has been previously stated and Bal's (1999) concept of an event, which maintains only those aspects of a story that have a subject and an object, move the story forward, and convey change. Additionally, the scenes are my interpolation. Below is a reading of the narrative I constructed from Jessie's biographical interview. This is followed by an analysis of the heteronarrative structure of this interview narrative

### Introduction:

*I was born February 6th, 1972 in a small town in central Georgia. Around 12 minutes after 10 in the evening. My sun is in Aquarius, my moon is in Scorpio, and my Mars is in Aries. I had been born with a congenital heart defect called Common Atrium. When I was five, I had open heart surgery. I had pace maker surgeries in 1977, 1980, 1984, 1992, and 1999. I was still in denial about the gender issues.*

### Scene2

*The earliest memory regarding my gender issues was in the first grade. There was a broken water spigot. These boys said, "Hey, Jessie, go turn on that water spigot." The water came out so hard and so fast I was shocked. I was crying, "I can't turn it off." I hung out as much with girls, if not more, than boys, and I had stitches that were healing. Rough and tumble play was always out, but not that I wanted to do it anyway. I remember, in first grade, telling a girl that I wanted to be a girl. My childhood was*

*not pleasant in a lot of respects because I was always ridiculed. When I was 10, my parents divorced. I started getting really fat, and so people saw me as effeminate. Sometimes I would try to play it down and sometimes I wouldn't. I was the only male flute player from fourth grade through ninth grade when I quit because I kept getting too much hell. I was nerdy; I was geeky; I was inquisitive; I was assertive. I always behaved in all these very contradictory ways. When I was 11 or 12, the teasing got really bad. I had no friends. I decided I should assertedly masculinize myself. But, I had too much pride to give up the flute, because I really liked playing it. Growing up in the South was not necessarily oppressive, even though it was in some respects. It is just that there aren't any alternative narratives. San Francisco is the new Gomorrah where all those faggots are, you know. And you don't want to be a faggot do you? In fifth grade I got called a fag in class. Of all the teachers I ever had, only Miss Smith, one of these Southern Black women who, of that last generation, was very strong, would punish people for mistreating me. I was always kind of teacher's pet, because I always knew the answer and never felt shy about raising my hand. That was yet another reason that I had to be loathed in the most distinct way, because I wasn't ashamed of it. When I was 7 or 8 years old, I became a Beatle maniac. I did not have the language to say I had a crush on the Beatles, but in hindsight, I did. When I was 11 or 12, there were several girls in my town named Jessie. I was feeling a lot of pressure to fit in because I didn't fit in, and I knew it. It was a contradiction because I had my own self direction but on the other hand I desperately wanted approval and people to love me. I don't think I will ever reconcile that. I made people start calling me Jeffery. I got even more involved with soccer. I could never perform like everyone else because of my*

heart condition. Right about then I saw my first PBS special about transsexuality, and I thought wouldn't it be great if I could wake up tomorrow and be a girl. That scared me at the time. I just tried to push it back with sports and religion and keeping up with football and all the things that were the hallmarks of Southern manhood. Going into high school, I was instantly despised by pretty much everyone. I pretty much had a nervous breakdown. I would come home from school and just cry for hours. In tenth grade I came back to high school really thin. Some people started being nice to me. I ditched marching. The band director, this Black man, felt odd around me because he thought I was gay. I got a bench and started pumping a little iron. I was in really great physical shape. Suddenly people were being nice to me. People started using me for rides to school. I didn't make the varsity cut in soccer. But, then I got on the academic team and became captain in short order, because I had excellent memory for facts. We were in the top 10 in the state throughout high school. I was under even more pressure. I was in advanced classes and the top club for preppie boys. Girls started paying attention to me, but didn't quite know what to think of me. And the guys started calling me stud, sarcastically, and as a backhand compliment. But, I figured out by then that these people were so fake. Because everyone used to hate my guts, but now it was like only certain people hate my guts and the rest are being nice to me because I am smart and attractive. That was the first big life lesson: People are fake as hell and if you start tweaking certain factors then those people can be manipulated.

### Scene 3

I fell in with a crowd of guys. I started smoking marijuana, and when I was 17 I dropped acid. It was like the most amazing experience I ever had. We started driving

*to Atlanta to go clubbing. My taste in music went from the Beatles to darker Goth. I started "dating." We would really never mess around, but we would always hang out because I was the guy who could be their friend and didn't want anything from them. For me it was exhilarating, gratifying, and comforting at the same time, because I would tell these young women things that I would never tell guys, and I would also betray the male silence code and tell their little secrets. I lost my virginity when I was 17 because I felt like I had to. I didn't even have an orgasm. Around 14 or 15, I started having a recurring dream where I would be giving myself fellatio. I kept having those dreams until I started giving fellatio in my 20's. I was in denial about my gender issues even through college. But they always had a way of getting out. We called ourselves progressives. I was in gifted classes. I read more. I started thinking of myself as different and wearing that differentness as a badge of honor. I started a lifelong appreciation of underground culture. I was politically aware. I didn't have a lot of ambition at the end of high school. I had the test scores and the grades to go to Ivy League. I went to a community college 20 minutes away from home. I took drama in high school and college. I just loved it. I have always been shy and introspective. I'm also a closeted exhibitionist. I choose my outlets carefully, mind you. When I was 7, I started drawing a cartoon of my cat. It was like a boy and his dog, but it was Jessie and his cat. I finished my year at community college and transferred to a 4 year college in Georgia. I wanted to leave home, because me and my Dad were getting into a lot of fights about me hanging with a bunch of losers. One time in high school I got an earring in my left ear. I came home and my Dad totally exploded. I took it out and wrote this really contrite letter about how I never wanted to offend, and just wanted to*



*please him so bad. I was scared of him. He was a bit of a drunk. He would yell at me, because he thought that I was a little sissy. But it is funny because when he died in 1999, I was a year into my transition, and I didn't know how I was going to pay for surgery, but he left me \$50, 000. When I began my transition, destiny, you know, everything just fell into place.*

#### Scene 4

*So, I started college. I met a friend, and we decided to rush. We got pledged into a fraternity. They were a bunch of freaks and deadheads. They smoked a lot of weed, ate a lot of mushrooms, and dropped a lot of acid. I did a play, Our Town.. I guess in hindsight it underscored my ambivalence about religion and hypocrisy. I was so glad to get to rebuild my identity; it was a fresh start. And I just totally took advantage of it, and had everybody fooled, thinking I was a swell guy, who would make a great brother. Later on I became the secretary and Greek Council representative. At the same time I kept company with the independents, the freaks and the intellectuals on the fringe. That is where I met Mira, who I later married when I was 24. She was really Goth. At the same time I was training to be this white male leader. Toward the end of my college career, I think everyone believed I was secretly gay. In hindsight, I really was secretly gay or queer. I was still in denial. I started going behind Mira and trying on clothes and playing around. I had been cross dressing when I was 11 or 12. I was so ashamed of this urge. When I started hitting puberty, the gender thing started getting confused with the sexual thing. I was clueless. It was hard to pull all of that apart. Even though it was okay to be attracted to women, my attraction to men that I had...I would just have these thoughts about wanting to kiss boys. I was just torn. You're not supposed to*

*be thinking that. But, I got along so well with women that I started to become sexually active. It was easy. I enjoyed it. But once I started living with Mira, it started coming back again. It always had little ways of coming out. It is not about how you are socialized, you know, it comes from within. Until I became an adult, I could never articulate these things, but in hindsight, I always knew that I was different, whether it was because of my heart problem or I wanted to be a girl or I was smarter than most of the other people or I liked cats instead of dogs or I liked to play the flute instead of the drums or the trumpet or the trombone. I don't know if the spirit has a gender. I think of myself as a Bodhisatta in training. Some where in-between is the most practical and progressive way to be. But the way our society works it likes to label. But labels are a kind of double-edge sword, they help define and clear everything at the same time they severely limit the discourse. I am keen on breaking the sexual/gender binaries we have reinforced. I was getting there, but was not all the way there. It was really law school.*

### Scene 5

*We graduated and moved to Atlanta in 1995. I was studying for the L-SAT. And, by then I had gotten really fat. I had a drinking problem. So my health started to deteriorate. I found out that I had cardiomyopathy. I was real depressed. I thought marriage was going to be the magic cure for all my problems. I was still in denial about my gender, even though I was getting into dressing. I was told I had five years before I needed a heart transplant and that I would have change the way I was living or I wouldn't survive. That got my attention. At the same time I was accepted into law school. That was a real turning point. I had started exercising, losing weight, changing my diet, and law school. I had found the transgender sites on the internet. I*

*started having panic attacks. In the summer of 1998 I got assessed for the first time. During the assessment, I broke down in tears. I was talking about how I had realized that I had always wanted to be a woman and that I just couldn't go on trying to pose as a man anymore. I had reached the end of my rope, and I wanted to start being myself. I didn't tell Mira for awhile. It had taken all this time for me to come to grips with it myself. It was law school, the fact that I can hang with the best minds in the state that gave me the self confidence to transition, because my self esteem had always been an issue. I confided in an open lesbian friend in law school. She said, even after you have had the surgery Mira can wear a strap. In 99 I told Mira. She thought it was just a phase. I told her I still loved her, but I had to do this. I started cross dressing in front of her. At first she was going to indulge me. I told her I was going to start seeing men. I was finally acknowledging I had always been attracted to men. Maybe it was selfish and maybe it was narcissistic, but I got to the point of either transition or die--and not necessarily death in the physical sense, even though that was laying heavily on my mind, but definitely in the spiritual sense. The last thing I wanted to do was hurt anybody by transitioning. But, you never transition alone. I look to my female peers in the legal profession as my role models. To see these women be assertive, aggressive, and intellectual while maintaining grace and femininity is something I aspire to still. I never thought about male privilege until I transitioned. Even though I considered myself a feminist, growing up a White male in the South, you just cannot know how much of your life is privileged until you are suddenly knocked down the social totem pole. How can I be an effective attorney at the same time trying to pass as a woman at the same time that it is obvious that biologically I am not female? At the same time I*

*have been singled out for not conforming, I have enjoyed the benefits of white male privilege in this society. The hormones have put me a lot more in touch with myself, but the whole transition process just forces you to think about things that no one in their right mind ever thinks about. Transitioning on job I learned that even self oppressed liberals have very conservative ideas. One of the biggest concerns they had was how was it going to effect fund raising. And then they put a lot of pressure on me to be the best because people are looking at you.*

### Conclusion

*And at the same time, there is also a spiritual aspect to it, too. I started learning about the history of transgender and paganism. Even before that I read a book about how patriarchy has run our civilization into a dead end and in order to move forward we need to revive the Goddess aspect of our culture that was part of our pagan tradition before being suppressed by Christianity. So at the same time I went from being an agnostic to starting on a Goddess path. I guess you could say I am the ultimate conservative: I am nostalgic for a time when there was a Western culture that had respect for transgender people in the establishment order, in the priesthood. I began believing that I have been called by the Goddess to step out of the patriarchal rat race, and start by the example I set from my life and my work and my options, bringing Goddess values into the Western mainstream. Sometimes I am not sure if I really believe that, but I decided that I want to believe that. I am reviving a tradition whose time is coming out in this age of environmental degradation. We need to think about the earth as an organism that if we destroy it then we destroy ourselves. I am not advocating going back to becoming hunters and gatherers, because the upshot of*

*patriarchy is that these events have led us to the point where technology has the potential to emancipate us from menial labor, and we can have a green technology that has the minimum amount of impact on the environment. I do have faith. But, that won't happen in our life. I sincerely believe that whether or not there are Gods or Goddesses or whatnot, it is pretty much the best idea that has come along. There is really not much of the actual religious practices of these Goddess religions that have survived all of these vast groups. So we are just having to make it up as we go along. One thing we don't want to find is a religion, an ideology, that just holds us back from just living examples of the kinds of values that are out there commuting our disabled planet.*

The introduction of Jessie's interview narrative aligns with Roof's (1996) heteronarrative. It begins and concludes in the heteronormative, foreshadows the struggles to come, and presents homology in the middle. She begins in the traditional autobiographical mode, telling the reader of her time and place of birth. The specificity of this information, "Small Town, Georgia, around 12 minutes after 10 in the evening, emphasizes the heterologic through the modern practice of recording the minutest detail (Foucault, 1990). The next sentence, "My sun is in Aquarius; my moon is in Scorpio, and my Mars is in Aries," continues this practice of presenting small, obscure details for the record. This continues the heterology of the previous sentence in terms of its production and reproduction of knowledge, but it does so within the content of Astrology, a discourse outside the normative. Consequently, this sentence functions homologically, placing the reader on the ambiguous ground of the influence of the planets on one's birth, and specifically, within this context, the astrological implications on the formation of a transsexual body and subject. The third sentence of the introduction,

mentioning Jessie's congenital heart disease, introduces us not only to the struggles to come, but to difference to come. Throughout her narrative, the consequences of living with Common Atrium function to signify difference and the tension correlated with difference and/or serve as a pivot point around which difference circulates. The introduction concludes with a list of the years Jessie has undergone pace maker surgery. This places her firmly within the heterology of modern medical discourse.

The conclusion of Jessie's interview narrative shows both heterologic and homologic moments as it discusses the spiritual aspects of her transition. It begins in the heterologic as she is accumulating knowledge through reading. The heterology of this reading is intensified as the knowledge of transgenderism and paganism joins the knowledge of the effects of patriarchy and the goddess pathway to produce through the agency of choice her move from agnosticism to the goddess pathway. The heterology of this choice is further intensified by the content of the choice. The move away from agnosticism toward the goddess is a move from the absence of knowledge toward production, as the goddess is a productive force in its position as the succedant term in the god/goddess binary as well as its signification of the reproductive force of the natural. This heterology is briefly interrupted in the next statement, "I am nostalgic for a time when there was a Western culture that had respect for transgender people in the establishment order, in the priesthood." Although it may be argued that such a time existed within Western modernity, nostalgia is a postmodern theme. As such, it hints of the homology of the present, the fractured space of postmodernity. This homology is given brief reign before it is called back into the heteronormative through the discourse of agency and healing, "I began believing that I have been called by the Goddess to step out of the patriarchal rat race, and start by the example I set form my life and my work and my options, bringing goddess values into

the Western mainstream.” Calling on the goddess does not represent a homology, as it is only an inversion of the modern Christian God discourse. Consequently, her call to be an exemplar functions to stop the previous homology of nostalgia. The following sentence brings back the homologic as it implies a subjectivist stance. By overtly “deciding that I want to believe that,” the pathway of the goddess and through the above inversion, the god, becomes a narrative that functions to fulfill desire, not truth. Returning to the metaphors of agency and healing the narrative proceeds again in the heterologic. The heterologic continues as patriarchy is portrayed as a teleological development which has arrived at the point wherein it has the capacity to emancipate humans without degrading the planet, a holistic healing. Continuing in the heterologic, the narrative proceeds with the notion of faith, followed by modern pessimism, “But, that won’t happen in our life.” Returning to the idea that the belief in the Goddess is a choice, which previously was read as a homology, here is heterologic due to the underpinning discourse of hope reflected in the last part of the conjunctive sentence, “It is pretty much the best idea that has come along.” The narrative concludes in the heteronormative, as we are writing our own destiny toward healing. Thus, the beginning and ending in the heteronormative, the conclusion does offer two brief moments of homology. Surrounded on each side by heterological statements, the homology of nostalgia and the goddess as discourse, however, allow minute respite from the heteronormative.

Set between the heteronormative introduction and conclusion, the foreshadowed tensions of the middle produce both heterologic and homologic moments. The first middle scene, begins in the heterologic. Not only does the scene begin with a reading of the past through the identity of the present, constructing a theme of always already was, it relies on a chronological presentation “the earliest memory,” of experience as proof. Thus, the heterology

of a linear chronology is used, and experience is used as the foundation of identity while the possibility of its constituting function is erased (Scott, 1998). After the fabula of being picked on by the boys at school, Jessie tells the reader “I hung out as much with girls, if not more, than boys, and I had stitches that were healing.” The second component of this compound sentence stabilizes the homology that begins in the first segment of the sentence. Read through her transsexual identity, hanging out with the girls is homologous behavior, however, the “and I had stitches healing,” places the reason for this behavior on the medical rather than gender aspects of her narrative. The following sentence functions inversely: “Rough and tumble play was always out, but not that I wanted to do it anyway.” The first half of the sentence places her behavior on medical reasons, keeping the narrative in the heterological, while the final clause moves the discourse back into the homology of gender dysphoria through her lack of desire to engage in such play. Explicitly calling on the memory of experience again, but lessening the heterologic strategy of experience as proof through the linear distance between the explicit link of gender issues with the fabula being told, the content of wanting to be a girl read through her present identity is homologous. The narrative then shifts, she takes a step back, becoming more of an external focalizer reflecting on a broader panorama of her childhood. As such, the fabula remains in the heterologic as the separating of narrator from narratee produces a tone of third person omnipresence, a logical reading of the facts of her life. This externalized focalization can present an encompassing picture of Jessie, the components of her “contradictory ways,” the underpinning causes for her actions and the outcome for their interaction, “I decided I should assertedly masculinize myself.” Homology then returns with a reflection on the limited “alternative narratives” available on which to constitute oneself. This is followed by a sarcastic reading of the heteronormative discourse of queer in the South, “San Francisco is the new



Gomorrah where all those faggots are, you know.” An embedded narrative follows in which Jessie tells of being “called a fag in class,” bringing the story back into the heterologic. Homology returns as she reads in retrospect her relationship with the Beatles as a crush. Not only does this reading place her, as him, as a homosexual, it places this reading as contingent on language. The narrative then proceeds in the heteronormative as Jessie makes a conscious and concerted effort to “fit in” the heterosexual matrix. Homology returns as she becomes aware of and reasserts her transsexual desire. Quickly returning to the heterologic, she notes her fear, “That scared me at the time,” and her continual effort to perform within the heterology of “all things that were the hallmarks of Southern manhood.” Continuing with the story of masculinizing himself, this fabula is heterologic. This is disrupted with “The band director, this Black man, felt odd around me because he thought I was gay.” The heterology of masculinization becomes unstable in the band director’s reading of him as gay. This reading places his attempts at masculinization as drag through which his true homosexual self was still apparent. But, any homology of his masculinization is not allowed to develop, because the explicit position of the band director as a Black man reinstates the heteronormative through implicitly relying on the normative binaries of black/white, male/female, sex/gender. This is especially noticeable in light of the previous characterization of the elementary teacher as a strong Black woman of the South, a re/inscription of the Black mammy. The fabula continues in the heterologic as he narrates various heteronormative high school male experiences – not making the varsity cut, becoming academic team captain, being in the to club for preppie boys. Not only are these typical heterosexual male experiences, his response from not making the varsity cut is narrated along stereotypic male lines – no emotion and quick replacement with another success, “I became captain...in short order.” The following sentence, “Girls started

paying attention to me, but didn't quite know what to think of me," follows the same logic discussed above wherein the second clause of the sentence alters the positioning of the first. The heteronormative of the first statement indicating male/female desire is quickly abated in the second clause as he notes his ambiguity, thus inserting a homologous moment. This is quickly brought back into the heterologic as "the guys started calling me stud..." But as in the previous sentence the second clause alters the logic of the reading, revealing the homology with "as a backhand compliment." Moving back once again to an external narrator, reading and learning from the experiences of her life, the scene concludes in the heterologic.

The first middle scene, documenting Jessie's first experiences of gender dysphoria and her attempt to build a male identity, begins and concludes in the heteronormative. The middle of the scene moves back and forth between heterologic and homologous moments. The heterologic takes precedence not only in the number of utterances, but in the amount of time given to it. Homology was quickly stunted, through external focalization, transsexual desire, or through dependent or subordinate clauses, allowing little ambiguity in this middle scene.

The third scene, in which Jessie acquires his identity as a progressive, follows the overall heteronarrative structure. It begins in the heterologic as he falls in with a new group of friends. It then steps into the homologous as she mentions that he began taking drugs. The homology appears to continue as her taste in music changes to darker Goth. As a counter culture discourse condemning many of the attributes of modern society, this music may be seen as a homology, yet as a productive capitalistic enterprise which fights against hegemony, it is itself that which it attempts to disrupt. Not only is it productive, it is a necessary component of the hetero/homo binary as it provides the under currents of that which homo is not. The fabula of dating moves the narrative to the homologous. This begins as dating is put in quotation

marks, indicating it is not what it appears. The sexual component is erased as they “really never mess around,” thus deleting the primary object of exchange in heterosexual relations. The homology of relations without exchange is continued in the later clause of the sentence “but we would always hang out because I was the guy who could be their friend and didn’t want anything from them.” Homology persists as he finds the experience of these relations “exhilarating, gratifying, and comforting,” expressing the fulfillment of desire outside a heterosexual relation. But, the second and third clauses of this sentence, “I would tell these young women things that I would never tell guys, and I would also betray the male silence code and tell their little secrets,” put the narrative back into the heteronormative. Not only is the gender binary reinstated, the relationships which up to now have been homological in their lack of exchange, enters the heterologic through the giving of information. Homology then returns as he narrates that he engaged in heterosexual relations for reasons other than desire. The homology of this statement is reinforced as he emphasizes that the heterosexual experience did not fulfill desire: “I didn’t even have an orgasm. The reoccurring dream of giving himself fellatio keeps the narrative in the homological as it communicates non-reproductive sex aimed at the wrong object choice – oneself and one’s own gender. Returning once again to the heteronormative, his gender is signified as “issues” and referred to as always having “a way of getting out.” The sign “issues” is negative in its connotation, inferring that which abnormal. The linking of issues with the notion of escape, signifies his gender as abnormal, as outside the heterosexual matrix. The heteronormative is maintained as he enters the realm of identity politics, aligning himself with the progressive discourse, and wearing the label of difference as “a badge of honor.” Identity politics and the one-to-one correspondence between signifier and signified that it implies, communicates an essential self, keeping the narrative in the

heterologic. The heterologic continues as she narrative aspects of herself, “appreciation of underground culture,” “politically aware,” lack of “ambition,” and “test scores and grades to go to Ivy League,” the love of drama, and “shy and introspective.” The final attribute listed, however, at first appears to alter the heterology of the narrative. Expressing herself as “a closeted exhibitionist,” in light of her “gender issues,” once again constitutes her sexuality as an abnormality. But the linking of the two can only occur through a heterologic reading. Thus, the apparent constitution of the homologic is only the outside of the heterologic, that which must be to incorporate the normative. This is followed by the inversion of the boy and his dog discourse. “Jessie and his cat” infers a gender inversion which was always present. It is the misalignment sex/gender fabula. As such it is heteronormative, based on the ideology of the natural alignment of sex/gender/ sexual orientation. The intersection of the heterologic and the homologic, the place where the two come to meet occurs in the relations between Jessie and her dad. The father as the symbol for the heterologic, the upholder of the oedipal, is a “bit of a drunk,” who is to be feared. The homologic retreats in his presence, “I took it out and wrote this really contrite letter about how I never wanted to offend, and just wanted to please him so bad.” But the homology prevails. It is through the death of the father that the means for sex reassignment appear. But the triumph of the homologic is lost in the last sentence, “When I began my transition, destiny, you know, everything just fell into place.” Through the metaphor of “destiny,” the providence of the right, the completion of the teleological journey, the possible homologous is usurped in the final moment.

The third scene follows the heteronarrative structure. It begins and ends in the heteronormative, while being interrupted with various homologic moments. Almost every heteronormative fabula is immediately brought back into the heteronormative, allowed only a

brief homologous interval. The only difference is where homology is prolonged through the misalignment of sexual expression and desire and object choice. Heterology prevails through the remainder of the scene except for the brief moment when homology usurps it through death.

The fourth scene, wherein Jessie reinvents her identity once again as she goes off to college, begins in the heteronormative as she starts college, meets a friend, “decided to rush,” and “got pledged into a fraternity.” The heteronormative is abolished as we find out that the fraternity to which he pledged is populated by a “bunch of freaks and deadheads” who “smoked a lot of weed, ate a lot of mushrooms, and dropped a lot of acid.” The homology continues in the next fabula as the seemingly heteronormative act of being in the play Our Town is read by Jessie as signifying her ambivalence about religion and hypocrisy. This ambivalence is a homologous act as it undermines, through the stance of ambivalence, the one-to-one correspondence between Truth and religion. The following fabula remains in the homologous as Jessie speaks of rebuilding her identity. This rebuilding, which is not homologous in and of itself, becomes ambiguous as he relates the multiple and contradictory positions that constituted this “rebuilding.” Firstly, the identity itself was artificial, “I...had everybody fooled.” Secondly, the identity is implicitly asexual as it is linked to the position of brother: everyone thought “I was a swell guy who would make a great brother.” Thirdly, the asexuality of this position is disrupted as the woman he marries is positioned as Goth and he is read as “secretly gay.” Fourthly, the theme of “independents,” “freaks,” “Goth,” drugs, and “on the fringe” run simultaneously and in tandem with “Greek council representative,” and “white male leader” bringing to the fore the homologous position of a bifurcated identity which “was still in denial.” The homology of these contradictory positions ends as he “started going behind Mira and trying on clothes and playing around.” By hiding his cross dressing and alternate gender desires, as

well as linking this practice to his adolescent shame, “I was so ashamed of this urge,” the narrative returns to the heteronormative, as metaphors of secret and shame constitute the behaviors and desires as perverse. The following statement interrupts the heteronormativity as it tells of sex and gender with out conclusion, “the gender thing started getting confused with the sexual thing. I was clueless.” But, the rhizomatic moment is stopped in the next sentence as she notes that “it was hard to pull all of that apart.” In the attempt to solve the riddle, to compartmentalize the aspects of the “gender thing” and “sex thing” the homology is stanchd in the quest for knowledge. After remaining in the heteronormative with the social mores of object choice, Jessie states, “I was just torn.” This statement is a brief homologic moment, noting the bifurcation of self and desire, before the narrative continues with his enjoyment of heterosexual sex. But the heteronormative is stopped in its natural conclusion of heterosexual marriage, “it started coming back again. It had little ways of coming out.” Here, the return of the homologous is recast within the heteronormative as she attempts to narrate herself in difference retrospectively. This happens because her retrospective reading of self is grounded in difference in relation to the heteronormative – boy wanting to be girl, boy liking cats, boy playing flute. The heteronormative continues as she contemplates the possibility of spirit having a gender and casts herself as a Bodhisatta, one destined to Buddahood. The first remains in the heteronormative as it attempts to essentialize gender and the later as she positions herself as on a path of knowledge and light, moving toward the teleological conclusion of Nirvana. Calling for the in-between, “Somewhere in-between is the most practical and progressive way to be,” the narrative remains in the heteronormative, for although it calls for a third space, “some place in-between,” it does so in the name of progression. The narrative then moves back into the homologic as it explicates the discursive workings of society

and its dual function of limitations and clarity. But homology is shut down in the agency of working to breaks “the sexual/gender binaries we have reinforced.” The narrative continues in the heteronormative through the conclusion as she is working toward this goal.

The fourth scene aligns with the heteronarrative structure. It begins and concludes in the heteronormative and presents homology in the middle. The heteronormative experience of going off to college and rushing is interrupted by the homology of the subjects who are members of the fraternity which he joins. Homology continues and shows its longest reign through the ambivalence toward religion and the multiple contradictory positions which are used in rebuilding his identity. The heteronormative re-enters when his gender desires are cast in secret and shame. Homology briefly emerges in the form of a rhizome as he sits in lack of knowledge. Through the heterological position of knowledge and social mores of object choice the heteronormative is again narrated. A homology is narrated through the bifurcation of self and desire, but this is quickly stopped through a reading of self as different in relation to the norm and the self on a progressive journey toward knowledge/enlightenment. Interrupted by the notion of a discursive society, the heteronormative asserts its position in the end through the notion of work. Thus, as can be seen in this scene, not only is the homologic allowed short reign as it is quickly pulled back into the heterologic, it is predominate in fewer fabulas than its polar opposite.

The last middle scene tells of Jessie’s transition. As the scenes before it, this scene follows the heteronarrative structure. It commences with the move to Atlanta after graduation and Jessie’s studying for the L-SAT. The narrative continues with the modern theme of deterioration, “My health started to deteriorate...I had cardiomyopathy. I was real depressed.” Deterioration, as a linear reading of a teleologic life, maintains the narrative in the

heteronormative. Homology begins to enter as s/he questions the panacea of marriage, “I thought marriage was going to be the magic cure for all my problems.” Homology continues as he expresses his denial about his gender issues and continues to cross dress. But, the heteronormative reasserts itself in the following sentence as Jessie is narrated as having the capacity for agency to change her deteriorating health and the medical institution is implicitly understood as possessing the truth and knowledge need for such a healing. The heterologic continues as being accepted into law school is seen as “the turning point,” a metaphor that is only possible on a linear pathway. Finding the transgender sites on the internet brings back a homology. Not only is this homologous return due to the content of the internet searches, but also as a function of the homology of the internet, a possible hypertextuality of continuous middles. The following fabula of being assessed for gender dysphoria pulls the narrative back into the heteronormative. As a condition which requires assessment, gender dysphoria is constituted as the outside of the normative through a discourse of medicalization. The following compound sentence – “I was talking about how I had realized that I had always wanted to be a woman and that I just couldn’t go on trying to pose as a man anymore.” -- is homologous, however. In narrating the simultaneous desire to be a woman and the inability to continuing to pose as a man, a neither-nor identity is presented (Hill, 2002). She is narrated as neither woman nor man. Heterology continues as she “wanted to start being myself,” a position of the essential self. Keeping the insight from Mira, thus constructing it as a secret, and signifying it as a deep and dark component of self (Foucault, 1990) maintains the heteronormativity of the narrative. Heteronormativity prevails as being able to “hang with the best minds in the state” gave him the self confidence to transition. Not only is this self confidence built on the ability of knowledge production, a heteronormative metaphor (Roof,



1996), but self confidence and the following concept of self esteem are notions built on a modern understanding of self. This is the self composed of a psychological inside and a material outside which emerges through subjection, the re-coiling of desire which creates an inner and outer sphere and self reflexivity, the ability to look back on oneself and judge that self (Butler, 1997). As the constitution of this self is constructed in the understanding of the Oedipal, it is a heteronormative construction. The heteronormative continues in the act of confiding, keeping the metaphor of the secret. This is followed by homology as Jessie's friend says, "Even after you have the surgery Mira can wear a strap." This suggestion not only inverts the sex and gender roles, it moves their relation outside the reproductive. The heterologic and homologic then go back and forth. Starting in the heterologic with "I told her I still loved her," homology follows with "I started cross dressing in front of her." This is immediately followed by "At first she was going to indulge me." The act of indulging implies that the homologous behavior is only a temporary misdemeanor which will be forgiven and eventually forgotten. Additionally, it privileges the heteronormative as the position which has the power to forgive the transgression. The homologous returns in the next sentence with his male desire, "I told her I was going to start seeing men. I was finally acknowledging I had always been attracted to men." The hetero/homo volley is terminated with death: "I got to the point of either transition or die." Death then becomes the furthest point of transgression, the point at which the homology returns to the heteronormative through transition. Homology is then reinserted as she looks to her "female peers in the legal profession as ...role models." This aspiration of balancing assertion and grace becomes homologic when read through her trans position, for it situates her as in the aforementioned position of neither-nor (Hill, 2002). Homology continues as she re-evaluates her male privilege. Then homology is explicitly brought to the surface as

she asks, “How can I be an effective attorney at the same time trying to pass as a woman at the same time that it is obvious that biologically I am not female?” The ambiguous is maintained as she is situated on the inside and the outside of privilege, “At the same time I have been singled out for not conforming, I have enjoyed the benefits of white male privilege in this society.” Heterology returns as she begins to conclude, mentioning the conservative ideas of the “oppressed liberals” and their concern of the homologic on the production of capital. The pressure of the heterologic on the homologic to appear “the best,” or in other words heteronormative, concludes the scene.

The last middle scene aligns with the heteronarrative structure. Beginning in the heteronormative as Jessie and Mira graduate from college and move to Atlanta, the narrative continues its heterology through the theme of deterioration. Homology enters when marriage as a panacea is questioned and Jessie begins crossing dressing again. Heterology comes back as Jessie is narrated as having the agency to change his health and the medical institution is understood as possessing the truth and knowledge of healing. Heterology and homology volley back and forth through the narration of being assessed for gender dysphoria. The heterologic then prevails for a time as Jessie desires to be herself, possesses a secret, is a knowing and confident self, and confides in her friend. After the fabula in which Jessie tells Mira of her desire the alternating between heterologic and homologic is concluded in the heterologic through death. The homologic returns as Jessie aspires to embody the attributes of her role models. The scene concludes in the heteronormative with the heterologic concern of the homologic on the production of capital.

Jessie’s interview narrative predominately aligned with the heteronarrative structure. It was introduced and concluded in the heteronormative. The introduction presented homology in

the middle as well as foreshadowed the struggles to come. The conclusion of the narrative commenced and ended in the heteronormative. However, unlike a plausible expectation, it expressed two brief homological moments in the middle through the discourse of nostalgia and reading the goddess as discourse. The four middle scenes all began and ended in the heterologic. Each, also, presented homology in the middle. These homological moments, however, were allowed short reign, as they were quickly pulled back into the heteronormative. Thus, not only was the frequency, but also the duration of the homologic was minimal. Through the close alignment of the heteronarrative structure, the homology of this narrative was contained within the heteronormative, allowed little expression before it was staunch, and erased in the conclusion.

#### The Structure of Jessie's Photo Elicited Narrative

Photographs tell a story (Bal, 1999; Barthes, 1981). From picture books to film to the family photo album, photographs are narratives which can be read for their content and structure. Consequently, they provide alternate narrative data which can be analyzed for their hetero/homonarrative structure.

Below is a photo story I have constructed from the elicited photographs Jessie took in answer to the question, "What does transsexuality mean to me?" Following each photograph is a condensed narrative I constructed. This narrative contains only Jessie's words, but I have abridged the interview data using the combined theories of Moustakas (1994) and Bal (1999) as mentioned above. The photographs appear in the order that Jessie chose to discuss them. The first photograph she described became the introduction of the narrative and the last picture stood for the conclusion. The remaining photographs and the condensed narratives that

accompany them from the middle of the narrative. Following this photo story, I present an analysis of the homo/heteronarrative structure of this narrative.



*It is closed now, but I was attacked in there. Just in the door and to the right was a cigarette machine. It was probably Spring of 2000. I had been drinking a little too much. My ex-sister-in-law worked there, and I thought it was safe. I went to the cigarette machine, and I turned around and this military guy, started yelling at me, "You are disgusting!" And then he pushed me down, and I fell over across a chair. When I got up, he was gone. I never got that drunk in Macon again.*





*How much can you say about restrooms? That's where it all winds up in the end, in the restrooms. All the judges, everyone, is scared that somehow you are going to violate them in the restroom. It connects people to their deepest fears about trans people. That is the ultimate transgression really, being in the wrong restroom. Our culture is so heavy with it. A French restaurant – "Madame," "Monsieur." At a vegan restaurant, you still have gendered restrooms, even among the progressives. You have the ladies room with the Gloria Steinem with her dog looking postcard, and you have the men's restroom with a big gorilla. The last two of the restaurant series are basically like the enlightened attitude, the unisex restrooms. Just recently, I had a name change case. And I was also requesting that the judge change the legal gender. And part of any name change case I do is all the medical documentation I can find regarding the condition – endocrinologist letter, psychiatrist letter, all of that. And maybe a copy of the DSM IV, gender dysphoria. And the judge was worried about restrooms. For this judge it all came down to restrooms. Anyone who has been a trans activist knows that the restrooms are a touchy subject, because some judges are afraid that you just want to be in there to molest little girls; they take a very patriarchal tone. This judge though was swayed by my argument, the fear of having my client next to him at a urinal. Would you rather have this individual in the men's room or the ladies room? And him being, you know, Mr. Big Judge, it was like, let the ladies worry about it.*



*This is my first gateway into the trans community --Atlanta Gender Explorations Support Group. This is where we meet. It is actually a Presbyterian Church in Atlanta. It was founded by Dallas Denny. We have it here because one of the long time members also happens to be one of the first transsexual Presbyterian ministers. And so, for exchange of a rental fee, the church lets us use its building every first and third Saturday of every month.*



*The next picture is the grave of Flannery O’Conner in Milledgeville, Georgia. She was a Southern writer that kinda gets lumped into that Southern gothic genre. She wrote from the viewpoint of a Catholic in the Protestant south. She had an outsider’s point of view at the same time that she looked like an insider. Interestingly enough, one of her short stories was where there was a county fair that came to town. It is told from the point of view of a 9 year old girl. Her sister went on a date with her boyfriend to the carnival. One of the freak shows was this tent that had an intersexed individual. The curtain opens and this individual is wearing a dress, and she lifts her dress and shows her ambiguous genitalia. And all she says to the crowd is, “This is how God made me.” And so, because of the fact that she is a Southern writer, and she wrote outside the mainstream, and she was from Milledgeville, Georgia where I went to college, and because of the fact that we used to get stoned on her grave, I included this picture.*

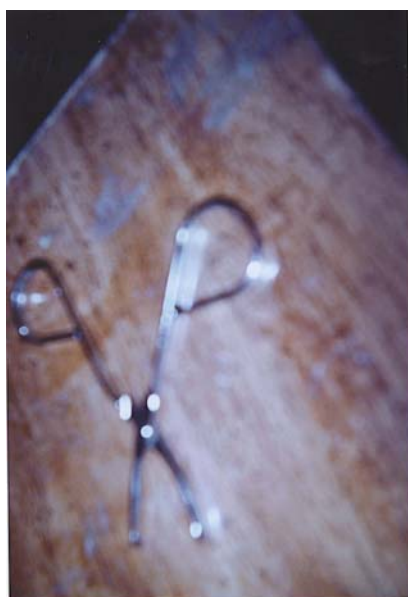


*This next picture is Miss Carolina Bliss. She is beautiful; she is strong; she is a survivor. She is on a mission of God. She will not stop until everyone is converted. A saint. Fun to party with.*





*With a little help from me friends. These are the boys. I wish I could have gotten all of Sir Mathew of Atlanta's face. But, I think I got the part that matters anyway. Sammy, my boyfriend. It's like, so many people down here when they hear transgender, they think men in dresses, but it is the transmen who are really blazing trails out there for us. They are great to have around. They are really cute, too.*



*Tweezers, an indispensable part of any transwoman arsenal. I got electrolysis, probably 70-80% done. I quit right before surgery. The longer you are on estrogen, the more sensitive your face gets. After the surgery, I decided that I would rather pluck any individual hairs with tweezers than go back for more electrolysis, since I got most of it anyway. This is my favorite kinda tweezers, the scissor type. You can really get a tight grip on the hair, and it doesn't wear out your fingers using it.*



*This is hormones. Back in the old days, for the initiates to the Maetrum of Cybele, they had to castrate themselves in a fit of religious frenzy with their own knives, after which they were given women's clothing. It certainly got rid of their testosterone issues. Thankfully, we are in a much more enlightened age when they will give you estrogen and progesterone. Or if you are a transman, of course, testosterone. The most painful part, I think, was the electrolysis. That was an initiation in itself. Very painful. I had to take muscle relaxers for the last 10 hours or so of it. I did probably 60 or 70 hours total. Hormones, I am lucky I can get a drug plan to pay for it. A lot of*

*the girls and boys do it on the street. They inject it. They get it on the black market.  
They share needles.*



*A picture of the state capital after a rally against the anti-gay marriage amendment. A very gray day. I felt the whole weight of the state falling on me. It is a common experience for transpeople. Every now and then, a fanatic right will target us in the legislator. You just feel the whole world falling on top of you. There is no escape.*

Jessie's photo elicited narrative aligns with Roof's (1996) heteronarrative structure. It is introduced in the heteronormative, the introduction foreshadows tensions to come, the conclusion remains heterologic through out, and the middles represent, in varying amounts, homologies. In the following, I discuss an examination of the heteronarrative structure of Jessie's photo narrative in more detail.

Jessie's photo elicitation photo is introduced with a photograph of the Waterwork's Bar and Grill. Taken at a right angle, the focalization is on the name of the closed bar and the "Available" sign in the window. The interview fabula attached to this photograph begins with "It is closed now." The focus on the failure of this business not only places this narrative in the

heterologic of capitalism, it sets it in the modern theme of deterioration. The second clause of the first sentence, "I was attacked in there," continues the heterologic of the story. Reading the I who was attacked as trans, the attacking becomes punishment for heteronormative transgression. The following three sentences continue the heterologic as the narrator implicitly is taking some of the responsibility of the attack. Beginning with "It was probably spring of 2000," the narrator brings to the fore that this incident took place at the beginning of her transition. Thus, her female presentation was potentially weak. Secondly, she admits, "I had been drinking a little too much," taking responsibility due to her state of inebriation. And finally, she notes "My ex-sister-in-law worked there, and I thought it was safe," misreading the situation. Each of these statements not only keeps the narrative in the heterologic through the implicit acceptance of blame by the victim, they foreshadow the struggles to come through her appearance outside the heterosexual gender norms, her state of inebriation, and her unsafe position. The narrative remains in the heterologic as it is the military who enforces the boundaries of the heteronormative. When she got up, the guard of the heteronormative was gone, but like the prisoners in the Panopticon (Foucault, 1977), she had internalized his gaze. She enforces herself, as she deems "I never got that drunk in Macon again." Thus this introduction remains in the heterologic and the struggles to come are indicated by her assumption of guilt.

The final photograph is of the state capital of Georgia. Taken at an extreme upward angle, the focalization emphasizes the power of the state and the impotence of the focalizer, the transpeople. The focalization and focalizer of this photograph introduce the conclusion in the heteronormative as it implies the top-down judicial power of the state (Foucault, 1990). This reading is reinforced by the windows of the capital which through the focalization appear to

look down upon the trans focalizer, supplying a top-down gaze while remaining impenetrable to the trans focalizer. That this picture was taken “after a rally against the anti-gay marriage amendment,” emphasizes the heteronormative power of the state and the heterologic of the narrative. Although the trans focalizer’s interpretation of this as “a very gray day,” seemingly wields homology, it is impotent against the top-down power of the state, and thus does not have the potential to pull the heteroideology of this narrative into a homologous moment. The power of heterology continues as the narrator “felt the whole weight of the state falling on me.” The consistency and pervasiveness of this power is read as the narrator states, “It is a common experience for transpeople.” Concluding that “There is no escape,” not only ends this narrative in the heterologic, it concludes the story in deterioration, alienation, and hopelessness, the plight of modernism (Lemert, 1997). This conclusion, then, remains heterological throughout.

The first middle scene, discussing restrooms, begins with “How much can you say about restrooms?” Bringing to the fore the explicit, yet often invisible, heterosexual underpinnings of restrooms, begins this scene in the homologous. The following sentence, “That’s where it all winds up in the end,” is heterologic as it constructs restrooms as the conclusion of trans issues. The narrative continues in the heteronormative as “everyone is scared that somehow you are going to violate them in the restroom.” This fear not only centers the heterologic of restroom construction, it places trans as the threat which validates the logic of the choice. The naturalness of this logic is emphasized in the following sentences: “It connects people to their deepest fears about transpeople. That is the ultimate transgression really, being in the wrong restroom.” But the heterologic is threatened in the next sentence, “Our culture is so heavy with it.” By calling attention to the extent to which our culture is laden with fear and obsession around which restroom one uses, points to the absurdity of the

logic. Homology then prevails through tone as the narrator almost jests with a sense of irony “Madame, “Monsieur,” “Gloria Steinem with her dog,” “the men’s restroom with a big gorilla,” and “the enlightened attitude, the unisex restroom.” The fabula then changes to a case she has recently tried. This moves the narrative back into the heteronormative through the heterology of the judicial system. This logic is maintained as all medical documentation is gathered. This documentation not only functions to establish the heterology and the power of the institutions which supply and mandate them, they constitute the biology of the individual (Foucault, 1990). Homology then returns through irony. For in light of all the medical documentation she submitted --“endocrinologist letter, psychiatrist letter...a copy of the DSM IV, gender dysphoria” – “For this judge it all came down to restrooms.” Once again this homology is over turned through the logic of the heteronormative, “some judges are afraid that you just want to be in there to molest little girls.” But, again irony takes hold and homology returns as the judge is swayed to change the legal name and gender of the narrator’s client based on the judge’s “fear of having my client next to him at a urinal.” The scene concludes in the homological by exposing the empty position of the judge, “And him being, you know, Mr. Big Judge, it was like let the ladies worry about him.” This first middle scene, then, begins and ends in the homological while showing altering moments of hetero and homological moments in the middle.

The second middle scene is the picture of a Presbyterian church and its accompanying constructed narrative. The distance of the focalizer from the subject of the photograph as well as the level gaze of the focalizer functions to make the position of the focalizer external, a stance which appears to be objective and thus heterologic. The doors to the church are dark, erased in the absence of light. This becomes symbolic when read through the first sentence of

the narrative text, “This is my first gateway into the trans community,” and the homology of the meeting, “Atlanta Gender Explorations Support Group,” becomes erased through the lack of entrance. The heteronormative of the scene continues as the location is named “a Presbyterian Church.” Heterology is maintained as the group is founded, but as the agent of this founding is “Dallas Denny,” a famous transsexual activist, homology enters minutely. Linking onto this homology, the following sentences prolongs its stay, mentioning “one of the long members also happens to be one of the first transsexual Presbyterian ministers. The heterologic of capitalism usurps the homology in the conclusion, “for exchange of a rental fee, the church lets us use its building every first and third Saturday of every month.” This scene then began and concluded in the heteronormative and used homology only briefly.

The fourth scene, the photograph of Flannery O’Conner’s grave and the accompanying narrative, begins in the heteronormative through the image of death. The metaphor of death is one of the primary techniques by which homology is concluded in the heteronormative (Roof, 1996). The heteronormative continues as O’Conner’s position is categorized, “lumped into that Southern gothic genre.” Further refining this classification, “the more accurate term is Southern catholic writer,” the narrative stays in the heteronormative. Homology then enters as O’Conner is dually positioned as an outsider and an insider, “She had an outsider’s point of view at the same time that she looked like an insider.” The narrative then begins an embedded fabula which tells of O’Conner’s short story, “A Temple of the Holy Ghost.” As a retelling this fabula is heterologic in its reproductive function. Contextually, it begins in the heteronormative. Told from the point of view of the sister, the Oedipal family structure is implied. The heterosexual orientation of the sister is inferred as well as she is accompanied by her boyfriend. Homology appears to enter in the following sentence, “One of the freak shows

was this tent that had an intersexed individual.” The labeling of the “intersexed individual” a freak, however, keeps the narrative in the heteronormative, for difference is signified as abnormal. Thus, intersex constitutes the that which is not of the heteronormative , functioning to construct the signified of heteronormative. The act of lifting her dress and showing her “ambiguous genitalia,” maintains the heterologic structure of the narrative. Not only is the hermaphroditic condition signified as female through the veil of the dress, constituting intersex as male absence, the exposure of her genitalia is the epitome of confession (Foucault,, 1990). Already constituted as abnormal and linked to male absence, the claim, “This is how God made me,” does not naturalize the position as homologic, but reinforces it as a mistake of nature. Heterology continues through the narrator’s identification with O’Conner as a Southerner who was outside the mainstream and from Milledgeville where she went to college. Interestingly, it is not until one clause prior to conclusion that homology enters. “We used to get stoned on her grave.” As mentioned above, the grave is a metaphor for death and thus signifies heterology. By sitting on the grave, the narrator has symbolically conquered death’s power to staunch the homologic. Additionally, not only have they transcended the heterology of death, they are in the rhizomic state of being “stoned.” In the very last clause of the scene, as it is read through the beginning of the sentence, “Because of...,” heterology returns through the agency and logic of the narrator, “I included this picture.” This scene, then, begins and ends in the heteronormative, and presents one short homology.

The fifth scene begins with a photograph of Miss Carolina Bliss. A head shot with Miss Bliss looking directly into the camera begins the narrative in the heteronormative. The constructed narrative that follows consists of a list of attributes describing the woman in the photograph: “beautiful,” “strong,” “survivor,” “on a mission of God,” “will not stop,” “a saint,”



and “fun to party with.” Each of these traits place the subject of the photograph in the heteronormative. But a second reading emerges when the identity of Miss Bliss comes to the fore. As a prominent member of the trans community, the founder and president of a respected transgender organization and a transwoman, the heterologic reading of this narrative becomes troubled. As trans, her beauty is a homology. Constructed on a heterosexual understanding, it is an explicit simulacra, thus indicating its homological stance. Her strength becomes ambiguous as the reader is unsure whether to link it to the previous virtue of beauty or the following attribute of “survivor.” In the first case it constitutes a homology because not only is beauty linked with the body, which in the case of trans constitutes the homology of sex/gender misalignment, her physical beauty is feminine, which furthers the gap between the misaligned components of sex/gender body/subject . In the later reading, wherein “strong” is linked to “survivor,” the narrative is underpinned more by heterology, yet the heteronormative continues to be challenge because the trans subjects threatens the heterologic of the normative. The following three lines -- “She is on a mission of God. She will not stop until everyone is converted. A saint” –pull the narrative explicitly back into the heteronormative. Regardless of the constituents of her subject position and the message of conversion, both of which are trans, the teleologic underpinnings of conversion and the implicit possession of the knowledge of right, maintains the heteronormative. The scene concludes with “Fun to party with.” Read through the conflicting messages of transwoman, beautiful, strong, and saint, the last line becomes a homology. It blurs the reading of heteronormative through the misalignment of heterologic terms. This scene begins and ends in the homologic and presents heterology in the middle.

The sixth scene is introduced with the only photograph taken from a left angle. Picturing two men out in the night, gazing into the camera, Jessie standing straight to the camera and Sammy angled left. Introduced with, “With a little help from me friends,” the narrative seems to commence in the heteronormative. The following sentence, “These are the boys,” immediately disrupts the norm and brings in the ambiguous. As “the boys,” the identity of the men in the picture is revealed to be trans. The next sentence, “I wish I could have gotten all of Sir Mathew of Atlanta’s face,” moves the narrative back into the heteronormative. The face is that which we present to the world, the symbolic representation of who we are. As such, the desire of the narrator to have all of Jessie’s face, is a desire to have presented all of his identity, a modern heteronormative signification. Moving to the other man in the photograph, the narrator states, “Sammy, my boyfriend.” Homology is read as we interpret the body and subject of the narrator and Sammy through previous encounters. In this reading, Sammy, a biological female who is male, is the boyfriend of Jessie, a genetic male who is female. The heteronormative returns in the following as the heteronormative reading of transgender is presented: “So many people down here when they hear transgender, they think men in dresses.” Homology returns as “transmen” in the following clause is connected to “men in dresses” in the previous clause. Differentiating “transmen” from “men in dresses,” demarcates the homologic from the heterologic. It implicitly documents the alternate ontology of transmen, biological women who are men, from the heterologic construction of men who dress. But, this homologic moment is short lived. It is brought back to the heterologic prior to the conclusion of the sentence. Placing transmen men in the position of “blazing trails out there for us,” not only constructs them as on a mission, it re-establishes the male/female binary of active men and passive women; men conquering the new frontier for women. The heteronormative of the

narrative continues through the conclusion through the reinscription of the heterosexual positions of the participants. Transmen are “great to have around and ...really cute, too.” This scene begins and concludes in the heteronormative. The homology in the middle arises through the misalignment of sex and gender.

The seventh scene is the photograph of a pair of tweezers and the narrative that follows. Focalized from above, the focalizer maintains power and displays the tweezers as a tool, laying open and ready for use on a clean surface. The heterologic is established through the focalization and the implicit conveyance of the human use of tools to produce specific ends. The introductory line, “Tweezers, an indispensable part of any transwoman arsenal,” emphasizes this heterologic reading as it lists tweezers as weapon in the “transwoman arsenal.” The following sentence, “I got electrolysis,” can be read as either hetero or homologic. Read through a heterological lens, getting electrolysis signifies the position as a simulacra. It constitutes proof that the female claim is artificial as the body does not align with the gender declared. Read through a homologic lens, a reading which is facilitated by the following scene, getting electrolysis constitutes part of the initiation rights into trans. Heterology is presented in the next sentence, “I quit right before surgery.” The concept of quitting is underpinned by the logic of a natural conclusion. Within homology, the ambiguity of the middle would be rhizomatic and termination would lose meaning. The fabula remains in the heteronormative through the logic of cause and effect, “The longer you are on estrogen, the more sensitive your face gets.” The decision not to return to electrolysis keeps the narrative in the heteronormative. This occurs as it is underpinned by the continual need to pluck hair that does not align with female hair growth patterns as well as through presenting the logic of not returning. The scene concludes in the heteronormative as it references the efficiency of the tool, “You can really get

a tight grip on the hair, and it doesn't wear out your fingers using it." This scene begins and concludes in the heteronormative. The middle either remains in the heteronormative throughout or presents one possible homology, depending on the reading of electrolysis in the first instance.

The final middle scene is a photograph of prescription hormones and the constructed narrative that follows. Focalized through a straight gaze, the medicines on the counter appear to be presented in an objective view. Introduced with "This is hormones," firmly set this beginning in the heteronormative through the one-to-one correspondence implied between signified and signifier. The following sentence, beginning with "Back in the old days," establishes a theme of nostalgia, maintaining the heteronormative. The sentence continues, "for the initiates to the Maetreum of Cyble." This simultaneously functions as a hetero and homological moment. It at once continues the heterology of nostalgia, but also represents the always has been of the trans position, and thus the perpetual homology of their position. Concluding this fabula with "It certainly go rid of their testosterone issues," pulls the narrative back into the heteronormative through equating castration solely with testosterone, a heteronormative interpretation of a chemical which is found in all bodies and organs (Fausto-Sterling, 2000). Heterology continues through reading the taking of estrogen and progesterone as "more enlightened," a narration possible through the ideology of progression. Heterology prevails as electrolysis is read as initiation, a continuation of the theme of nostalgia begun in the second sentence. As the space of initiation is left, the heteronormative continues when hormones are linked to capital, "Hormones, I am lucky I can get a drug plan to pay for it." The underside of heteronormative then presents itself, "A lot of the girls and boys do it on the street. They inject it. They get it on the black market. They share needles." The repercussion of

heterologic, explicit here in terms of capital and gender, the lack of access to drug plans and the erasure of transgender, explicate the pain of such erasure, but do nothing to establish homology, but in fact continue to re/produce the heteronormative through constituting the outside. Thus, this scene begins and ends in the heteronormative, while representing homology in the middle through the continuation of trans.

Jessie's photo elicitation narrative closely aligns with a heteronarrative structure, beginning and concluding in the heteronormative and presenting homology in the middle. Remaining in the heteronormative throughout, the introduction foreshadowed the struggles to come through the presentation of the narrator's guilt. The conclusion, directly following the heteronormative structure, remained entirely in the heteronormative. Each middle scene, except the fifth, began and concluded in the heteronormative, while presenting only brief homological moments in the middle. Contrary to expectation, the fifth scene began and concluded in the homological and presented a heteronormative middle. This inversion was suggested only after reading the narrative through other texts which represented Miss Carolina Bliss as trans.

The length and frequency of homology in the photo elicited text was minimal. The introduction and conclusion remained in the heteronormative and the middles showed only brief homologic moments which were predominately couched between heterologic statements. Thus, the homology of this narrative was not only tightly tethered to the heteronormative, it was predominately erased not only in the conclusions, but in the sentence or fabula which proceeded it.

## The Body and Subject in Jessie's Narratives

The re/production of a transsexual body and subject occurs simultaneously through the structure and the content of narrative. One cannot be separated from the other, as the structure of narrative in/forms the constituents of the body and subject and the composites of the body and subject in/form the structure of narrative. Thus, in the following, I analyze the content of Jessie's body and subject as narrated in the constructed narratives of her interview and photo elicitation. Specifically, I will examine her body and subject narrated as essence –the essential self at the core of the modern individual -- inscribed(Foucault, 1980, 1984a, 1990), discursive(Butler, 1993, 1997, 1999), and becoming. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987)

### The Body and Subject in Jessie's Interview Narrative

The body and subject represented in Jessie's interview narrative basically follow the heteronarrative structure. They begin and conclude in the heterologic and are presented as homologic at various intervals in the middle. Although the body and subject are foreshadowed as homologic in the introduction, this precursor of things to come occurs in the last lines of the introduction, rather than the predicted middle. A more detailed exploration of the structure of Jessie's constructed interview narrative follows.

The introduction of Jessie's interview narrative appears at first to represent an essential I throughout. Beginning with the date, time, and place of her birth, minute facts are adhered to the I which is introduced, constituting the position of a self. Adding to the details of this self, she is narrated as being born with Common Atrium. As congenital, this disease progresses the identity of self through its re/productive lineage. The identity as self continues as she is narrated as having open heart surgery and a series of pace maker surgeries. The essentiality of this self, however, is destabilized as it is reread as an inscription through the discourse of

cyborg feminism (Haraway, 1988). The essential constitution of the body and subject is lost as the invasion of technology into the body becomes “real,” producing a body that is literally formed in the material discourse of technology, becoming in the mergence of inside/outside, science/body, a becoming that may be read in the destratification of natural/unnatural.

Jessie remains an essential self through out the conclusion. Beginning with an essential, heterologic “I,” she is self contained, learning, reading, re/producing knowledge. This representation continues as she chooses her spiritual path, moving from agnosticism to the goddess path. Looking at self as self, she reflects on her stance, labeling herself “nostalgic.” This separation of self, the self reflective capacity of looking back on self as an object, is the discursive body and subject read as essential (Butler, 1997). Continuing in a reading of an essential self, Jessie is agenic in her work to bring “Goddess values into the Western mainstream.” This self is not only agenic in its work; it is teleological in its progressive journey toward healing the planet. Solidifying this position, the tone of this self becomes pedantic, “We need to think about the earth as an organism that if we destroy it then we destroy ourselves.” This pedantic self, the propagator of knowledge which will heal the planet and us, continues through the end of the story, keeping the body and the subject as an essential representations thought out the conclusion.

The first middle scene, in which Jessie narrates her earliest memories of gender dysphoria and her subsequent attempts at maculinizing herself, begins with an essential self. Starting with her “earliest memory,” she links the past to the present in a teleological journey of the self. The linking of these events to the “my” of gender issues constitutes the discursive I which we read as essential (Butler, 1997). The teleology of this journey is indicated by the same “my,” as Jessie the adult is linked to “my gender issues” through the continuous presence

of the statement. The essential constitution of self remains through the water spigot fabula and the following vignettes of first grade. This self begins to fracture in the sentence, “I started getting really fat, and so people saw me as effeminate.” Using the word “saw” Jessie puts a bar between the inside and outside of self, the self as being and the self as appearance. This fracture has the propensity to indicate a discursive body and subject because the position of “effeminate” is placed on the body and subject from the outside and it is not recognized as adhering to her “I.” The body and subject then shifts again to a modern self, agenic in the attempts to portray identity, “Sometimes I would try to play it down, and sometime I wouldn’t. She continues as an agenic gendered self, choosing to play the flute and quit when the negative feedback got too much, isolated in her individual position, “the only male flute player.” The essential nature of protagonist’s position is emphasized in the following list of categories to which she aligns: “I was nerdy; I was geeky; I was inquisitive; I was assertive. The simple structure of these sentences, pronoun, verb adjective, intensifies the essentiality of her constitution by directly linking the attribute of the adjective to the “I.” She thus constructs a multifaceted essential self. This tightly constructed self is then called into question as she concludes this string of constituents with “I always behaved in all these very contradictory ways,” moving the attributes of the I from being to behavior. This places a rupture between attributes and being, allowing the possibility of a discursive self. Read in retrospect, reading the first part of the sentence through the last, the positions of self are called into question as essence and imply doing not being. In other words, the doer behind the deed has been separated from the attributes that constituted self (Butler, 1997). A modern self then continues to be narrated in several ways: first, it is constructed on the theme of victimization and alienation, “The teasing got really bad. I had no friends.” Second, relying on agency, he



determines to “assertedly maculinize myself.” Third, following the modern constructs of the internal attributes of pride and desire, and the social construct of rights, Jessie refuses to give up the flute. The discursivity of the body and subject is then implied as she mentions that there were not any “alternative narratives” growing up in the South. The prospect of a discursive self is halted, however, as it is set in the discourse of identity politics. This is seen in the link between “oppressive” and “faggot” – “Growing up in the South was not necessarily oppressive... You don’t want to be a faggot do you?” An essential self is narrated through the following fabula of being called a “faggot” in school. This self is disrupted when Jessie narrates that “I did not have the language to say I had a crush on the Beatles, but in hindsight, I did.” Although at first glance it appears she is labeling an experience that had the nature of a “crush,” in the explicit act of labeling this experience retrospectively, she has brought to the fore the process of naming that chooses at what joints to break experience (Rorty, 1991), constituting truth out of the abyss of experience. The homology of her body and subject is thus brought to the fore, albeit briefly, she is once again the modern individual aligning with the theme of isolation and alienation. His agenic nature then usurps the situation, “I made people start calling me Jeffery.” A discursive body and subject follows: “Right about then, I saw my first PBS special about transsexuality, and I thought wouldn’t it be great if I could wake up tomorrow and be girl.” Presented with alternate identity positions, he consciously desires altering his body and subject. Returning to agency, she tries to “push it back...with all the hallmarks of Southern manhood.” A modern self of alienation continues, constituted with a physical outside and a psychological inside that “had a nervous breakdown.” Once again following alienation and victimization an agenic self follows: I came back to high school really thin. I started pumping a little iron.” The essentiality of this position is emphasized as the

psychological inside and the material outside of Jessie are further separated through the responses of people to his newly constituted outside juxtaposed to his “faggot” inside. This is seen in the mention of the band director’s reading of him as gay, the sudden “nice” response from people, as well as the dual response from his female peers who became interested in him, but “didn’t quite know what to think of me.” Jessie’s narration of himself here is a clear reflection of Foucault’s modern body and subject: he is taking himself “as an object of a complex and difficult elaboration... [making] of his body, his behavior, his feelings and passions, his very existence, a work of art.” He is not attempting to “discover himself,” but “tries to invent himself” (Foucault, 1984b, p. 39-40). Jessie as a modern individual of reason follows as he figures out “the first big life lesson.” This lesson, which concludes the scene, not only positions Jessie as a self, but itself is constituted on the ideology of an essential self, since the positioning of people as fake is only possible in relation to the notion of real. Additionally, that these people can be manipulated emphasizes Jessie as an agenic individual.

The body and subject presented throughout the second scene are predominately constituted as essential. The scene begins with an essential self which is constituted through chronology of experience, the attachment of attributes to the I, and the constitution of an agenic psychological and physical self. This is briefly disrupted as the doer is separated from the deed, behavior is demarcated from being. A modern self then returns constructed through the discourses of alienation, agency and rights. Shortly interrupted, a discursive self is implied as the lack of alternative discourses is mention. A discursive body and subject are found again after the fabula in which she is called a “faggot” at school. The remainder of the scene functions on a modern self consciously constituted as a work of art. The scene concludes with a rational self of modernity, learning the lessons of life.

The third scene, wherein Jessie narrates her identity as a progressive, presents an essential self through out. Beginning with “I fell into a crowd of guys,” Jessie is an essential self, as there is no evidence to the contrary, albeit his agency is obviously absent. His agency is quickly recovered as he becomes involved with drugs, goes clubbing, alters his taste in music, and starts dating. Moving through each of these experiences, his identity as the boy attempting to “masculinize” himself into Southern manhood is lost and a new identity of a “progressive” emerges. But this transition of identity does not change the essential constitution of self. As a 17 year old male, these alternate identities are expected as part of the developmental tension of modern adolescence. It is the mandated homology in the middle of narrative, which not only makes a series of events a story, but fulfills the Freudian developmental pathway (Roof, 1996). His asexual relations with his female peers, forced lost of virginity, and fellacio fantasies do not alter the essential constitution of the self. While these experiences may put into question his position within the heterosexual matrix, the nature of the self remains the same. Then, however, it is noted, “I was in denial about my gender issues even through college, but they always had a way of getting out.” At first this appears as if the gender issues were not only separate from the self, but had their own agency. However, I think this is an erroneous reading. As an essential aspect of the body and subject of Jessie, the gender issues could not be denied. As her inter truth, their existence could not be hidden under a mask of masculinity. The essentiality of the self continues as Jessie narrates herself as different. This difference, cast in the light of intelligence and not gender, continue to constitute various attribute of the I. The two flashback fabulas which follow, Jessie drawing the cartoon of his cat when he was 7 and getting an earring in high school, do not alter the constituents of self. Serving to establish the always have been of her gender, they are further pieces of data for her essential femininity,

emphasizing that the gender confusions have always existed, but the process of bringing them to consciousness was long and arduous. The scene concludes with the destiny of her transition. Not only is the nature of the self reinforced through the ideology of destiny, but body and subject constituted as a psychological inside and material outside is substantiated through the sex/gender misalignment fabula.

The fourth scene begins with an essential body and subject. Starting college, meeting new friends, rushing, pledging into a fraternity are all activities within the normal expectations of a modern body and subject. The homology of his peers, “freaks and deadheads [who] smoked a lot of weed, ate a lot of mushrooms, and dropped a lot of acid, does not alter their essential status, or his by association. Their acts and identities do not change their constitution as a self adhering to various attributes which form their specific subjectivities. A discursive body and subject enters the narrative as Jessie states, “I was so glad to get to rebuild my identity; it was a fresh start.” The consciousness of this act, emphasized by “I just totally took advantage of it,” linked with the artifice of the persona, “I...had everybody fooled,” constructs body and subject formation as a simulacra. The body and subject as a simulacra becomes even more vivid as read through the previous seen wherein Jessie also reinvented himself. Thus, his status as a copy of a copy becomes magnified. But, the discursive body and subject become fragmented as variously constituted in the following fabula. As Jessie is rebuilding his identity, on the one hand his explicit inscription is noted: “I was training to be this white male leader.” On the other hand, his essential constitution as queer is also read: “I really was secretly gay or queer.” An essential body and subject then reemerges as Jessie is “in denial” about his gender issues, as denial indicates a refusal to acknowledge that which is part of self. An essential self continues as he notes that the “gender thing started getting confused with the sexual thing. I

was clueless.” The fact that he was “clueless,” emphasizes not only that he was lacking knowledge, a heterological stance, but also that he was seeking for the essence of the “gender thing” and the “sexual thing.” This becomes clearer as he states, “It was hard to pull all of that apart,” thus indicating the substantive components of each attribute. Although homologous, his “wanting to kiss boys” and his enjoyment of sex with women, continues a presentation of an essential self. The essentiality of this body and subject is continued through the constitution of an inside and outside, an escaping of that which is and cannot be denied through the attempts to heterosexual, “Once I started living with Mira, it started coming back again. It always had little ways of coming out...It comes from within.” Then, reading herself “in hindsight,” a discursive body and subject are presented. Through a retrospective reading the essentiality of the body and subject is erased as it is reread through the language now available to her as an adult. The essential status of the body and subject reoccur as the self is presented as a “Bodhisatta in training.” As a Buddhist novice in training, the spiritual core which comprises the self takes precedence. This essential self is continued through the conclusion as she is an agenic self working to break “the sexual/gender binaries we have reinforced.” Throughout this scene an essential self predominates. A discourse self is briefly noted on two occasions, but it is terminated quickly in essence.

The final middle scene presents predominately an essential body and subject. It begins with an essential body and subject as Jessie graduates, moves to Atlanta, and studies for the L-SAT. The essentiality of this position continues as her gaining weight and drinking problem is linked to her deterioration of health and depression. In this signifying link, not only is the material outside and the psychological inside established through the relation of the deterioration of the body and the onset of depression, a cause and effect relation between body

and health is established. An essential subject is continued through the implicit agency in the act of getting married underpinned by the hope for “the magic cure for all my problems.” An agenic body and subject prevail as she “started exercising, losing weight, changing my diet, and law school.” This agency continues as she “found the transgender sites on the internet.” Yet along side the act of locating the sites is the possibility of a discursive body and subject, a finding of alternate discourses of represented as self. A modern self underpinned by the discourse of psychology continues as she “started having panic attacks.” Going in for assessment, this self maintains its modern status as previously discussed. Yet, in this assessment the possibility of a becoming emerge. “I had always wanted to be a woman and that I just couldn’t go on trying to pose as a man anymore.” Narrating a neither-nor (Hill, 2002) position, in-between being and becoming (Prosser, 1998), a possible becoming emerges at the intersection of the stratifications of “wanting” and “posing.” This becoming is deleted as she then states the desire to be herself, “I wanted to start being myself.” Coming to terms with the inner self maintains an essential self, which is then continued as she is presented as a self of knowing, “I can hang with the best minds in the state,” and a self of “confidence.” Confiding in her friend is an act of the modern body and subject, a mandate to tell our deepest and darkest truths (Foucault, 1990). The essential construction of self continues as he “started cross dressing,” “seeing men,” and acknowledging the always had been of male desire. As attributes of self, these behaviors do not alter the essential nature of the self. It is not until she aspires to a feminine balance of assertiveness and grace that the possibility of a discursive body and subject re-enter the narrative. In aspiring to be like her female role models, she is setting up the conflict of that is not me. Thus, the not me of the options of femininity appear as possible discursive subjectivities. The presentation of a discursive body and subject is kept as she reads

the privilege of white southern male through the subjectivity of feminism in the body of a trans “knocked down the social totem pole.” The following misalignment between profession, gender and biology continues the representation of a discursive body and subject – “How can I be an effective attorney at the same time trying to pass as a woman at the same time that it is obvious that biologically I am not female?” Then suddenly an essential body and subject reappears, “The hormones have put me a lot more in touch with myself, but the whole transition process just forces you to think about things that no one in their right mind ever thinks about.” The essential nature of the self appears in the first clause of this sentence as getting in touch with self indicates a pre-existing self, and the latter clause signifies this self through the notion of a “right mind,” a signification of an essential body and subject. The constitution of the self then becomes a little opaque. After mentioning transitioning on the job, making “transitioning” the noun signified by the pronoun “it,” the narrative states, “One of the biggest concerns they had was how was it going to effect fund raising.” Obviously, the narrative enters the heterologic at this point through the concern for the reproduction of capital, but the constituents of the body and subject remain unclear. If I link the previous body and subject to as the condition signified by transition, they are essential in this reading. But, the following sentence “They put a lot of pressure on me to be the best, because people were looking at me,” also leaves the constituents of the body and subject unclear. Is the pressure to become the best a push to become the most of that which you are essentially or is it a forced encouragement to perform, thus indicating a discursive body and subject? The opaque “nature” of the body and subject in the ending fabula concludes this scene with an ambiguous body and subject. Thus, although a self is predominately narrated, a becoming and discursive body and

subject can be read. The opaqueness of the body and subject in the conclusion is an alternate presentation than seen in the previous scenes.

The body and subject presented in the interview narrative were predominately essential. A becoming was read in the first and fifth scenes; an inscription was read in the fourth scene, and a discursive body and subject were read briefly in the second, fourth and fifth scenes. Each of these alternate readings was couched between essential narrations of self. Thus, not only was an ambiguous body and subject rarely represented, their narrations were short in duration as well as closely contained to a modern representation through being sandwiched between narrations of an essential self.

The positions of these representations in the narrative structure closely aligned with the heteronarrative structure. An essential self introduced each scene. A homologous self was foreshadowed in the introduction. An essential self concluded each scene except the introduction, which ended with a becoming, and the fifth scene, wherein the constitution of the body and subject was unclear. The remaining homologous representations of a body and subject occurred in the middle of a scene. Thus, the representation of an ambiguous body and subject predominately followed the heteronarrative structure.

#### The Body and Subject in Jessie's Photo Elicited Narrative

Jessie's body and subject are re/produced in and through her photo elicitation narrative. Read as a text, the photographs and constructive narrative that follow constitute the body and subject. In the following, I examine the heterologic and homologic formation of the body and subject presented in Michelle's photo elicited narrative.

The body and subject presented in the introduction of Jessie's photo elicitation narrative are essential until the last moment. The narrative begins with an essential self in the first



sentence, “I was attached in there.” With no mention of the constituents of the I, it is the body and subject read in the previous narrative which fills this position. As that position repeatedly concluded in the heteronormative as a self, it is this modern transsexual individual that is pulled forth to fill the introductory I in this scene. This same I functions in the next two sentences as she tells us “I had been drinking a little too much,” and “I thought it was safe.” The essential nature of her position here is reinforced through her providing reasons and her implicit responsibility for the incident that follows. This self continues as the military man yells, “You are disgusting!” Here, the power of the right signified by the military is naming her repulsive, constituting her body and subject position as an aberration of the norm, as the not-me which constitutes the other and the self (Butler, 1997). Getting up after being pushed over, she noticed “He was gone.” She then pledges, “I never got that drunk in Macon again.” The gaze of the power of the right had been internalized and turned to self. The self became its own watcher, thus indicating the inscription of self. But this inscription, read through the turning of the gaze, functions to make the self all the more essential to itself, as it monitors its own behavior. Thus, the body and subject in this last instance are essential to themselves and inscribed to the postfoundational reader. It is in this ambiguity that the struggles and tensions of the constituents of the body and subject to come are represented.

The conclusion of the photo elicited narrative presents an essential self. The I is not mentioned until the third statement, yet its position as a modern self is re/produced through the focalization of the photograph. Looking up at the state capital, the focalizer represents the power of the state over the modern individual. The third sentence emphasizes this self, “I felt the whole weight of the state falling on me.” This self continues as it is read that “a fanatic right will target us in the legislator.” As the target of the right, the body and subject are placed

in the realm of sovereign power. In the bottom position in this power dynamic, an essential self emerges as the object. A modern individual continues and is read in the concluding sentence, “There is no escape.” Although a postmodern body and subject can be read in this last statement through the lack of possibility of hope, I think the body and subject implied here is more the modern alienated individual. This is especially the case as I link the position of the last sentence with the previous narration. Thus, the body and subject remain essential throughout the conclusion.

The first middle scene of the photo elicited narrative presents a perspective on bathrooms. Six different photographs are presented in three sets; each focalized at a level angle, presenting what appears to be an objective view point. The first two sets are sexed pairs, and the last set, although represented as unisexed, have male/female signs on the door. Through the objective focalization and the binary representation of sex and gender, this scene begins with an essential body and subject. The first two sentences of the narrative states, “How much can you say about restrooms? That’s where it all winds up in the end, in the restrooms.” Although this indicates that everything is underpinned by sex and gender, the raising of the question as well as the ironic tone in which it is cast, implies a troubling of the body and subject, producing a homologous possibility. The judicial and social concern that follows, “All the judges, everyone, is scared that somehow you are going to violate them in the restroom,” brings back the modern self through referencing fear of alternative re/productions. This citing functions to solidify heterology through the constitution of an other around which to coalesce power (Torfing, 1999). An essential self is continued through the signification of transgression, since transgression can only occur if there are bounds, presumably normative, to cross. Through satire this self is then disrupted: “You have the ladies room with the Gloria Steinem

with her dog looking postcard, and you have the men's restroom, with a big gorilla." A modern self prevails in the following sentence wherein the unisex bathrooms are signified, albeit perhaps slightly ironically, as "enlightened." This signing maintains the previous "progressive" attitude, which implies teleology. The fabula then changes, "I had a name change case." Herein, however, the I remains essential through its agency and individual possession. Continuing as a self through the implications of work, this self explicitly disappears as the narrator discusses the attitudes of judges. But although the narrator becomes external, and the I explicitly disappears, it implicitly remains through the statement that "Anyone who has been a trans activist knows," as well as through the trans position linked to the narrating I through previous texts. The self, therefore, remains essential because of the agency of activism and the concluding essential construction of her trans position. Presenting a persuasive argument, "The judge though was swayed by my argument," the narrating self remains essential. In the conclusion, the narration again becomes external, as the narrating I appears to fade behind the words of the judge. But, the I remains behind the indirect quotation of the judge, implicitly maintaining the essential position of the self. The second scene, therefore, begins and ends with an essential self. This essential self is troubled through irony and satire in the middle of the scene.

The third scene discusses Atlanta Gender Explorations Support Group. This fabula begins with an essential self in the first sentence: "This is my first gateway into the trans community – Atlanta Gender Explorations Support Group." The body and subject signified by the pronoun "my" in the first sentence is read as essential because not only is it read as trans through its link to the previous texts, the metaphor of a "gateway," implies the trans community locates a specific geographic, thus essential, location. Through the signifying links constructed,

trans in the position of “my,” the spatial metaphor of the community, and the link between the two, an essential self is narrated. The position of the body and subject becomes troubled in the following as trans and church, two oft time opposing positions, become united, “We have it here because one of the long time members also happens to be one of the first transsexual Presbyterian ministers.” A modern body and subject prevail as these linked positions are then connected to capital, and its implicit re/productive underpinnings, “And so, for exchange of a rental fee, the church lets us use its building every first and third Saturday of every month.” The body and subject although momentarily troubled in the middle, remain predominately essential throughout the third scene.

The fourth scene, depicting the grave site of Flannery O’Conner, erases the body and subject of the narrator through external narration until the last sentence. Through the linking of the living description of O’Conner to the narrator, a reading of the body and subject of the narrator emerges “A Southern...outsider... [who] looked like an insider.” As a passable transwomen, Jessie is an outsider who looks like an insider. This reading positions the narrator as a replication of the essential body and subject of the narrating I, closing the gap between the narrating and narrated self (Smith, 1998). As such, the discursive possibility of the body and subject are erased in an act of reading. This linking of the two positions is accentuated as the embedded fabula summarizing O’Conner’s short story, “A Temple of the Holy Ghost,” is inserted. Depicting an “intersexed individual” in a heterosexual context of the “sister ... on a date with her boyfriend to the carnival,” wherein the body and subject in the show are simultaneously a “freak” and the product of God, “This is how God made me,” the link between the narrated and narrating position cannot be denied. As a “freak” and a product of God within the heterosexual context, the intersexed individual at the carnival is re/produced as

an essential body and subject. Through the narrating and narrated link, the body and subject of the narrator is also read as essential. The signifying link between O'Conner and the content of her writings with the body and subject of the narrator continues through the conclusion wherein this connection is brought more explicitly to the fore: "And so, because of the fact that she is a Southern writer, and she wrote outside the mainstream, and she was from Milledgeville, Georgia where I went to college, and because of the fact that we used to get stoned on her grave, I included her picture." The last four words of this complex sentence reinforce the essential constitution of self through the agency of the narrator's choice. The fourth scene, then, represents an essential body and subject throughout.

The fifth scene is a fabula of Miss Carolina Bliss. No explicit I of the narrator appears in this scene. Narrated by an external narrator, a narrating I does not appear until the last sentence in which it emerges implicitly. Thus, any reading of the body and subject must once again be done through the signifying link of the trans position between the narrated and narrator. The focalization in the photograph – a frontal shot with a level camera angle – along with the external narration of the text conveys an objective point of view. Underpinned by an objectivist epistemology, this narrative would thus imply an essential self. The body and subject of Miss Carolina Bliss maintain their essential status as she is narrated as a "strong...survivor...on a mission of God." She is thus not only agenic; she is on teleological path and will not desist from her target, "She will not stop until everyone is converted." She thus represents the modern individual. Implicitly, the I of the narrator then appears, "Fun to party with." Closing the space of the narrator and the narrated through their partying association along with the already established common trans position, as discussed previously,

re/produces the body and subject as essential throughout through the signifying links constructed between the two positions.

The sixth scene narrates “the boys.” The constituents of the “me” in the first sentence, “With a little help from me friends,” is assumed on first reading to be essential as it is read to be the narrating I which has been predominately essential through out. This position is troubled in retrospect after reading the next sentence, “These are the boys.” Signified as “the boys,” we become aware that the bodies and subjects depicted in the photograph are transmen. The coupling of transmen with transwomen disrupts the essential constitution of the Jessie’s body and subject as none of the positions any longer represent the “real.” At one and the same time, the bodies and subjects illustrated in the photograph are trans and men and align to the heterosexual matrix through Sammy’s position of “boyfriend,” and their role of “blazing trails out there for us.” This simultaneous re/presentation as aligning and misaligning with the heteronormative, brings to the fore a homologous body and subject. As simultaneously positioned, I read the constituents of these bodies and subjects as discursive. Continuing with a linear reading, an essential body and subject of the narrator intervenes after the introduction of the men in the picture. “I wish I could have gotten all of Sir Mathew of Atlanta’s face.” Through agency and the projection of desire, Jessie narrates herself as a modern self in this sentence. The discursive potential of signing Sammy as her boyfriend is followed by juxtaposing alternate images of transgender “men in dresses” and “transmen blazing the trails out there for us.” The heteronormative signification of the polarized binary of male and female is here transposed on the trans positions. Transwomen are subordinated to transmen not only in transmen’s agency of “blazing the trails for us,” but also transwomen are degraded as “men in dresses.” Although the reference to “men in dresses” was linked to the response of “many

people down here,” its link to transmen as performing the heteronormative act of conquering a new frontier reinforces the essential binary. The essential position of the narrator is then continued through the conclusion as she reinforces the heterosexual male/female binary by noting of the transmen, “They are great to have around. They are really cute, too.” This scene, then, begins with an essential body and subject on first reading, but this position is troubled in a retrospective reading which positions the body and subject as discursive. An essential body and subject then return through the inscription of the male/female binary. This body and subject position is continued through the conclusion.

The next middle scene, the fabula of the tweezers, begins with a homologous body and subject. Focalized from above, the tweezers are placed in a subordinate position to the external narrator of the fabula. This positions the body and subject of the narrator in the position of mastery over the tools which are used to transform the body. Reinforced by the first sentence of the fabula: “Tweezers, an indispensable part of any transwoman arsenal,” the body and subject are inscribed, as they are the material on which the tools are used. An essential body returns as she states, “I got electrolysis, probably 70-80%.” The body and subject position as inscribed becomes erased through the agency of the I. This modern self continues through agency as “I quit right before surgery.” Switching to third person, the self maintains its essential construction through the generalization of experience as truth, “The longer you are on estrogen, the more sensitive your face gets.” This self prevails through agency as she “would rather pluck any individual hairs with tweezers than go back for more electrolysis,” and then continues through the rationalization of the modern individual, “since I got most of it anyway.” A self of desire is then expressed in the next sentence, “This is my favorite kinda tweezers, the scissor type. A modern self concludes as she rationalizes her desire, “You can really get a tight

grip on the hair, and it doesn't wear out your fingers using it." Thus, this scene begins with an inscribed self and then represents an essential self throughout the remainder of the fabula.

The final middle scene begins with the photograph of hormones. This last middle scene begins with what appears to be a modern body and subject through the one-to-one correspondence of between the signifier and the photograph, "This is hormones." But this reading is quickly disrupted as the seemingly natural chemicals of a natural body are depicted as pharmaceuticals. The implicit ingestion of hormones brings to the fore, the body and subject becoming. The lines of flight of the drugs intersect with the stratification of the body, producing a becoming trans. The becoming is interrupted with the nostalgia of the past: "Back in the old days," which brings the brief return of an essential self. But the remainder of the sentence, "they had to castrate themselves in a fit of religious frenzy with their own knives," immediately brings back the possibility of a becoming – steel edge intersecting with testicles producing other without "testosterone issues." An essential self then returns through teleology, "Thankfully, we are in a much more enlightened age..." Moving to the metaphor of initiation, "the most painful part, I think, was the electrolysis. That was an initiation in itself," an essential self is maintained. Initiation is not a becoming something, but the price paid to transcend from one position to another. As such, it is an essential act, a metaphor underpinned by the heterologic of cost and reproduction. An agenic self continues as she did "60 or 70 hours total." A modern self continues with "I am lucky I can get a drug plan to pay for it." Her essential body and subject concludes the scene as it is juxtaposed to those who "do it" outside the established normative of the medical discourse. Those who are represented in the homology of "the streets" and the "black market," those whose names are erased, yet connected through the sharing of needles. This last middle scene begins for a brief moment with an



essential body and subject. A body and subject becoming is then presented as hormones are implicitly ingested. This is followed by a brief portrayal of a modern self before another possibility of becoming is read. An essential body and subject are narrated through the conclusion through the metaphor initiation and as constructed as the inside through its juxtaposition to those who eat hormones on the street. Thus this scene begins and ends with an essential subject and is interrupted with a body and subject becoming trans and becoming other.

The body and subject presented in the photo elicitation narrative are predominately essential. They remain essential in construction through out the fourth, fifth and concluding scenes. Maintaining an essential construction until the last line, wherein an inscribed body and subject is read, the body and subject in the introduction is predominately represented as essential, as well. A homologous body and subject constructed through the literary devices of irony and satire is briefly read in the second scene. In the third scene, an essential self is troubled through the discursive link of church and trans. A discursive body and subject make a momentary appearance in the sixth scene through the signifying links of transwomen, transmen, and the real. An inscribed body and subject are presented in the seventh scene as the subject has mastery over the tool which transforms the body. And finally, a becoming trans is seen before being quickly interrupted in the eighth scene. The frequency and duration of each of these homologous bodies and subjects is seldom and short, tying the body and subject firmly to the heteronormative.

The body and subject in the photo elicitation narrative closely align with the heteronarrative structure. Beginning with an essential self in the introduction, the body and subject are represented as inscribed in the last instance, providing a foreshadowing of the struggles to come. In the conclusion, the body and subject remain as essential throughout. The

body and subject in the introduction and the conclusion, then, follow a heteronormative structure, except for the position of the homologous in the introduction, which normally appears in the middle not concluding statement. Within the seven middle scenes, the body and subject are introduced and concluded as essential and represented as homologous in the middle in the second, third, and eighth scenes. A self is narrated through out the fourth and fifth scenes. In a retrospective reading, the sixth scene begins with a discursive body and subject and concludes with an essential self. In the seventh scene an inscribed body and subject appears in the introduction, and a modern self concludes the scene. Although all but two of these scenes present a homologous body and subject, the presentations that do appear are brief as they are bound by an essential self. As in the narratives previously discussed, the short reign the homologous is allowed continues to re/produce the body and subject within the heteronormative.

### Conclusion

Examining the structure of Jessie's interview narrative and photo elicitation narrative showed how both predominately aligned to a heteronarrative structure (Roof, 1996). The interview narrative began and concluded in the heteronormative. The introduction presented homology in the middle as well as foreshadowed the struggles to come. Unlike the previous conclusions analyzed, this conclusion presented a brief homology in the middle. Each middle scene began and concluded in the heteronormative and had brief moments of homology at various intervals. The homology in each case was allowed little expression before being staunched in the heteronormative and/or erased in the conclusion.

Jessie's photo elicited narrative also began and concluded in heteronormative and expressed homology in the middles. The introduction remained in the heteronormative and

foreshadowed the struggles to come through guilt. The conclusion was heterologic throughout. Each middle scene, except the fifth began and ended in the heteronormative and expressed brief moments of homology in the middle. The fifth scene was inverted from the anticipated structure. It began and concluded in homology and presented heterology in the middle. As with the interview narrative, the photo elicited narrative allowed little expression of homology. When homology was narrated at various instances in the middle scenes, it was quickly brought back into the heteronormative. The length and frequency of homology was minimal as it was predominately embedded between heterologic statements and/or erased in a conclusion.

The body and subject narrated in the interview were predominately essential. Although an occasional homologic body and subject were represented, an ambiguous body and subject were often couched between an essential construction of self and their duration was short. The position of bodies and subjects aligned closely with the heteronarrative structure. An essential self was presented in the introduction and a homologous body and subject was foreshadowed. Unpredictably, this self concluded, however, in a becoming. An essential self was represented through out the conclusion. Except for the fifth scene, the middle scenes began and ended with an essential self. A homologous body and subject were represented in the middle of each scene, except the third. Thus, the representation of a body and subject predominately followed the heteronarrative structure and were predominately represented and concluded as essential.

The body and subject represented in the photo elicitation narrative also were predominately essential in their construction. An inscribed body and subject were noted in the conclusion of the introduction and the introduction to the seventh scene. A homologous body and subject were narrated through signifying links in the first two middle scenes as well as in the sixth scene. And the final middle scene narrated two brief moments of becoming trans.

The bodies and subjects in this narrative also aligned with the heteronarrative structure. An essential body and subject introduced the narrative and a homologous body and subject were foreshadowed through its inscribed position in the last line of the introduction. An essential self was narrated throughout the conclusion. The middle scenes, except for the seventh, began and concluded with an essential self while presenting homologous bodies and subjects in their middles. The seventh scene, however, began with an inscribed body and subject and concluded with an essential self. Thus, not only did this narrative represent only brief moments of a homologous body and subject, their presentation aligned with the heteronormative structure.

Both of Jessie's narratives closely aligned to the heteronarrative structure, presented predominately an essential body and subject, and narrated heteronormative and homological bodies and subjects in positions which align with the heteronarrative structure. Each of these structures in isolation and combination appear to re/produce transsexual within the heteronormative. In an attempt to transfigure this structure, in the following chapter I construct an alternate narrative which may allow a homologous reading of transsexual.

## CHAPTER 6

### DISRUPTING THE HETERONARRATIVE STRUCTURE

The transsexual body and subject are confined within the heteronormative through the structure of narrative and the constituents of the body and subject represented. Allowed minute homologous moments, the signification and thus life expression of transsexual are severely delimited within the heteronormative. Through continuing to narrate transsexual within the heteronarrative structure, we constitute the materiality of this position outside the normative and construct through reiteration the always already unnatural status of transsexual (Butler, 1999). One possible way to disrupt the heteronormative narration of transsexual and thus possibly the disenfranchised status of the position of transsexual is to transfigure the heteronarrative structure.

In the following, I work toward a means of communication that is not heterologic in function. This narrative was formed by disrupting the heteronormative structure and the re/production of the body and subject through constructing a rhizonarrative, a narrative which has the structure of a rhizome (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Each segment is a text which is read through other texts (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Foucault, 1984), continuing along a theme, a thought or nothing at all. As a rhizome any point can be connected to any other point and it “establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 6-7). The source of each text used can be identified by the font. Books segments are typed in Arial. *Michelle’s narratives are typed in New Roman Times Italic. Jessie’s narratives*

*appear in Courier New Italic. **The Bible verses are printed in engravers mt*** and Music lyrics are represented in Adolescence. **My thoughts are typed in twentieth century poster.** Information gathered from the Internet is seen in Franklin Gothic Demi Cond, and finally **the reconstructed newspaper article is typed in plump mt.**

#### Transsexual: A Rhizonarrative

The history of transsexualism offers food for thought. In European and American culture we understand transsexual to be individuals who have been born with “good” male or “good” female bodies. Psychologically, **The notion of an ontologically bounded “body” and an internal psychological core is “an enacted fantasy,” it is the repeated performance of gestures and desires which “produce the effect of an internal core or substance, but produce this on the surface of the “body” through the play of signifying absences that suggest...the organizing principle of identity as cause” (Butler, 1999).** however, they envision themselves as members of the “opposite” sex. A transsexual’s drive to have his/her body conform with his/her psyche is so strong that many seek medical aid to transform their bodies hormonally and ultimately surgically, by removal of their gonads and transformation of their external genitalia **“Why is it always brought down to genitals? Why are my genitals so important? I used to show them, tell all. But, now I draw the line. I am not my genitalia”.** (Transwoman, personal communication, March 17, 2004). . The demands of self-identified transsexuals have contributed to changing medical practices forcing recognition and naming of the phenomenon. Just as the idea that homosexuality is an inborn, stable trait did not emerge until the end of the

nineteenth century, the transsexual did not fully emerge as a special type of person until the middle of the twentieth. Winning the right to surgical and legal sex changes **How Sex Changed: The History of Transsexuality in the United States,** (Meyerowitz, 2002) however, exacted a price: the reinforcement of a two-gender system. **Prior to our current two sex model, a one sex model prevailed for thousands of years. In this model women had the same genitals as men except that they resided on the inside of her body. Alexandrian anatomist, Herophilus, in the third century B.C., said that women had testes with accompanying seminal ducts very much like the men's. One testis lay on each side of the uterus. In this one sex system, woman was understood as an imperfected man, lacking the vital heat needed to be male. The vagina was seen as an inverted penis, the labia as foreskin, the uterus a scrotum, and the ovaries as testicles. "In pre-Enlightenment texts, and even some later ones, sex, or the body, must be understood as the epiphenomenon, while gender, what we would take to be a cultural category, was primary or 'real'" It was not until 1800 that the two sex system began to emerge. Within a two sex system, not only did two sexes arise, but male and female emerged as different in every aspect of body and soul, in every physical and moral aspect. (Laqueur, 1990,). By requesting surgery to make their bodies match their gender, transsexuals enacted the logical extreme of the medical profession's philosophy that within an individual's body, sex, and gender must conform "the decision to raise the child with male pseudohermaphroditism as a male or female is dictated entirely by the size of the phallus." (Kessler, 2002).**

Indeed, transsexual had little choice but to view themselves within this framework if they wanted to obtain surgical help. (Fausto-Sterling, 2000 p. 107)

*I questioned, not gender, but sexual identity. You don't grow up with the terms you need to explain what you are feeling. Mine was always in homosexual terms that the church uses.*

## **Leviticus**

**18 <sup>22</sup>: Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination. Romans 1<sup>27</sup>: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. Leviticus 20 <sup>1</sup>: And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones.. <sup>3</sup>And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people; because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name. (Biblegateway, 2004)**

*Around seventh grade, I had my first experience with a guy. I had a couple of other experiences with a couple of guys from my church. There is more homosexuality going on in the ultra right church than anywhere.*



**According to the Southern Baptist Convention**

**(2004): 1. The Bible passages that are commonly quoted condemning homosexuality are valid. 2. People can change their orientation. 3. Homosexuality is not caused by hormonal imbalance or genetic factors, but by an unhealthy relationship with one's parents. 4. People cannot be pigeonholed into 2 classifications, homosexual and heterosexual. There is a continuum which includes various degrees of bisexuality. 5. Although homosexuality is a sin, it is not the unpardonable sin, or most terrible of sins. 6. Homosexuals can only lead moral lives by remaining celibate. 7. Discrimination against gays and lesbians is proper, in the areas of employment, protection of the heterosexual family, and protection of the social institution.**

*The earliest memory regarding my gender issues was in the first grade. There was a broken water spigot. These boys said, "Hey, Jessie, go turn on that water spigot." The water came out so hard and so fast I was shocked. I was crying, "I can't turn it off." "Where the sissies hang. Where the sissies hang. This is heaven. This is heaven...Like you have never gone down your own drain...And all my friends are there. IN heaven. IN heaven. Where the sissies hang. (Kirsten Hersch, 1998). I hung out as much with girls, if not more, than boys.*

**The DSM IV, the official diagnostic and statistical manual of the American Psychiatric**

**Association for mental disorders, lists gender identity disorder (GID) as a mental disorder. The first listed symptom of GID is “behaving in feminine ways.” In order to meet this criterion, a boy must show at least four of the following symptoms: repeatedly state his desire to be a girl or state his insistence that he is a girl, show a preference for cross-dressing or simulating female attire, exhibit an intense desire to participate in stereotypically feminine games, and pastimes, and exhibit a strong preference for female playmates (Bailey, 2003).**

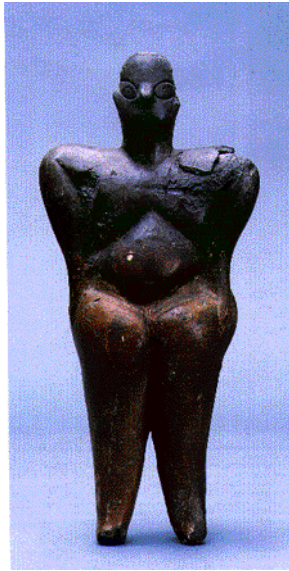


*and I had stitches that were healing.*

*Rough and tumble play was always out, but not that I wanted to do it anyway. I remember, in first grade, telling a girl that I wanted to be a girl. One day at work this beautiful blond girl said, “Do you want to be girl?” It was just like the angles sang and the*

*She was trans herself; I had no clue.*

*lights flashed. She saw it in my eyes and saw my soul...And I daily thank the*



*goddess...*

**Hacilar Figure 7500 BCE**

#### **Promise of the Goddess**

**Listen to the words of the Great Mother, who of old was called Cybele,**

**Isis, Bahuchara Mata, Inanna, and many other names:**

**"Those who are like you, My gallae and ashinnu and hijras, shall be  
strangers in their own homes. Your families will hide you in shadows  
and leave you nothing. The drunken will smite you, and the mighty will  
imprison you. But if you remember Me, and how you were born from the  
light of the stars to save Me, and through Me the earth, then I shall  
harbour you and your kind.**

**"You will be My favourite children, and I shall make you My priestesses.  
I shall grant you the gift of prophecy, and the wisdom of the earth and  
the moon and all that they rule, and you will heal all My children, even**

**as you have saved Me from darkness. For you are Those Who Have Come to  
Renew the Light."**

**"And when the earthen jug is brought from Irkalla, you shall again walk  
among the stars, and none shall resist you."**

**Hear the words of the Star Goddess, the dust of whose feet are the hosts  
of heaven, whose body encircles the universe:**

**"I am the beauty of the green earth and the white moon among the stars  
and the mysteries of the waters. I call upon your soul to arise and  
come to Me. I am the soul of nature that gives life to the universe.  
From Me all things proceed, and to Me all things must return.**

**"Let My worship be in the heart that rejoices, for all acts of love and  
pleasure are My rituals, and my law is love unto all beings – love  
under Will.**

**"If you seek to know Me, you must find what you seek within yourself, or  
you will never find it without. For I have been with you from the  
beginning, and I am that which is attained at the end of desire."**

**(Battakes, C.P., 2004)**

*Back in the old days, for the initiates to the Maetrum of  
Cybele, they had to castrate themselves in a fit of religious  
frenzy with their own knives, after which they were given  
women's clothing. He gave me a Valium to take with some water, and a couple of shots. We then went  
back to the room where the procedure was to be done. It was an older building, yet everything seemed to be clean. I*

**stripped down to my socks, leaving my shirt on, and lay down on a table. The surgical area was carefully treated with iodine solution, the drapes were arranged, and Dr. K... began his work. I don't remember much of the operation ...I remember Dr. K... telling me that he was half way finished, and then the Valium and the anesthetic seemed to take over and I fell asleep. I later found out that the whole procedure took about 30-35 minutes (Anne Lawrence, 2004).**

*I could never act on it in the open. I would do something then feel ultra depressed. My desires and my teaching were always a dual thing in my mind. One time in high school I got an earring in my left ear. I came home and my Dad totally exploded. I took it out and wrote this really contrite letter about how I never wanted to offend, and just wanted to please him so bad. I was scared of him. He was a bit of a drunk. He would yell at me, because he thought that I was a little sissy.*

**Often little boys who exhibited feminine behavior were place on a behavior modification program – they were given rewards for male behavior and punishments for female behavior.**

For Mama and my stepdaddy, the shame factor of having a li'l girl with candy was too great to bear. And for this reason alone, I still assume they took to exorcising the demon seed from my very soul with the fiercest lashings a person could possibly be capable of giving to another. Only the outside bruises have ever really healed. "Get into the bathroom and take off y'clothes! GET BUCK NEKKID NOW! 'Cause I'm gonna whip y' colored ass!" This was the preamble to what I received as a ritual, several times a week, for six years of my life...The blood dripped down my ass, I'd be taken to the back porch and tied round one of them skinny beams that connected the porch to the foundation of our

house...Tied up and alone, weak, shriveled, and sore, I'd stare up to the sky, demanding to know why...There'd be Mama and my stepdaddy, looking out at me so solemnly from that big window in our kitchen silently praying that maybe this time they'd finally made a boy outta me. (Chablis, 1996 p. 55-56)

*My fathered called and asked to speak to me. He said, "Is this what you are now?" "That is who I am now."...He said: "I hope you are going to do something about it. Because if you aren't, I will drive up to Atlanta and do something about it for you."*

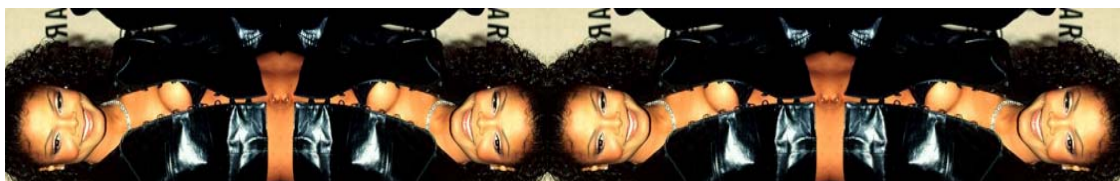
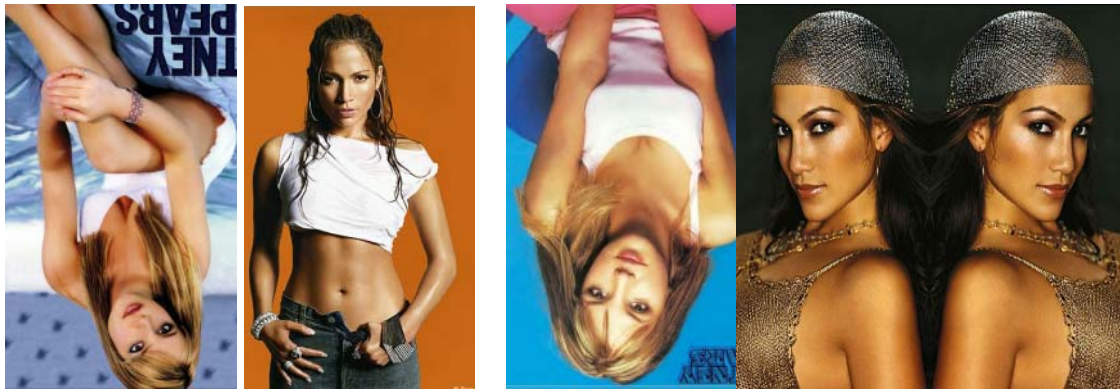
**Trannie found dead**

**A man dressed in woman's clothing was found shot in the head in his care this morning in front of his buckhead apartment. Police have no leads at this time.**

**A candlelight vigil will be held this evening for Precious Armani. Please bring your own candle to light in remembrance of her life.**

There are quite a few organizations these days that are doing excellent work to change the legal system in order to redistribute both wealth and power, and to protect basic human rights. There's a snag here, though. I think there's a danger with

any specialized civil rights movements...I believe that organizations or groups that fight for civil rights of some without taking into account the common oppression of the many are doomed to the same fate awaiting anyone who bases their struggle on identity as opposed to values...We need to keep looking at this stuff until we can find a common bound, some banner under which we can all dance. From my point of view, the common bound could be linked to the gender/identity/power system and the oppression of all but a few who meet the membership requirements of the Perfect Identity Club (Bornstein, 1994 p. 127)



*I was so glad to get to rebuild my identity; it was a fresh start. And I just totally took advantage of it, and had*



*everybody fooled, thinking I was a swell guy, who would make a great brother. I was training to be this white male leader.*

*I never thought about male privilege until I transitioned. Even though I considered myself a feminist, growing up a White male in the South, you just cannot know how much of your life is privileged until you are suddenly knocked down the social totem pole. How can I be an effective attorney at the same time trying to pass as a woman at the same time that it is obvious that biologically I am not female?*

*I was secretly gay or queer. I was cross dressing.*

I had a favourite black sweater with red sleeves and a red band round the neck, which I used to put on my head with the sleeves hanging down the sides, which looked very Egyptian. I didn't have access to wigs, so I used sweaters instead. They say necessity is the author of creativity. I'd wrap a sheet around myself like a halter-top and I'd sit up there with a rod, pretending I was commanding the Egyptian and Roman armies. And I had a little rubber snake that I'd bit myself with. Dale would be out working on his car or something very butch like that, and I'd be up there on my throne dressed as Cleopatra going, 'Oh Antony, Antony, say you love me! The soldiers are at the door!' Dale would notice me, he'd wave

and I'd wave and eventually he'd  
come over. We'd start talking  
and he'd say, 'Let's go up to the  
tree house. (County, 1996 p. 15)

*I was in denial. I would just have these thoughts about  
kissing boys. I was torn. It is not you are socialized. It  
comes from within.*

*I grew up  
best friends with my mother. I grew up in a household of three older brothers. My aunt and  
uncle said, "You raised him as a daughter; shut up and accept it." I was allowed to play with  
Barbies. My mother told my friends "When Michelle was young she always wanted girl  
clothes." I remember dreaming about a white dress, of being a bride, of being a princess.  
Then I knew: "Wow that is where it has all been." Never in my mind was I concerned about  
being gay, because in my mind, I wasn't gay. I was a girl who was interested in guys.*

To combat heteroideology would mean thinking  
outside the system altogether...I do not believe all is  
hopeless...I would like to end this book with hope, a  
hope that was there from the beginning: that by  
defining what we seem to take for granted, we might  
find a way to begin to think in a radically different way,  
at least I hope. This radicality has to do with seeing  
what has always been there: the patterns in narrative  
that have never counted because they did not lead to  
closure or production. It has to do with never

assuming that effect necessarily precede cause, with understanding that time can move tow ways, and that meaning lies not in the lure of knowledge but in the repetitions, accruals, alterations, and nonsense of maybe never getting there. Or in knowing there is no there to get. (Roof, 1996 p 186-187)

*This is a sign of Loca Luna. It is a restaurant club. This is actually a straight place. I want to incorporate my life as I saw it was suppose to be born. And so I go to straight places too and just be the girl next-door. I just wanted to convey that my life outside my identity as a T. A lot of times you see me going into Loca Luna, where people don't know the "T," where they just*

*see me as a girl,  
to one person; I may  
friend. I have gone a  
a girl, not being a*



*though I may only talk  
hang out with just one  
whole night just being  
transgirl.*

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

For millennium biological men have been born women. The position of transsexual, however, did not begin until 1922 when Lili Elbe was castrated at the Hirschfeld Institute in Berlin (Meyerowitz, 2002). Elbe's autobiography, Man into Woman (Hoy, 1932) was published in the United States in 1932. This transsexual narrative spread a hermaphroditic fabula as Elbe positioned herself as a female "personality" residing in an intersexed body (Meyerowitz, 2002). This fabula was interrupted in 1949 when Dr. David Cauldwell, a psychologist, named patients who narrated themselves as being born female in a male body, "trans-sexual." This naming not only changed the hermaphroditic fabula to a sex/gender misalignment fabula, it also constituted transsexual as a narrative act. Harry Benjamin, an endocrinologist, facilitated the development of this fabula as he worked for the right of transsexuals to have medical access to sex reassignment surgery. However, in the strong heteronormative climate of post World War II, he also mandated that transsexuals narrate a heterosexual self – possess physical features that allowed them to pass as women after transition and exhibit heterosexual desire – in order to be diagnosed as transsexual and thus be in position to receive medical assistance in transitioning.

In the 1990's a new transsexual narrative emerged on the margins (Nestle et al., 2002). These narratives began to disrupt the essential self represented in the previous narratives and represent aspects of what Hill (2000) called a both/and and neither/nor body and subject. This

body and subject functioned outside heterology, the productive logic of sex/gender/sexual orientation.

As the signification of transsexual has altered from and between a hermaphroditic fabula, a sex/gender misalignment fabula, an essential self, and a homologic body and subject, it has continued to be a narrated position. Thus, the purpose of this study was to analyze how narrative re/produces the transsexual body and subject. Specifically, I examined the structure of transsexual narratives and the constituents of the transsexual body and subject within these narratives.

I used narrative analysis (Bal, 1999) to examine the re/production of the transsexual body and subject. This theory of narrative analysis allowed me a comprehensive theory by which to analyze all the data set of this study because it considered as narrative both visual and written texts. The participants for this study were two male-to-female transsexuals living in Georgia. For the purpose of this study, a male-to-female transsexual was a biological male desiring to change at least some of her bodily characteristics of sex to female characteristics of sex or who found an incongruence between her “inner” gender and “outer” sex and had a desire to express her gender through alternate significations, such as body modifications, cross dressing, and gender/sex blurred identifications (Lawrence, 2002).

My data sets consisted of two case studies, the narratives of Michelle and Jessie. The case of Michelle consisted of three data sets: an in-depth biographical interview, photo elicitation, and a Yahoo profile. The data set for Jessie consisted of two types of data: a biographical interview and photo elicitation. Member checks were conducted through out this study. Triangulation was achieved through the use of multiple data sources. The interview data was condensed into constructed narratives using a combination of Bal’s (1999) concept of

an event, and Moustaka's (1994) concept of say it only once. I then separated each narrative into introductory, middle and concluding scenes.

Using Bal's theories of narrative analysis, I analyzed the structure of each narrative. Roof (1996) argues that our narratives in the West follow a specific structure which conclude in the heteronormative, the normative of the modern individual – the alignment of sex/gender/sexual orientation, the logic of capitalism, knowledge, identity, and family. This structure -- a beginning which foreshadows the conclusion, middles which allow for homology, or the logic of ambiguity, and a conclusion which ends in the heteronormative -- circumvents the re/production of homologic bodies and subjects, bodies and subjects constituted outside the logic of the heteronormative.

#### The Re/production of a Transsexual Body and Subject

The transsexual body and subject in Michelle's and Jessie's narratives were re/produced within the heteronormative as they were predominately narrated within a heteronarrative structure. Michelle's interview narrative began in the heteronormative of the oedipal family, foreshadowed the ambiguities to come through contradictory identity statements and concluded in the heteronormative as it narrated an agenic self. The conclusion remained in the heteronormative and concluded with Michelle narrating herself as a heterosexual female. The middles, offering short lived moments of ambiguity, all began and ended in the heteronormative. The homologic of the middle was kept on a short reign, never allowed to roam far before it was tied back to the heterologic. Each middle, then offered only an illusion of homology as it represented a hologram of the heteronarrative.

Michelle's photo elicited text predominately followed the heteronarrative structure, although homology was absent from several of the middle scenes. The introduction began in

the heteronormative context of work. The theme of diversity in the fabula functioned to simultaneously foreshadow ambiguity and ground the narrative in the heteronormative. The conclusion of the narrative remained entirely in the heteronormative. Although the middles were more heterologic in their construction than were those of Michelle's interview narrative as they often remained in the heterologic or only represented brief homologic moments, homology was also more complex in its representation. This complexity was noted as homology was seen to function simultaneously with heterology; the border between homology and heterology was spacialized, and the body and subject were explicitly separated. Thus, this narrative, while remaining more continuously in the heteronormative, also re/presented more complex homologic spaces than the interview narrative.

Michelle's Yahoo site was read as having a slightly different structure. The homology of the introduction was represented as a possibility through her position as an object of desire. The conclusion, as those above, remained entirely in the heteronormative. The first middle scene was homologic throughout and the homologic beginning and ending of the second middle scene contained the heteronormative middle. The third scene only presented heterologic events, while the homology of the final two middle scenes is presented structurally not contextually. Thus, the Yahoo photo narrative while aligning to the overall structure of a heteronarrative, offered different homologic strategies: homology as possibility, entire homologic scenes, and homologic structural disruptions.

The body and subject were presented were in alignment with a heteronarrative structure if I read an essential self as heteronormative and a inscribed, discursive, and/or becoming body and subject as homologic. This is seen as it is predominately introduced and concluded as essential and re/presented at various intervals in the middle as homologic. The introduction of



Michelle's interview varies slightly from this structure as she is introduced through absence. An essential self then concludes the introduction, following the heteronarrative structure. The conclusion presented an essential self is narrated throughout, remaining in the heteronormative. Each middle scene presents an essential self in the introduction and conclusion and a homologic body and subject in the middle. A homologic body and subject were quickly pulled back to the heteronormative in each instance. There was only one instance, which occurred in the second scene, wherein the possibility of an identity moving between two homologic positions was presented. In every other representation, the body and subject were pulled immediately into the heterologic of the essential self. Mirroring the pattern of a heteronarrative, identity was allowed little movement; therefore, the homology of a body and subject was read as an illusion, for each time it was narrated as homologic, it was quickly reinscribed as essential.

The body and subject presented in Michelle's photo elicitation narrative had a similar structure. The introduction commenced with an essential self through the narrative of work and concluded with the same through agency. Homologic identities to come were foreshadowed through the writing on the whiteboard, and the conclusion to the narrative presents a modern self throughout. In the sixth through eighth and the tenth scenes, the re/presentation of the body and subject aligned with the heteronarrative structure. It was introduced and concluded as essential and illustrated at various moments as homologic in the middle. This structure is broken in the remaining middle scenes, however. In the second, third and ninth scenes only an essential self is read, and in the fourth and fifth scenes the possibility of bodies and subjects as becoming conclude. Thus, the photo elicited narrative predominately re/produced a modern

heterologic identity within the heteronarrative structure, although it did illustrate in the fourth and fifth scenes the possibility of the re/production of a homologic body and subject.

The body and subject narrated in Michelle's Yahoo profile varied from the anticipated heteronormative articulation. The introduction narrated an essential self throughout and did not foreshadow an alternate body and subject, and the essential self presented in the conclusion is interrupted with a discursive body and subject in the middle. A homologic body and subject are narrated through out the second, third and possibility the fourth scenes, and an essential self is represented through out the fifth scene. The anticipated constitution of an essential body and subject interrupted by a homologic body and subject is narrated in the sixth and seventh scenes, however the homology here is not established through content, but through the disruption of structure. Thus, the body and subject in the Yahoo profile narrative did not adhere as closely as the previous narratives to the heteronarrative structure as they remained essential throughout the introduction, homologic throughout several middle scenes, were constituted as homologic through the disruption of structure, and were presented momentarily as homologic in the conclusion.

Through the heteronarrative structure and the heterologic construction of the body and subject, the re/production of a transsexual body and subject appeared to be constituted primarily within the heteronormative in Michelle's narratives. Although homological moments were narrated, the narrative and the body and subject were quickly reinscribed within the heteronormative. Thus, in Michelle's narratives a homologic transsexual body and subject were erased and heterology maintained.

Jessie's narratives also predominately aligned with the heteronormative structures, re/producing a heterologic transsexual position. This is seen as her interview narrative begins

and concludes in the heteronormative and presents homology in the middle. The conclusion of this narrative, however, was different than any other conclusion analyzed as it presented two brief homological moments before concluding in the heteronormative. Each of the four middle scenes of this narrative expressed homology between a heterologic introduction and conclusion. Each instance of homology was brief, however. In frequency and duration its expression was minimal before it was overcome by heterology and reinscribed back into the heteronormative.

Jessie's photo elicitation narrative closely aligned with a heteronarrative structure. The introduction remained entirely in the heteronormative and foreshadowed the struggles to come not through homology, but through the narrator's guilt. The conclusion, as expected, remained entirely in the heteronormative. Every scene except one began and concluded in the heteronormative and presented homology in the middle. The fifth scene, however, was inverted as it began and concluded in homology and presented a heteronormative middle. It was evident that the homology of this narrative was erased not only in the conclusions, but in the heterology of the following sentence or fabula.

Maintaining the heterology of the structure, the body and subject re/produced in Jessie's narratives were predominately essential. In the interview narrative a becoming, an inscription and a discursive body and subject were read briefly read. Each ambiguous body and subject presented, however, was sandwiched between a re/presentation of an essential self, pulling any homology quickly back to the heteronormative. The photo elicitation also re/produces primarily an essential body and subject. An essential body and subject are narrated throughout most of the scenes and where a homologic body and subject is narrated, it is fleeting, as it is quickly brought back into the heteronormative representation of an essential self.

The body and subject in Jessie's narratives closely aligned with the heteronormative structure. In her interview, an essential self introduced and concluded the narrative, and an ambiguous body and subject was represented in each middle except one. In her photo elicitation narrative, although the introduction concludes with an homologic body and subject, it begins with an essential self and the conclusion represents only an essential self. Each middle scene concludes with an essential self and most re/present a ambiguous body and subject, albeit briefly. Each homologic body and subject is bound by an essential self, containing the re/production of the transsexual body and subject to the heteronormative.

All the narrative presented in this study closely aligned to the heteronarrative structure, presented predominately a modern self, and narrated the body and subject through a heteronarrative structure. In isolation and combination these structures appear to re/produce the transsexual body and subject within the heteronormative and erase homologic possibility.

As a heterologic re/production of transsexual appears to function through narrative structure, a transfiguration of this structure was presented in Chapter 6. This rhizonarrative was constructed by reading texts through texts (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Segments of the text were connected through a thought, theme or nothing at all to segments of other texts. In this manner, the linear heteronarrative structure was disrupted, and the continuing middle of a rhizome, rather than a beginning, middle, and end of a heteronarrative, was represented, constituting a homologic transsexual body and subject.

### Significance and Implications

This study has both methodological and theoretical implications. Methodologically this study is of import because it combined structural and poststructural thought. I used structural methods, the narrative theories of Roof (1996) and Bal (1999), to answer a poststructural

question, how does narrative re/produce a transsexual body and subject. Additionally, the underlying objective of this study, social justice, was structural in nature. This combination is one that is not often encountered in the social sciences, but might be seen in poststructural feminisms. It is a stance that allowed me a postfoundational reading of transsexual without the accompanying signification of hopelessness.

This study also offered a new method of narrative data reduction. Through combining the works of Bal (1999) and Moustakas (1994), I was able to formulate a method for constructing abridged narratives that maintained only those aspects that moved the story forward. This method kept the primary fabula of the narrative; however, interpolating scenes on this data may have accentuated the beginning, middle, end structure of narrative. This method allowed me the opportunity to analyze in depth a greater volume of data. It also allowed me to present the data within the document, thus allowing the reader to come to her own conclusions based on the data.

This study offered several important theoretical contributions. The findings of this study upheld and extended Roof's heteronarrative theory (1996). The narratives herein aligned with Roof's theory as they began and concluded in the heteronormative and offered homology in the middle. It was also found, however, that the homology in the middle is erased prior to the conclusion as it is quickly sutured to the heterologic as each middle follows the structure of the whole narrative, beginning and concluding in the heteronormative. The possibility of homology as illusion is not mentioned by Roof nor does she note that each middle is a hologram of the whole.

It is also theoretically significant, as it has not been previously documented in the literature to my knowledge, the re/presentation of the body and subject predominately align

with the heteronarrative structure. The body and subject are primarily essential in the introduction and conclusion, foreshadow struggles to come through a homologic re/presentation in the introduction, and are homologic at various intervals in the middle. Any homologic construction of the body and subject is momentary as they are abruptly re/presented as essential. Although not necessarily constituting a one-to-one correspondence between heterologic structural moments and heterologic body and subject representations and homologic structural moments and homologic representations of the body and subject, the overall structure of the representation of the body and subject aligned with the heteronarrative structure.

This study both upheld and disrupted the literature on the constituents of the body and subject. While re/presented as inscribed (Foucault, 1984, 1990), discursive (Butler, 1993, 1997, 1999), and becoming (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), the homologic body and subject were alternately constituted at different moments in the narratives. In other words, the homologic body and subject were not solely represented as inscribed *or* discursive *or* becoming, but were inscribed *and* discursive *and* becoming. In Hill's (2002) language the body and subject were both/and not neither/nor. And finally, this study found that although a poststructural body and subject was represented in transsexual narratives as Hill (2000, 2002) suggested, the homologic body and subject is erased through heteronarrative structure.

But in the daily lives of transwomen, what does this study have to offer? Of what significance is insight into the heterologic construction of the position of transwomen in light of the "one person per month [that] has died due to transgender-based hate or prejudice" over the last decade (Smith, 2000 ) and the many gay and lesbian organizations that continue to disregard the plight of transgendered people, fearing that any trans association would

negatively impact their own fight for justice? I suggest that this study offers hope. The first step toward constructing a just and equitable world for transgendered people is becoming aware of our practices that construct transwomen as the outside of heteronormative and erase the possibility of homologous bodies and subjects. Becoming conscious of how we construct ab/normal gives us the tools to perform differently. It allows us to begin to story ourselves and others in ways that promotes homologous possibilities.

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