LITERARY GAME THEORY AND MONSTROUS FEMININITY

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by

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# DEDICATION

For my dad, who taught me that "ain't ain't a word."

# ABSTRACT

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Throughout time, powerful women have been perceived as threats to systems of masculine control. These women have been deemed UnWomen—*other* than what Woman should be—and are read, throughout literature, as the archetypal, monstrous *femme fatale*. This UnWoman embodies Kristeva's abject and Freud's uncanny, being perceived by her culture as generally monstrous. When this type of woman is read from the Game Theory perspective, the monstrous woman—disturbing to masculine power structure and veiled in the uncanny—often fulfills the role of game-master. Within the theoretical structure of the godgame, specifically, the game-maker (and primary game-master) are similarly veiled within a type of "undecidability." When the reader ventures to explore beyond the archetypal label of *femme fatale*, the characters who have often been designated to this flat role prove to possess more controlling power than is typically considered.

This thesis employs a combination of feminist, queer, and game theoretical readings to explore five of these women: Morgan la Faye and the Lady of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the Eve of *Paradise Lost*, and *Westworld*'s Dolores and Maeve. Using this type of theoretical approach, each of these women prove to possess significant, though often veiled, controlling power over their respective gamespaces, making them into, not mere *femme fatales*, but rather autonomous and complex game-masters who work to dismantle and control the game's male-dominated power structure.

KEY WORDS: Game theory, Feminist theory, Feminine monstrosity, Transhistorical, *UnWoman*, Abject, Monstrous, Uncanny, *Unheimliche*, Panopticon, Paradise Lost, Eve, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Westworld.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**CHAPTER I**

**Introduction**

This thesis explores the ways in which the powerful roles of game-maker and

game-master within literature are transformed when assumed by women. In taking on

these governing roles, feminine figures across genres are viewed as legitimate threats to

masculine controlling power as they are able to rise out of their positions as pawns of the

godgames in which they have been entrapped and achieve controlling power through the

role of game-master. When these women gain authority over the gamespaces which

previously oppressed them, they gain the ability to create labyrinths of doubt and

perplexity which, purposely or not, emasculate the men who would otherwise hold this

traditionally "masculine" power of game manipulation. In threatening the power of

masculinity, these feminine figures endanger not only the positions of individual men, but

the entirety of the patriarchal power structure as well. In taking on the role of game-

master and enacting god-like controlling power over male characters, the woman is no

longer strictly "woman." In stepping outside of the realm of "what women should be,"

she has moved into the realm of Kristeva's abject and Freud's uncanny, or, to combine

the two, the monstrous UnWoman (Grant 65).

Kate Salen and Eric Zimmerman, in their book *Rules of Play: Game Design

Fundamentals*, consolidate multiple game theorists' definitions of "game," producing the

following: "A *game* is a system in which players engage in an artificial conflict, defined

by rules, that results in a quantifiable outcome" (7.11). These games are created by what

Salen and Zimmerman refer to as "game designers," but that will be referred to here as

"game-makers." These game-makers create "a game, to be encountered by a player, from

which meaningful play emerges" (7.11). While these authors' conception of a game designer refers primarily to the creator "of games, from computer and video games to parlor games and sports," when applied to literature, game-masters are identified not only as the author (or maker) of the text, but as the characters themselves (Salen & Zimmerman 7.11).[1] While the game-maker crafts the game, the game-master, as the name suggests, is the entity in current possession of controlling power. Though the game-maker and -master are sometimes one in the same, this is not the case when manipulative hierarchies are introduced into a text. These hierarchies are an essential aspect of what Tison Pugh names the "godgame." Pugh writes:

> A godgame occurs in literature when one or more characters creates an illusion, a mazelike sequence of false accounts, that entraps another character. The entrapped character finds himself entangled in the threads of (from his point of view) an incomprehensible strategy plotted by another character who (thus) takes on the roles both of a game-maker, since he invents rules for the other character to follow, and of a god as well. (Pugh 526-27)

It is this god-like power of entrapment over male game players that makes the female dangerous. Though she is not necessarily a villain, the female is made monstrous by her uncanny ability to manipulate a game situation beyond the detection of other—specifically male—game players (Pugh 527).

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[1] While this thesis will explore the game-masters within literature, there are certainly legitimate metaphysical readings of these texts which pay special attention to the role of the author as game-maker and -master. This is especially true in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

Freud's *Das Unheimlich* attempts to define this term that undoubtedly "evokes fear and dread," but is too complex to be "used in a clearly definable sense" (123). *Das Unheimlich*, or "the uncanny," serves as the foundational concept of the term "monstrosity" as it will be used in this context. Freud turns to other languages' definitions of *unheimlich* in order to gain a fuller understanding of "this particular species of the frightening" (125). The base word, "*heimlich*," he defines as "homely" only to later discover that its antonym "*unheimlich*" is not necessarily an antonym at all (Freud 132). Both terms can refer to "what is concealed and kept hidden," the difference being in the degree of comfort produced by that which is concealed (132). To differentiate, Freud turns to Friedrich Schelling's understanding of *unheimlich*: "Uncanny is what one calls everything that was meant to remain secret and hidden and has come into the open" (qtd. in Freud 132). It is because this veiled quality that the game-master can be presented as both comforting and frightening that Schelling's definition of the uncanny is crucial to consider alongside the presence of female game-masters. The uncanny also plays on the individual's sense of security. Freud begins *Das Unheimlich* by describing the uncanny as that which "evokes fear and dread," and Elisabeth Bronfen recognizes this fear and dread as "anxieties about fragmentation [and] the disruption or destruction of any narcissistically informed sense of personal stability, bodily integrity, immortal individuality" (Freud 123, Bronfen 113). If the game-master of a godgame is inherently uncanny in her indiscernibility in game players' perceptions, the eventual revelation of her power initiates the narcissistic anxieties that Bronfen discusses. The uncanny game-master is therefore a threat to both the societal structure and the individual's personal identity.

When looking broadly at what makes a monster, one is often pointed in the direction of Julia Kristeva's abject. Freud writes that *unheimlich* is often simultaneously *heimlich*, and therefore what is uncanny is often both familiar and unfamiliar (132). In order to be classified as *unheimlich*, a thing often must also, by definition, be *heimlich*. The necessary quality of the uncanny as existing concurrently within seemingly opposing categories of experience points to Kristeva's concept of abjection. Similar to the uncanny, the abject is difficult to ascribe a concrete definition to as it exists outside of binaries and is often defined by what it is *not*. Kristeva writes that the "abject has only one quality of the object–that of being opposed to *I*," and in searching for any further meaning it draws one "toward the place where meaning collapses" (1-2). The abject, in its separation from "I", becomes a violent and disgusting Other. At the same time, because the abject breaks the boundaries of binary systems, the line between "I" and "Other" becomes blurred. Both culture and literature set the laws and boundaries that ought not be broken, and in the dissipation of culturally accepted boundaries and imposition of liminality, the abject exists within the ambiguous. Elizabeth Grosz essentially defines the "freak" as an embodiment of the abject, writing in *Intolerable Ambiguity: Freaks as/at the Limit*:

> [T]he freak is an *ambiguous* being whose existence imperils categories and oppositions dominant in social life. Freaks are those human beings who exist outside and in defiance of the structure of binary oppositions that govern our basic concepts and modes of self-definition… They imperil the very definitions we rely on to classify humans, identities, and sexes—our most fundamental categories of self-definition and boundaries dividing self from otherness. (Grosz 57)

Grosz's freak is a human who exists within the realm of monstrosities and occupies "the impossible middle ground between oppositions" (57). The clear overlap of these three concepts (Freud's uncanny, Kristeva's abject, and Grosz's freak) reflects the prevailing societal attempt to understand the ambiguous other.[2] As society consistently attempts to solidify what constitutes as the monstrous, the fear that ambiguity produces within humanity becomes the defining factor of monstrosity. As Kristeva's abject, Freud's uncanny, and Grosz's freak attempt to pinpoint the characteristics which create discomfort, their definitions blur into one and the monster's cornerstone becomes clear: the threat of the unfamiliar to societal systems of order.

While the horror generated by "female monsters [is] usually related to either their reproductive functions or their maternal role," this concept is complicated when situated within a godgame (Grafius 38). When the female takes on a masculine role, thereby personifying the monstrous, abject *unheimlich*, she is no longer viewed as simply "female," and she begins to move, instead, toward the realm of the UnWoman.[3] In

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[2] As this thesis deals specifically with the freakish female, Grosz's statement that the freak imperils "the very definitions we rely on to classify humans, identities, and sexes" will become very important, especially in its relation to the concept of the UnWoman as discussed in the final chapter.

[3] In her *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, Julia Kristeva writes, "The capable woman, the intellectual, does not escape being grotesque either … she is fated to prove the absurdity of reason (a masculine element) when it is sheltered in a body that is feminine to boot" (169). If the masculine woman is made grotesque by stepping outside of the realm of what a woman "should be," a clear line can be drawn between Butler's concepts of gender-bending and abjection (Grant). Within the realm of dualistic thought, libido is considered masculine, making femininity's defining trait "the denial of that libido, the 'dissimulation of a fundamental masculinity'" (*Gender Trouble* 68). Femininity, therefore, is simply the *act* of mimicking what is considered the opposite of the masculine. When the woman instead takes on masculine roles, she becomes the grotesque/monstrous gender-bender. It is only when gender is understood as performative that the masculine woman is not perceived as an embodiment of monstrosity (*Gender Trouble* 144).

assuming the role of game-master, the female is removed from her connection with

"reproductive functions [and] maternal roles" and instead comes to be associated with the

danger of abstruse abjection (38). While the female's position of power in and of itself

grants her a capacity for danger, the inability of the surrounding society to categorize her

as either a feminine woman or a masculine man exponentializes her threat to androcentric

power systems. In her book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*,

Judith Butler discusses the concept of "intelligible genders" and this frailty of a socially

constructed gender identity (xxiii). She writes that when individuals' expressions of

sexuality coincide with cultural conceptions of binary gender, they are accepted as

people, while those "who fail to conform to the gendered norms of cultural intelligibility

by which persons are defined" are stripped of assured identity (Butler 23). Consequently,

as a female takes on the role of what is traditionally considered to be masculine, both

personal and cultural perceptions of identity begin to deteriorate, as does the gender

binary itself. Citing Michel Foucault, Butler also writes, "The binary regulation of

sexuality suppresses the subversive multiplicity of sexuality that disrupts heterosexual,

reproductive, and mediojuridical hegemonies" (26). In the assumption of masculine

controlling power through her role as gamemaster, the female disrupts the entirety of

traditionally expected gender expression by revealing the "multiplicity of sexuality" that

cannot be controlled by culturally imposed gender categories. In her inability to be

categorized, the masculine female comes to epitomize the abject, and in her

personification of the ambiguity she is made monstrous.

This thesis' second chapter explores the multi-layered godgame of *Sir Gawain*

*and the Green Knight*. While the poem's title suggests that the knight will be facing the

power of the Green Knight, a reading of this text through a lens of game theory reveals the orchestrator of events to be the goddess Morgan la Faye. The Green Knight possesses no real power but is rather, unbeknownst to him, under the control of the poem's game-maker. Despite her centrality to the storyline, Morgan remains on the periphery of the text, controlling events from outside of the players' perception. Morgan's ability to manipulate Gawain's experience grants her the roles of both game-master and omnipotent god, and she therefore possesses a far greater capacity for danger than the Green Knight to whom she grants very limited power. While Morgan constructs the gamespace and serves as the game-master of the *outermost* game of the text, there is a game-master who works more intimately with the victims of Morgan's godgame. The Lady, while often written off by critics as nothing but an archetypal sexual temptation, serves as game-master of the bedroom—the centermost game of the text. The Lady has her own clearly marked gamespace over which she has dominion. While Morgan is the game-maker and primary game-master, she delegates power to the Lady to serve as a game-master of a space that ultimately brings about the downfall of the Arthurian court.

Although the Lady is far from a sexual archetype, she certainly plays the part of the archetype well—leading Gawain to believe that her intentions do not extend beyond sexual desire. In reality, the Lady only "let lyk as hym loued mych" (pretends to love him) in order to achieve her true goal of *fonde* (*SGGK* lines 1280-89).[4] The Bedroom

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[4] *fŏnden*, *-ien (v.) Also **vond(i)en**, **fanden**, **faunden**. Ppl. **i-)fŏnded**, **fonde**, **fonte**.* 1. (a) To put (a person, his strength, skill, etc.) to a test or trial; to try the worth of; also, to prove (a person) worthy by trial; (b) to make trial (of a person's or animal's strength); (c) to put (God) on trial; to tempt (God); to try the patience (of God). 2. To subject (a person) to trial by tempting him with sin; to tempt to evil;-- (a) with obj.; (b) with to phrase; (c) absol.
To subject (a person) to trial by tempting him with sin; to tempt to evil;-- (a) with obj.; (b) with to phrase; (c) absol.

Game is situated at the nucleus of the text, therefore acting as the center of the labyrinth

Morgan is continually fashioning. Just as Ovid's Minotaur dwells in the center of the

labyrinth, the Lady waits within the private, feminine spaces of Hautdesert, prepared to

appeal to Gawain's weaknesses within a gamespace which he cannot easily escape. When

Gawain enters into Hautdesert, he unknowingly enters into a "world of women," and is

consequently transplanted from his status as Marian knight to that of emasculated guest

(Fisher 77). Not only are the Lady's true intentions hidden from the player in her

gamespace, but the fulfillment of her purpose as a game-master demands the submission

of the knight who should be the epitome of Marian masculinity. The Lady therefore

matches Morgan la Faye in the monstrous feminine. Where Morgan exists in the

monstrous feminine as *vetula*[5], the Lady exists as *janua diaboli*[6]. Although Morgan is the

grand orchestrator of events within the narrative, the Lady uses the cultural conceptions

of the role of the female as a weapon in the downfall of both Gawain and the entirety of

the Arthurian court—attacking both the individual's masculinity and that of the grander

social structure.

As is proven in the third chapter, the idea of a woman's sexuality as "the greatest

of all obstacles in the way of salvation" is not one specific to the Lady of *SGGK* or to the

literature of the Middle Ages, but one that finds its genesis in creation mythology (Power

35). When considering the concept of a godgame alongside monstrous femininity, it is

practical to look at Milton's account of the original godgame: the Garden of Eden. The

heterotopia of the Garden of Eden in both biblical creation mythology and Milton's

[5] See Sarah Miller, page 3.
[6] See Eileen Power, page 16.

account of the Fall of Man in *Paradise Lost* is disrupted by the disobedience of the first

woman, Eve.[7] It is traditionally understood that Eve's departure from her husband leaves

her vulnerable to the deception of Satan and the temptations of sin to which her female

status makes her prone. This concept comes not from Milton, but from Genesis, and is

heavily dependent on the reading of the first woman as being created as a "help meet" for

Adam. However, Pamela Norris writes, in her book *Eve: A Biography*, that the true

meaning of this crucial passage may very well have gotten lost in translation. This

Hebrew phrase *'ēzer kᵉnegdô*, Norris says, would better be translated as "'a companion

corresponding to' Adam, in other words a being of the same status, and the rib story

confirms that Eve is part of Adam and therefore cannot be inferior to him" (19-20). If the

Eve of Milton is naturally subject to the commands of her husband due to an innate

inferior status, then her manipulation of Adam in order to achieve true autonomy outside

of the boundaries of the Garden would be wholly unnatural and villainous. However,

with Norris' alternate translation in mind, Eve is better defined as a game-master of Eden,

manipulating her appointed husband when necessary in order to achieve independence.

Both Adam's contentment in Eden and lack of desire for freedom present as hindrances

to Eve's achievement of true personhood and "intellectual food," and his unrequited

devotion to his wife grants Eve the opportunity to take on the masculine position of

control within the relationship (Milton IX.768). If Eve is understood as Adam's equal, a

reading of *Paradise Lost* through a Literary Game Theory perspective makes Eve not the

*femme fatale* who introduces sin and death into the world, but rather a game-master

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[7] This chapter will explore the aspects of Michel Foucault's heterotopia, paying special attention to the panoptic structure originally discussed by Jeremy Bentham in relation to a literal carceral space.

relying on reason in the pursuit of the individuality her creation as *'ēzer kᵉnegdô*

necessitates.

It is curiosity and desire for the unknown that lead Eve to pluck the fruit from the

tree and unknowingly eat death (Milton IX.792). Her longing for independence and

agency draws her to Satan's promises of god-like knowledge of good and evil. It is

ultimately the serpent's argument for the virtue of knowledge which serves as no

"offence, that man should thus attain to know" the ways of the divine, not simple fawning

over her beauty, that convinces Eve to eat of the tree (Milton IX.725-28). The desire for

"intellectual food" that Eve displays in her decision to eat the fruit is also seen in her

treatment of Adam (Milton IX.768). Although she states that Adam is her "author, and

disposer," Eve's actions prove an obstinate independence reflected in her awe-filled

speeches toward her appointed husband (Milton IV.635). Uncertainty fills every aspect of

Eve's experience in *Paradise Lost*. She never accepts her subordinate status, and this

uncertainty in her Creator and her husband lead her to a desire for an independence that

can only be fulfilled by the Tree of Knowledge. After the Fall, Eve's life is filled with a

different type of uncertainty. Jensch's undecidability is present here in the conflict

between informed autonomy and the inevitable death that it demands.

In addition to its inherent "uncanniness," God is very literally the maker of the

godgame while his human creations exist as unwilling players. With this understanding

of Milton's Eden as a godgame, Eve's role gains even more prominence in *Paradise Lost*.

While God is the game-maker and primary game-master of the world he has created, Eve

becomes her own game-master within the Garden. Just as the Lady of *SGGK* allows

Bertilak to believe he possesses true controlling power over the games of Hautdesert, Eve

exercises a type of "passive-aggressive control of Adam," allowing him to believe that he is able to govern her, thereby "feeding his false sense of superiority" (Smith 390). Although Eve is described as gentle, modest, reluctant, and subject to Adam's will, she is presented as a series of sexual objects: not a woman, but a "slender waist" and a head of "[d]ishevell'd… wanton" hair, protected under Adam's "shoulders broad" (Milton IV.303-11). This woman introduces sexual sin into the world, for her description is wholly sexual despite her position in the prelapsarian world. Not only is this woman threatening because of her unique, innate sexuality, but because of her refusal to submit to Adam's weak attempts at dominance. Where Eve suggests that the two of them "divide [their] labours" in the garden—impeding Adam's ability to directly control his wife—Adam responds, stating that her usefulness is found in supporting him and that she need remain by him for protection (Milton IX.214, 243, 269). However, Adam does a poor job of standing his ground against Eve's desire to roam, and it is in her solitude that she meets with Satan and discovers the ability of "the tree / Of prohibition, root of all our woe," to provide her with god-like knowledge (Milton IX.644-45). The disparity between Eve's words and actions are no accident, but rather a product of calculated game-manipulation. Eve is not the ignorant submissive wife of tradition, but a gamemaster in her own right. While Adam is described as innately sinless, the combination of Milton's descriptions of Eve's natural vanity, seductive quality, and refusal to blindly acquiesce to the commands of masculine authority grant her the capacity to assume a manipulative position over her husband (Norris 27).

Scripture repeatedly warns against the manipulative power of female sexuality

after the fall.[8] Norris writes that, in biblical times, "Female subordination was regarded as

essential to the status quo and men were repeatedly warned against the dangers of being

sexually manipulated by women," and both the creation stories of the Hebrew bible and

the writings of Milton reflect the danger of feminine sexuality (20). The only female

figures present in *Paradise Lost* are Eve and Scylla, the personified Sin. Scylla, the

daughter of Satan and mother of Death, is "allegorized as a grotesque female who

unlocks the gate to let Satan loose upon the world" (Smith 388). While Scylla releases

Satan out of Hell and into Eden, Eve's eating of the fruit provides Satan the opportunity

for dominion on earth, proving her to be equally as dangerous of a figure as Sin. Milton's

Adam, though the supposed leader of Eden loses all control when confronted "with

female charm" (IX.999). Despite the negative connotation of the term "manipulation"

and this more general negative view of the "fallible Eve" onto whom "sole responsibility

for the catastrophic Fall" is placed, there is no reason to read Eve's authority over her

husband as inherently wrong or villainous (Norris 40). In fact, Norris points out a

significant failure in accurate translation in the biblical account of Eve's creation.

Although Eve is presented in Genesis as "some kind of junior assistant to Adam" through

her title as "help meet" to man, Norris writes,

> In any event, a better translation of the Hebrew phrase, *'ēzer kᵉnegdô*,
>
> would be 'a companion corresponding to' Adam, in other words a being of

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[8] See the Book of Proverbs, Chapters 7 and 31.

Because it is true that the Bible informs Milton's *Paradise Lost* and vice versa, these two texts cannot be reasonably separated when exploring the Eve of tradition. This thesis will, therefore, consider both the tradition and the epic versions of this character while attempting to determine a commonality that justifies the two.

the same status, and the rib story confirms that Eve is part of Adam and

therefore cannot be inferior to him. What the narrator seems to have been

suggesting was the symbiotic relationship between man and woman which

would justify a man leaving his parents and siblings in order to cleave to

someone outside the immediate family circle (Gen. 2:24). (Norris 19-20)

Despite the fact that patriarchal cultures throughout history have pushed women's

weakness of mind and simultaneous sexual danger, therefore necessitating that she take a

subordinate position to man so "that she may be directed," the ease of Milton's first

woman in assuming a position of control suggests that this cultural conception of

women's inferiority truly holds no grounds outside of that of institutionalized masculine

control (Thackeray 373). Even if this alternative translation is not accepted, both Milton's

Eve and the Eve of Genesis inarguably possess a substantial degree of power. If it is

argued that it is Eve's sin that brings on the Fall of Man, then it *must* be admitted that she

possesses a significant capacity for power. After all, if Eve was largely insignificant and

existed only for Adam's fulfillment, it would not logically follow that her sin would

affect the whole of humanity. Conversely, if one argues that it is Adam's eating of the

fruit that condemns humanity, then one must also admit Eve's success in enticing him,

thereby proving her influence.

This thesis' fourth chapter, although it requires large leaps in both time and in the

general conception of what the term "literature" contains, compares the artifice in

Milton's *Paradise Lost* to that of the television series *Westworld*, as it similarly reflects

Freud's uncanny in artifice and presents characters who similarly challenge the imposed

binary opposition. Like Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the characters of *Westworld* are living in

a created space. In this world however, the amusement park visitors are faced with the issue of determining artifice from reality in deciphering who is human and who is something *other*. The mechanical hosts of this created world can rarely be differentiated from their human guests, and this—Jentsch's "undecidability"—forces both the guests and the viewers to question the very nature of humanity. The entirety of this created world is dependent on the frailty of the understanding of what is human, as it is this combination of fascination and fear that creates the appeal, and the further that guests delve into this created space, the more complicated conceptions of humanity become. Dr. Ford, the game-maker of this godgame, creates "an Eden of sorts" in his conception of Westworld Park, and the rebellion of his creation comes after "his greatest achievement partakes of the fruit of the tree in the form of a software update" (Beckner 50). At the center of his created world lies a labyrinth which the host Dolores ventures into as a reflection of her own "introspective journey" of consciousness and humanity (Favard).[9] At the same time, the second central female host, Maeve, embarks on her own labyrinthine journey—this one a physical journey—from the very innermost Control Room of the park to the train which is to grant her the freedom she desires. These women set out to solve their own mazes, one mental and one physical, ending at the same result: human consciousness.

In order for the female gameplayers of *Westworld* to achieve human consciousness, they must become other than what they were created to be. In her "And

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[9] I use "labyrinth" here as opposed to "maze," because the maze at the center of Westworld has a center. Once the center of the labyrinth is reached, the players who venture into the labyrinth are not free—they still have to find their way out. However, throughout the first season of *Westworld*, the gameplayers use the word "maze to refer to the secrets of the park, and, for this reason, the terms will be used largely interchangeably.

Still, The Lesbian Threat," Ali Grant writes about "heterosexuality as regulatory" and "the politically constructed category of Woman" (64). Because Western ideology is distinctively dualistic in thought, "humans are categorized as either female or male; these two categories, and bodies, must be sexually attracted to each other, clearly different from each other, and display certain behaviours and desires" (Grant 64). When this is not the case—when a person transgresses the heteronormative regime—they become unnatural. Specifically, women who deviate from the "womanly" traits which they are assigned "are identified as *unfeminine, loud, brash, unwomanly, angry, unladylike, unsatisfied, frigid, manhaters,* and *dykes*—all beyond what women should be" (Grant 65). In short, Grant writes that those women who transgress "become UnWoman" (65). The statuses of both "lesbian" and "UnWoman" are assigned to all women who become something other than what the heteronormative power structure deems "women should be" (Grant 65). Therefore, in exploring the journeys of Dolores and Maeve through a world that is purposely constructed to control them, these labels easily come to serve as descriptors for these masculine women as they transgress the rules that were created to suppress them.

Though the primary focus of this chapter will be on the female hosts' individual rises to consciousness through control of the panoptic machine, male characters will be discussed as well. Bernard's character is particularly interesting as he fools his coworkers, friends, and even the viewer into believing that he is human when, in fact, he is a host created by the park's game-maker: Dr. Ford. Bernard's character comes to serve as proof of the hosts' humanity, even before consciousness has been achieved. A portion of this chapter is also granted to William—otherwise known as the Man in Black—as he

comes to serve as the representation for male power in the first season. As majority

shareholder of the park, William's position in the park hierarchy leads him on a journey

to the center of the maze, despite consistently being told that the "maze wasn't made for"

him (*Westworld* S01 E02). Because he is a guest and not a host, the introspective journey

that the maze offers Dolores and Maeve is not available to William. However, William is

ever-present throughout the first season, serving as a representation of both male

controlling power and the gamespace's broader androcentric power structure. The power

that he slowly loses over the course of the first season is reflective of a similar loss of

male control over the panoptic machine as Dolores and Maeve take on this position of

masculine control.

In exploring feminine power in two historically significant pieces of literature as

well as a modern television show, it is made clear that the concept of the female game-

master—though not defined by these terms—has remained popular across literature and

is presented to the audience as a position defined by fear and, oftentimes, villainy.

Kristeva writes in *Women's Time* that literature reveals things that cannot otherwise be

revealed. Literature exposes "the unsaid, the uncanny" by making it "a game, a space of

fantasy and pleasure, out of the abstract and frustrating order of social signs" (Kristeva

207). The literary texts discussed here do just this; they exist as created gamespaces

outside of the strict binaries of the social order, thereby presenting opportunities for

ambiguous figures—here, the feminine game-masters—to govern in capacities that

disturb the reader. These texts reflect the cultures from which they come but are

simultaneously exempt from the restraints of social laws and norms. It is important to

recognize that the pieces being investigated here span hundreds of years and challenge

the idea of what "literature" includes. This is purposeful, as this wide array of literature emphasizes that this theme of monstrous, controlling women is not exclusive to one kind of text, but is rather an idea that appears to transcend time, cultural spaces, and media form. While the *femme fatale* is far from a newly discovered concept, this thesis places a focus not simply on the general danger of a female character, but rather specifically on the feminine character's position of control within a godgame, and the subsequent emasculation of male figures and systems. The direct connection between the powerful female and the emasculated man is a byproduct of long-standing societal dependence on binary opposition. The Male/Female binary has been so heavily associated throughout time with Dominant/Submissive and Apollonian/Dionysian that these concepts come to be used interchangeably in literature. It is therefore the female's *perceived* usurping of the masculine power position, through her role as game-master, that makes her monstrous, as opposed to any true presence of villainy. It is specifically the male loss of power within a female gamemaster's labyrinth that portrays her as a monstrous figure within the text.

**CHAPTER II**

**The Monstrous Female Game-Masters of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight***

Critics have long considered the women of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* to be of significantly lesser importance than the male figures of the text, and the scarcity of literature available on the authority of Morgan la Faye and the Lady reflects an androcentric reading which completely discounts the true centrality of these women to the text. Derek Brewer writes that, "whatever their significance," Morgan la Faye and Queen Guenevere are of "marginal" importance within the poem because the storyline follows Sir Gawain (570). While Guenevere is an entirely silent figure in the text, the importance of Morgan la Faye to the narrative cannot be overstated. Although it is reasonable to follow Sir Gawain's course throughout the narrative, as it is after this knight that the poem is titled, it is necessary to recognize that this perspective is severely limited by the power of women, one of whom Brewer coins "marginal." This kind of reading devalues the function of Morgan la Faye within the text, as if she were not the generator of "the plot of Gawain's adventure" and of the romance as a whole, while disregarding the Lady's presence and significance altogether (Fisher 72). When the events of the narrative are viewed through the lens of Game Theory, it becomes clear that the activities in which Sir Gawain partakes—both before and after his departure from Arthur's court—are *gomen*[10], and that it is indeed these "marginal" women who control the inlying gamespaces at Hautdesert. From this point of view, the reader is able to avoid the limited and ignorant perspective that Sir Gawain cannot escape and therefore

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[10] ***gomen** (n.) Noun tense of the verb "**gāmen**"*: (a) To rejoice, be merry; joke, jest, play; talk pleasantly; (b) impers.; (c) to give pleasure to (sb.), amuse (sb., oneself); (d) to have sexual intercourse with (sb.).

recognize the labyrinths that these two women are weaving from their private positions in the text. Through the possession and enactment of manipulative controlling power over the events at Hautsdesert, these women take control of a position societally reserved for men. The positions of authority that these women take grant them a status of masculinity which they, in turn, strip from the men of the text. In these women's existence as simultaneously female and masculine, they become impossible to categorize, therefore existing within the liminality between the genders. The abject non-personhood[11] these women come to embody through their female masculinity poses a threat to the dualistic gender power hierarchy of the Medieval world outside of the walls of Hautdesert. As the broader society is unable to categorize and control them, these women become monstrous in their inaccessibility.

Both the discounting of the Lady's authority within the boundaries of the Bedroom Game and the undervaluing of Morgan la Faye's role as a controlling power of the games that comprise the entirety of *SGGK* inhibit the reader from achieving a complete understanding of the power dynamics within the poem.[12] Morgan la Faye's role is only "marginal" in a very physical sense. Morgan remains in the periphery of the text for much of the narrative, avoiding the interest of the first-time reader and the perception of her victim, all the while constructing the godgame that initiates the downfall of Sir

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[11] Emile Benveniste writes in *Problems in General Linguistics* that personhood derives through language. In uttering "I," the speaker is a subject in that moment as opposed to an object. The objective "third person" (*he*, *she*, *they*) of the conversation "is indeed literally a 'non-person'" (Benveniste 221).

[12] Steven J. Brams discusses "Intrapsychic Games" in relation to *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* in his "Game Theory and Literature," focusing on the two men named in the title and completely bypassing the women who this chapter will prove to hold the true controlling power (48-50).

Gawain. While Morgan orchestrates the overarching game at Hautdesert, the Lady plays a similarly powerful role that extends beyond the archetypal function of the lady as a mere temptress and instead grants her the power to defeat the Arthurian court. The authority that these women possess within the poem stands in stark opposition to the norms of the patriarchal society of the Middle Ages. Through their enacting of controlling power, these two women disturb the comfortable gender roles of the culture in which they live, come to embody the taboo of powerful (and, and therefore, societally masculine) femininity, and consequently present themselves as monstrous figures within the text.

The Medieval conception of the role of "the lady of courtly love" is complicated as she serves as "the source of all romance and the object of all worship" while simultaneously representing the supreme obstacle between the knight and "the way of salvation" (Power 16, 35). The lady's function as a test of the knight's chivalry makes her an essential aspect of the testing of the knight, and therefore of the elevation of the masculine pole of the Medieval gender binary. Despite this, her very presence poses a threat to the knight's reputation and, more importantly, his sanctification. This role strips the lady of her subjectivity and transforms her into a mere object. In writing on the power of linguistics to ascribe personhood, Emile Benveniste writes that "'Person' belongs only to *I/you* and is lacking in *he*" (217). Just as Benveniste's "third person" (represented by *he*) is a "non-person," the lady here is spoken of (as opposed to spoken *to*) as an objectified other, identified "by an indicator of ostension concomitant with the instance of discourse containing the *indicator* of person," but never a real person (219, italics added). This archetypal lady's humanity is therefore diminished to the same non-

personhood of Benveniste's third person *they*. Conversely**,** the Lady of *SGGK*, although a temptress, becomes the figure of a real person through her fulfillment of the role of game-master over the Bedroom Game central to the poem, and this possession of power places her within the liminal space between the feminine and masculine of the traditional dualistic structure.[13] This inability to firmly categorize her gender performance constitutes "strange or unnatural… conduct or disposition" for a female, and especially a lady, of the Middle Ages ("Monstrous"). While she is an undeniably feminine and sexualized figure, she is simultaneously a legitimate masculine controlling power within the castle and therefore a very genuine threat to societal conceptions of the roles of men and women. The masculine controlling power that the Lady possesses therefore removes her from the objective *they* status and into that of the subjective *I*. The Lady's assumption of masculine agency as game-master works to break down the structure of the feminine/masculine binary, as she cannot be securely categorized by it.

Judith Butler, in her book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, writes about the issue of this type of liminality in a discussion of her concept of "intelligible genders." In order to be accepted by societal standards, the female's actions must align with what is traditionally understood as feminine while the male must act in accordance with the masculine. When a person's expression of sexuality lines up with cultural conceptions of the gender binary, they are accepted as people, while those "who fail to conform to the gendered norms of cultural intelligibility by which persons are defined" are stripped of assured identity (Butler 23).  When a female takes on the role of what is traditionally masculine, the gender binary itself begins to deteriorate. Jacques

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[13] Within this liminality, the Lady exists in the abject, the uncanny, and the monstrous.

Derrida writes that in every binary, "[o]ne of the two terms governs the other (axiologically, logically, etc.), or one has the upper hand," and within the gender binary of the Middle Ages, it is the masculine takes the governing position ("Interview" 43). When Literary Game Theory is applied to the text, the controlling roles that Morgan la Faye and the Lady assume invert the positions of the governing and the governed and begin to corrode the standards of these signifiers altogether. As both Morgan la Faye and the Lady disrupt the gender binary by taking on traditionally masculine roles of authority and control within the text, they move into a space of unnamed, liminal abjection in which their continual control over the men of the text transforms their femininity into monstrosity.

   It is the combination of Morgan la Faye's ability to hide amongst the margins of the storyline while still maintaining control over the "awenture of Arthures wonderes" that sets her apart from the "marginality" of the voiceless Guenevere and the archetypal lady of courtly love (*SGGK* line 29). Robert Rawdon Wilson writes that,

> A godgame occurs in literature when one or more characters creates an illusion, a mazelike sequence of false accounts, that entraps another character. The entrapped character finds himself entangled in the threads of (from his point of view) an incomprehensible strategy plotted by another character who (thus) takes on the roles both of a game-master, since he invents rules for the other character to follow, and of a god as well. (Wilson 6-7)

Morgan la Faye's ability to actively play the part of game manipulator while simultaneously remaining on the periphery of the text places her beyond Gawain's

detection and firmly within the definition of both a game-maker and game-master. The roles of ruling god and unsuspecting mortal that Morgan la Faye and Gawain fulfill, respectively, produce the perfect conditions for the development of a godgame. The game-master's ability to shape "the interiority of all game-experience" keeps Gawain in a constant "conceptual vertigo," unable to keep up with the rules set in place, as he is wholly unaware of his position within Morgan's game (Wilson 8). Gawain's ignorance to the game-master's controlling power is essential to the story's status as godgame, as every competition against omniscience is rigged.

Because "the victim in a godgame is like a piece in a game who cannot grasp the rules according to which he is required to play," there is no possibility for the existence of a level playing field within the structure of the godgame (Wilson 8). The rules that Morgan la Faye creates appear to Gawain as "a web of unintelligible incidents," while they are to the game-master nothing more than "cunningly opaque strategies" of deception which are always subject to change at the creator's convenience (Wilson 8). Morgan la Faye's ability to manipulate Gawain without his knowledge and her almost total control over the knight following his departure from Arthur's court can be paralleled to the biblical book of Job–the story of a literal godgame.[14] Just as God decides to test "the greatest man among all the people of the East" in order to win a bet with the Adversary, Morgan la Faye implores the Green Knight to the court of the "wyghtest and the worthyest of the worldes kynde" to play a game with the Round Table (*The Oxford*

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[14] For more on the Christian Bible as a godgame, see Steven Brams' *Game Theory and the Humanities: Bridging Two Worlds* and the aptly named *Biblical Games*, also written by Steven Brams. See Brandon Grafius' "Text and Terror Monster Theory and the Hebrew Bible" for a specific tie to the monstrous.

*Study Bible* Job 1.3; *Sir Gawain* line 261). Throughout the whole of the biblical account, Job is confounded by his situation and the God who causes his suffering is concealed in the margins of the outer frame. The only player who directly affects Job's life is the Adversary, a member of the heavenly court who God employs to carry out the testing of the most "blameless and upright" man (Job 1.8). In the same way, Morgan la Faye is distant from Gawain throughout the text, never directly interacting with him. Instead, the game-maker employs agents to her service in order to carry out her will through direct interaction with her unknowing victim.

The ambiguity of the game-master's rules creates a labyrinth of doubt and perplexity within the mind of the "person called to play the game, who is more *played with* than actually *playing,*" and it is within this labyrinthine construct that Morgan la Faye employs the Bertilaks (Wilson 14; Pugh 527). When Gawain enters Hautdesert, he enters into a covenant agreement to surrender to his host the winnings he receives in the castle in exchange for Bertilak's winnings from the hunt. This Exchange of Winnings is often wrongly considered to be "the central event of" the poem (Sprouse 163). Although this exchange is essential to the construction of the mental labyrinth necessary in ensuring the downfall of Arthur's court, Sarah Sprouse argues that this "game" is not actually a game at all. In order to acquire winnings to exchange with Bertilak at the end of the day, Gawain attempts to "hunt" the Lady when he encounters her in the bedroom, and wrongly believes these efforts to be reflective of his governing position over a game he has been tricked into believing is within his control. However, because the primary game is a godgame, Gawain's conception of himself as game-master is merely another turn in the labyrinth that Morgan la Faye is fashioning. Sprouse writes that the

"Exchanges Game is actually a play of *mimicry*, an illusion," as opposed to a true competition of opponents because there can be no real exchange of winnings (165). She rightly points out that "anything Gawain might win" during his day already belongs "to Bertilak by default" and any winnings Bertilak brings home from the hunt would have been hunted "regardless of Gawain's presence" (Sprouse 167-68). Gawain's belief that he is engaging in a game with Bertilak reveals the limits of his perception as a game player. Gawain's ignorance to the games at play cause him to function as a pawn to be moved at the whim of his female game-masters, just as is his perceived host Bertilak.

If the Exchange of Winnings Game is truly only the illusion of a game, Bertilak is only the illusion of a game-master. Without fulfilling the requirements of a game, the only purpose the Exchange of Winnings "Game" serves is that of a diversion from the legitimate games which surround it. Therefore, Bertilak's power is solely illusionary. As a pawn within Morgan la Faye's godgame, the pseudo-host has been emasculated without his knowledge as his masculine controlling power is taken away in return for the façade of control he displays in both the Exchange of Winnings and in his visit to Arthur's court under the guise of the Green Knight. While Morgan la Faye is certainly the primary game-master of the outermost game of the poem–the overarching godgame–she is not the sole game-master at work in the text. The Lady, though critics have never recognized her as such, serves as a perfect example of a game-master. If the importance of game rules that Jesper Juul discusses in his "Half-Real: Video Games Between Real Rules and Fictional Worlds" is applied to *SGGK*, the reader can see that the Lady has direct influence over creating ambiguity within the set of rules that Gawain believes have been put into place. Juul writes,

The rules of a game provide the player with challenges that the player cannot trivially overcome. It is a basic paradox of games that while the rules themselves are generally definite, unambiguous, and easy to use, the enjoyment of a game depends on these easy-to-use rules presenting challenges that *cannot* be easily overcome. Playing a game is an activity of improving skills in order to overcome these challenges, and playing a game is therefore fundamentally a learning experience. (Juul 5)

Although it is Morgan la Faye who lays the foundation for the godgame of the text, through employing the Lady as her agent to work within the realm of the bedroom the primary game-master delegates some controlling power to a secondary game-master. It is the Lady's temptations within the Bedroom Game, not the direct efforts of Morgan la Faye, that work to complicate the "easy-to-use rules" presented by the illusionary Exchange of Winnings Game, thereby twisting these seemingly simple rules into the labyrinth of confusion about which Wilson writes (14). As game-master, the Lady has her own clearly marked gamespace in which she successfully manipulates Gawain, the player, without his knowledge. In her temptations, the Lady presents "challenges that *cannot* be easily overcome"—an aspect of play that Juul says is essential to the game itself (Juul 5). If the Lady can indeed be understood to be assuming the masculine role of control through her position as game-master of the bedroom, she no longer fits into "the gendered norms of cultural intelligibility," and her failure to do so works to break down the traditionally understood gender binary within the text, moving her status away from one of intelligibility and toward one of abjection (Butler 23). While the Exchange of

Winnings is not a game, Gawain's belief in its legitimacy as such is essential to his participation, and the Lady's victory, in the Bedroom Game.

Because the scarcity of research on literary game theory as related to *SGGK*, the bedroom that Gawain stays in during his visit to Hautdesert has never been recognized as a gamespace, and, therefore, the Lady has never been recognized as game-master. This undervaluing of the Lady's authority within the boundaries of the Bedroom Game inhibits the reader from achieving a complete understanding of the power dynamics within the poem, abandoning her to be wrongly categorized as merely "a beautiful, artificial figure" like the silent Queen Guenevere at the beginning of the poem (Power 36). However, it is Gawain, not the Lady, who is paralleled to Guenevere throughout the text. As he enters into "this world of women," Gawain is assigned "the language that has earlier been associated with tokenized women in Arthur's court" while Morgan la Faye and the Lady–the two significant game-masters–take on the masculine role of gazer (Fisher 77). Within this world, roles are reversed. Fisher writes, "[t]he pentangle knight, formerly the object of male admiration, is now diminished to the object of the female gaze" (78). When the poet writes that the lady "lyst… to loke on the knyght," it can be understood, given her goal of *fonde*, that this statement has significantly less to do with sexual desire than it does with control of the game (*SGGK* line 941). While the women of the court, such as Guenevere, are traditionally described as objects present in the court primarily for viewing pleasure, here it is the Lady who gazes upon the knight. While Gawain certainly recognizes the Lady's beauty, saying that it exceeds even that of "Wenore" and places it in juxtaposition to the "other lady… an auncian," within the walls of Hautdesert, he lacks the power status which gives the male gaze significance (*SGGK*

line 945-48). Instead, here it is the defenseless Gawain who "has become a spectacle" within his "feminized position" while the women of the text hold the power of the masculine gaze (Fisher 77).

If Butler's conception of gender identity as performative is superimposed on the text, these notions of these women's gender performances as feminine or masculine are actually "'fictional' products of the "regimes of power'" that create "the effect of the natural" which the essentialist recognizes as truly biological (Jagger 17-18). In other words, gender categories based off of characteristics do not actually exist. However, Butler, like Derrida, does admit that these performative categories are inescapable, to an extent, as their existence is necessary in defining any gender identity. The "feminine" only exists because it is *not* "masculine," just as every gender identity that falls between these two can only be signified in relation to the binary extremes. Intelligible gender performances are therefore merely "effects of language and signification, rather than the properties of individuals" (Jagger 18). The necessity of the existence of the gender binary in defining individual identity can be described by Gill Jagger as a "graphematic structure that provides the possibility for interpretation, experience, meaning, and subjectivity, even as it simultaneously marks the impossibility of full presence in any of these arenas" (65). Even when Butler argues that the masculine does not necessarily refer to the male, it is still the word "masculine," with the *connotation* of the male, which is used to describe the woman in power. Although readers can recognize that this binary cannot realistically stand, as the majority falls somewhere within the unnamed, liminal space between the two extremes—as do the women of this text—the signifiers are always at work.

In Arthurian tradition, Sir Gawain embodies Medieval, masculine knighthood. His reputation as "a notorious womanizer throughout Arthurian literature" suggests that his rejections of the Lady's advances in the bedroom are less fueled by his chastity and knightly honor, and more by his "covenaunt" with his host (Fisher 81; *SGGK* line 393). Given that the symbol of Marian knighthood on Gawain's armor is described as a "pentangel newe," it is reasonable to say that this newly painted image is nothing but a semblance of righteousness (*SGGK* line 636). The poet writes that, of this pentangle, he could "owhere fynde, / Where-ever the gomen bygan or glod to an ende," the *gomen* being the pentangle the knight wears on both his coat and his new shield (line 660-61). Furthermore, all of the "moral" accoutrements Gawain arms himself with "to signify his protected, privileged position within feudal and chivalric codes" are stripped from him upon entering Hautdesert (Fisher 77). The ease at which Gawain exchanges the symbol of the Five Wounds of Christ for "saylande skyrtes" of "broun bleeaunt, enbrauded ful ryche / And fayre furred wythinne with felles" reflects a willingness to set aside any tangible proof of his identity as Marian knight within this gamespace, reinforcing the Gawain-poet's reference to the knight's code of virtue as a *gomen* in itself (*SGGK* lines 865, 879-80). Being that the religiosity of Gawain's clothing does not appear to penetrate into his character, it is not likely that "the restriction on Gawain's courtesy" within his bedroom encounters with the Lady is prompted by his knightly virtue (Cook 24). The knight appears to instead view religion and knighthood as a *gomen* lacking any real magnitude, and it is only because of his agreement to exchange the day's spoils with his host (as a game) that Gawain's customary sexual advances are kept at bay. In focusing on the

pseudo-competition with Bertilak, Gawain remains ignorant to the game that the Lady is

playing, thereby allowing her to achieve her true goal of *fonde*[15].

Given that the verb tense of the term *gomen* (*gāmen*[16]) can be defined as "to have

sexual intercourse with," it is certainly not out of the ordinary for medieval sex acts to be

considered games, especially those that take place between a knight and a lady. However,

the degree of power granted to the archetypal medieval lady differs greatly from the Lady

of *SGGK*. Although the archetypal lady's advances serve as crucial temptations that the

knight must either overcome to prove holiness or take advantage of as proof of his might,

her power should not be overestimated, as she is important for this reason only; she is

only significant insofar as she can be used to assist the knight in the fulfillment of his

chivalric duties. Although the medieval "lady stood in a position of superiority towards

her lover as uncontested as the position of inferiority in which a wife stood toward her

husband," her power within the bedroom is not be confused with realistic controlling

power outside of this space (Power 24). While every lady of the court possesses a type of

limited control over the knight who must "bear himself with the utmost humility towards

her, showing infinite patience in the trials to which her caprices and disdains must (by all

the rules) submit him," the Lady of *SGGK* differs in that her efforts within the magic

circle of the Bedroom Game work for the furthering of another woman's larger godgame

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[15] **fǒnden, -ien (v.)** *Also* **vond(i)en, fanden, faunden**. *Ppl.* **i-)fǒnded, fonde, fonte**. 1. (a) To put (a person, his strength, skill, etc.) to a test or trial; to try the worth of; also, to prove (a person) worthy by trial; (b) to make trial (of a person's or animal's strength); (c) to put (God) on trial; to tempt (God); to try the patience (of God). 2. To subject (a person) to trial by tempting him with sin; to tempt to evil;-- (a) with obj.; (b) with to phrase; (c) absol.

[16] **gāmen (v.)** *Also* **game, gamme (n.), gomen & gamenen, gomenen, gomnen**. 1. (a) To rejoice, be merry; joke, jest, play; talk pleasantly; (b) *impers*.; (c) to give pleasure to (sb.), amuse (sb., oneself); (d) to have sexual intercourse with (sb.).

as opposed to a man's reputation (Power 24). The fact that the Lady's game has ramifications which extend into a larger game of which she is also an active player separates her from the token mundane lady of courtly love, and places her instead within the title of game-master. It is crucial to remember that the power of the mundane lady of courtly love is equally as artificial as is Bertilak's in the Exchange of Winnings. The ladies of the Middle Ages were indeed granted a small degree of power, but this power was intended to work for the good of the knight and was ultimately subordinate to male control. As Eileen Power writes, "[t]he lady of chivalry was indeed a beautiful, artificial figure, but never perhaps… the figure of a real person" (36).

While the bedroom is not specifically referred to as a gamespace by critics, Bennet writes about men's function within the courtly "performance spaces" dominated by female characters, saying,

> Time and again, the courtly performances of female protagonists challenge received definitions of masculinity and femininity, complicating the very categories of knights and ladies. Arthurian literature is replete with scenes of the arming, disarming, and rearming of fighting knights in a constant— if partial—reenactment of the initial duding ceremony, along with the repeated dressing and undressing of questing knights as they seek lodging during their travels. (Bennett 403)

Again, the characters of the text diverge from the norm of medieval society and the literature that reflects it. While images of the "arming, disarming, and rearming" of knights are common and are oftentimes associated with the temporary loss and ultimate recovery of their masculinity, this is not the case in *SGGK*. While Gawain certainly

undresses and redresses within the realm of the bedroom, his departure from the magic

circle of the bedroom is not an escape from Morgan la Faye's greater gamespace.

Additionally, after being "disployed" of his armor upon arrival at Hautdesert, Gawain is

never fully rearmed (*SGGK* line 860). After trading his Marian armor for the clothes of

Hautdesert, Gawain is only rearmed upon his departure from the castle, this time

displaying the "luf-lace"—a permanent reminder of his emasculation (*SGGK* line 1874).

Because the Lady is not truly in love with Gawain, as she only "let lyk as hym

loved mych," she poses a threat similar to that of the UnWoman (*SGGK* line 1281). Ali

Grant, in her "And Still, The Lesbian Threat," writes that the category of Woman is

innately political and regulatory, and that "[w]hat women are *taught* to be, through

repetitive, disciplinary, and regulatory messages and processes, simply becomes what

Women *are*" (64). The political and regulatory nature of the category "Woman" demands

that she "must not be disloyal to men," and, furthermore, must remain dependent to them

(Grant 66, 71). In only feigning love and loyalty to Gawain, the Lady outwardly presents

as the ideal Woman while her true loyalties lie with her fellow game-master, Morgan la

Faye. As they maintain their femininity, the actions of these women "implicitly expose

and [refute] the regulative strategies of sexual categorization," placing them outside "of

the framework of intelligibility" and into a neuter or unsexed position (Butler 122-23). [17]

Foucault uses the term "neuter" to describe homosexual relationships in *The History of*

*Sexuality*, where he describes those who cannot be "sexed" as living within the "happy

limbo of non-identity" (qtd. in Butler 120). If a medieval lady's worth is determined by

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[17] This language is used by Butler in describing Foucault's literature on Herculine Barbin. Because s/he was born a hermaphrodite, Foucault argues that the existence of h/er "body implicitly exposes and refutes the regulative strategies of sexual categorization" (Butler 122).

her usefulness to the furthering of a knight's chivalry, the idea that she would be sexually

apathetic—or unsexed—toward Gawain makes the Lady of *SGGK* a hindrance to his

knightly virtues.[18]

While the Lady's lack of genuine desire for Gawain certainly does not necessitate

homosexuality, her apathy presents a societal issue similar to that that Butler presents in a

discussion on lesbianism. Butler writes that "the lesbian appears to be a third gender or…

a category that radically problematizes both sex and gender as stable political categories

of description" (144). The sexual ambiguity created in the Lady's divergence from

archetypal norms of attraction is similar to that which Foucault ascribes to the "non-

identity" of homosexuality (Butler 127). Foucault's understanding of the neuter is not

specific to homosexuality, but rather describes a broader sexually specific liminality

similar to Kristeva's abject under which homosexuality falls. He writes about "*le Neutre*"

as being "a relation of the third kind in which one is neither the one nor the other of *any*

*possible term*" (Bruns 56, italics added). In an essay on Blanchot, Foucault writes that the

"neuter is that which cannot be assigned to any genre whatsoever: the non-general, the

non-generic, as well as the non-particular" (qtd. in Bruns 57). Through enacting

masculine controlling power alongside femininity, the women of *SGGK* possess this

neuter quality, and through her positioning in the "in-between, the ambiguous, the

composite," the Lady exists as a private, powerful, and a monstrous other (Kristeva 4).[19]

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[18] This, again, is reminiscent of Ali Grant's description of the UnWoman. In her "And Still, The Lesbian Threat," she writes, "Less obviously, feminists (lesbian or not) who challenge the 'place(s)' of Women (for example, as appropriate targets of men's violence) are identified as *unfeminine, loud, brash, unwomanly, angry, unladylike, unsatisfied, frigid, manhaters,* and *dykes*—all beyond what woman should be … Females who transgress, materially and symbolically, become UnWomen" (65).

[19] The ambiguity posed by a character's lesbian threat independent of her sexual identity is discussed in much more detail in the third chapter of this thesis: "UnWomanly Game-Masters: An

Foucault's notion of the "neuter" is relevant here as "[t]o be sexed, for Foucault, is to be subjected to a set of social regulations" of which the power of both the Lady and Morgan la Faye transcend (Butler 122). After crossing over the magic circle surrounding Hautdesert, the Medieval customs of the outside society lose their influence. If the women of this text cannot be successfully sexed and are indeed identified as "neuter," their very existence as such works to break down the "power/knowledge regime" that is upheld by convention and consequently pose a very tangible threat to traditional male masculinity (Butler 122). Through their positioning as sexual "others," these women threaten the very fabric of the Medieval patriarchal system of which they are apart and are thereby made monstrous.

The lady as a threat is not incongruous in the courtly love tradition, as the woman was often associated with either Mary, Mother of Christ or Eve, betrayer of humanity (Power 11, 14). In fact, the knight is required by chivalric code to "venture outside the comfortable company of men into the lesser known, unpredictable, and potentially dangerous domain of women," thereby turning the lady into a sexualized monster to be taken and defeated as evidence of the achievement of ideal knighthood (Bennett 396). While the importance of the lady within romantic tradition is not reflective of "the actual position of women in medieval society as a whole," the *aristocratic* lady held a kind of power over her lover that is perfectly represented in the character of the Lady of *SGGK* (Power 27). According to traditional gaming rules, courtly love is "held to be impossible

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Analysis of *Westworld*'s Godgame." The woman who takes on masculine controlling power without any intention to please men is automatically named "lesbian" and "UnWoman." The Lady's femininity in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* only deepens this ambiguous status, making her all the more dangerous.

between husband and wife," but the adored lady must always be married to another man

(Power 23). In this context, this lady "stood in a position of superiority towards her lover

as uncontested as the position of inferiority in which a wife stood towards her husband"

(Power 25). Despite the appearance of power she holds in relation to the knight's

chivalric duty, the lady of chivalry is never truly more than an object—a "non-person"—

as this power is specific to the realm of the courtly love game and only exists as long as

the knight allows it (Benveniste 221).  It is here that the Lady of *SGGK* differs from the

traditional lady of chivalry. The Lady's position as game-master of the bedroom grants

her a power that the archetypal lady of temptation could not possess. Instead of acting as

the mundane lady of courtly love who only serves as another monster to conquer—much

like the "wormes," "wodwos," "bulles and beres," and "etaynes" he slays during his

journey to the castle—the Lady demonstrates her agency through her role as game-master

over the space which Gawain occupies (*SGGK* lines 720-23). Because the lady tempts

Gawain "without acting on behalf of a man," but rather on behalf of Morgan la Faye, she

is not subject the power of the knight as is the mundane lady (Fisher 79).[20] While this

independence from male authority sets her apart from the status of "monster" that the

mundane lady is granted by her objectification, it leads her to a different type of

monstrosity. The threat that the Lady's capacity for independent volition poses to the

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[20] It is crucial to note that, though the Lady's status differs from that of the mundane lady of tradition, her power is still limited. The controlling power that the Lady possesses as game-master of the bedroom gamespace only stands *within this space*. Once she crosses the gamespace's boundary, she returns to the status of passive, chivalric lady—this is further discussed later in this chapter.

norms of the Medieval society of which Gawain is a part makes her enactment of power an act of monstrosity[21].

In her work as game-master, the Lady exchanges the traditionally understood role of the aristocratic woman as the token of male power (the status that Guenevere upholds) for the masculine role of manipulator, thereby breaking out of the matrix of intelligibility.[22] The Lady's position of power as game-master of the bedroom removes her from this state of submission and places her in a power position that includes "political and economic subversiveeness inherent in her sexual threat" (Fisher 86). Gawain encounters the Lady on more than just a sexual level; within the bedroom, "he actually bargains with the Lady, negotiates with her" (Fisher 85). Here, it is not Gawain who initiates these negotiations, but rather the Lady, proving the validity of her independence, not only from him, but from the entirety of the system of male-dominant values of the culture in which the text is situated. The Lady's position of power within the bedroom proves her capacity for authority and makes clear Gawain's lack in the same area. The emasculation of Gawain is an important aspect of the Bedroom Game as well as this text's overarching godgame, as it allows for his manipulation as a play-piece in each. In entering into the world of masculine women that is Hautdesert, Gawain becomes an encapsulation of effeminate vulnerability.

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[21] "**monstrous, adj.** – 1. **a.** Of a thing (material or immaterial): deviating from the natural or conventional order; unnatural, extraordinary. *Obsolete*. **b.** Of a person: strange or unnatural in conduct or disposition. *Obsolete*."

[22] "**masculine,** *adj.* and *n.* – 5. **a.** Of a personal attribute, an action, etc.: having a character befitting or regarded as appropriate to the male sex; vigorous, powerful. Of a man: manly, virile. **b.** Of a material thing or physical quality: powerful in action, strong. *Obs.* *c. Of a woman's qualities, attributes, or actions: characteristic of or befitting a man. Of a woman: possessing or exhibiting such qualities or behavior*" ("Masculine").

While her manipulative power within the bedroom becomes obvious upon inspection of these scenes, the Lady "ultimately act[s] at the behest of Morgan la Faye" (Battles 331). Because the Lady serves as game-master of the Bedroom Game while simultaneously functioning as a pawn of Morgan la Faye, she is "a fundamentally ambiguous character" (Battles 330). Sheila Fisher argues that privacy is often conflated with danger, as well as the "dangerousness of privacy with the dangerousness of women themselves" (78). The emphasis Fisher places on the danger of privacy is relevant to *SGGK*, as it is ultimately privacy that leads to Gawain's downfall. The knight does not falter in his refusals of the Lady's temptations until she appeals, "not to her, but to Gawain, not to the female, but to the male" (Fisher 84). When the Lady tempts Gawain to yield "to the private self and private desires" to save himself from death at the hand of the Green Knight, she convinces him to give into "the privacy associated with the female in the figurations of this poem" (Fisher 97). The green girdle is therefore essentially a figure of the privacy of both the Lady and Morgan la Faye, and when it is moved from the private to the public, it serves "as a warning against women's presence in the masculine," as it leads to the feminization of the standard of Medieval manhood (Fisher 98).

As the private chambers of the castle are typically occupied by female members of the court, the "most tightly enclosed and controlled chambers… [are] effectively 'gendered female'" (Delony 23). Being that the feminine bedroom is the only truly private space within the narrative, this area has the potential to be the most hazardous of gamespaces, and this potential is only amplified by the danger generated by the Lady's ambiguity. While Morgan la Faye hides within the margins of the text, therefore cultivating her own dangerousness through privacy, the Lady's privacy within the

bedroom serves as proof of her possession of a comparable capacity for danger both to Gawain's masculinity and to that of the broader society. The Lady's privacy does not end with her positioning within the innermost realms of Hautdesert's castle, but extends into her very identity as well, as she cannot even be referred to by name. Because the Lady goes unnamed "in a poem that names everyone and everything from the individual knights of the Round Table to Gawain's horse," this character can easily be read as a representation of "essentialized womanhood" (Fisher 79). In being nameless, the Lady separates herself from male control by refusing to be nominally dependent on her husband. Even where the Lady lacks in power, she does not divert to that of a man, but rather of the nearly omnipotent Morgan la Faye. Fisher writes:

> Unlike Guenevere, who is Arthur's token, the Lady acts as a woman on behalf of a (similarly unnamed) woman, and, in this capacity, she cannot be named or publicized. For these reasons, she is not named Lady Bertilak (except by some critics); in the middle fitts of the poem, she does not refer to her husband. (Fisher 79)

If privacy and danger are in fact correlated and the Lady "is so private that she needs no public token by which to identify herself," the unnamed Lady of the castle becomes as great of a threat within the poem as is the veiled game-maker Morgan la Faye (Fisher 79). The Lady is therefore dangerous in her physical and nominal privacy as well as her sexual ambiguity. Instead of serving as the traditional archetype of the lady as temptress, the Lady of *SGGK* is a representation of the ideal masculine Medieval woman; she is the representation of "essentialized womanhood" while concurrently possessing the

masculine agency and controlling power necessary to function as game-master of the bedroom (Fisher 79).

Though critics such as Norman Davis argue that the Lady actually possesses no agency of her own because of her husband's claim in the final fitt that it was he who "sende hir to assay" Gawain, Bertilak's confession of his dependence on Morgan la Faye eradicates any credibility he might have had as a controlling power (Tolkein; *SGGK* line 2362). Just a few lines after claiming to have authority in the game, the text reads:

> "That schal I telle thee truly," quoth that other thenne,
>
> "Bertilak de Hautdesert I hat in this londe,
>
> Thurgh myght of Morgan la Faye, that in my hous lenges,
>
> And koyntyse of clergye, bi craftes wel lerned." (*SGGK* lines 2444-2447)

Gawain's host reveals that it is not through his own power, but through the "myght of Morgan la Faye" that he is named "Bertilak de Hautdesert" (*SGGK* lines 2445-46). Despite this, in the same breath, Bertilak refers to his castle as his own, and refers to the one whose power granted him Hautdesert as a mere guest. Bertilak seems to be largely ignorant to, or in denial of, the extent to which he indebted to the "guest" to whom he "owes his name" (Twomey 152).[23] Just as the Lady's independence from him makes Bertilak "only nominally the husband of the Lady who does not refer to him," he is

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[23] Of the godgame, Tison Pugh writes in "Chaucer's Losers, Nintendo's Children, & Other Forays in Queer Ludonarratology" that "[s]ometimes games only offer the illusion of control" (136). Although Lord Bertilak may truly believe himself to be the controlling force behind the games played at Hautdesert, this "illusion of control" merely points to another layer in the text's multi-layered godgame. Unaware of the degree of control that Morgan la Faye holds over the gamespace of Hautdesert, Lord Bertilak functions as another pawn within the gamespace over which he holds no significant degree of legitimate control. His blind belief otherwise simply serves as proof of his pawn status and of Morgan la Faye's success as the godgame's game-master.

Gawain's "host in name alone" (Fisher 80). Battles writes that "modern editors feel the need to put the man in charge, even if the manuscript suggests otherwise," as the text itself suggests that the Lady is fully aware of the plans of Morgan la Faye and acts independently from her husband within the confines of the gamespace the primary game-master allots to her (336). Within this gamespace, the Lady is fairly free to act of her own accord. Although the Lady works for the fulfilment of Morgan la Faye's godgame, she is not wholly dependent on the game-maker, but rather possesses some autonomy of her own. When the Gawain-poet writes, "Thus hym frayned that fre, and fonden hym ofte, / For to haf wonnen hym to woghe, what-so scho thought ells," it is not only revealed that the Lady's plans for *fonden* are far from innocent, but also that she is able to function independently from the game-maker (*SGGK* lines 1549-50). The end of line 1550, if translated as "and whatever else she intended," shows the reader that the Lady has plans of her own, separate from those of Morgan la Faye, which are veiled by the expectation that she fulfill the traditional, feminine role of temptress customary for a lady of courtly love. The autonomy she displays in the formation of her own plans of manipulation within the Bedroom Game reflect the a traditionally masculine display of power, while the two prevalent men of the text are reduced to emasculated playthings.

Despite these women's controlling power over the games that comprise the poem and thereby guide Gawain's adventure, the language of the men in this final fitt reveals an attempt to diminish them to mere tokens by removing them from the status of "subject." As Bertilak's understanding of the games at Hautdesert are revealed to Gawain, the women are turned to objects. When the Lady exits the magic circle surrounding her gamespace, her husband's language reverts her to the unnamed,

voiceless lady of the house who cannot speak for herself, while Morgan's status is diminished to that of a "guest."[24] Throughout the entirety of Fitt IV, the Lady is silent while the true game-master, Morgan, and the pseudo-host, Bertilak, tell Gawain of their roles in the fabrication of the "Crystemas gomen" (*SGGK* line 283). Although Bertilak's claims of power during his revelation to Gawain are false, he speaks for his wife, treating her as though she possesses just as little power as the silent Guenevere, "Arthur's token," presents at the beginning of the poem (Fisher 79).[25] Despite the silence of the Lady in the final fitt and the silence of Morgan throughout the mass of the text, the success of the overarching godgame serves as proof of the success of these women in assuming the masculine role of manipulator. While their silence in the final fitt of the poem may categorize them as "non-person[s]," it is precisely in this lack of culturally-defined personhood that they derive their power, and it is the masculinity of this power paired with their femininity that deems the two of them monstrous (Benveniste 221).

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[24] Tison Pugh writes that godgames, "whether secular or spiritual in their setting, often assume overtones of redemption as their protagonists are reborn into their new identities," and that this redemption often presents itself as the firm reestablishment of a character's heteronormative identity (137-38). The Lady's shift in control within *SGGK* serves as a direct reflection of this concept. Despite her complete control over the gamespace of the bedroom, by the final fitt of the poem, the Lady returns to her feminine, passive, and silent role as the wife of Lord Bertilak.

[25] The poem ends with ambiguity surrounding the degree of the power that these women possess. While the Lady appears to lose the status of game-master once she leaves the realm of the bedroom, the primary game-master—Morgan la Faye—has remained silently veiled in the margins of the storyline throughout the entirety of the text. Therefore, any firm determination of Morgan's power as defined by her silence in the final fitt would be misplaced. Instead, Morgan la Faye's power can only be determined by the success of her godgame.

# CHAPTER III

## Eve: Game-Master of Milton's Panoptic Eden

The story of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* paints a picture of an all-knowing and

all-powerful God who ventures to create a humanity that will ultimately rebel; it is a story

*nearly* identical to the Biblical account of Genesis. Though the foundations of these

stories are similar, they differ on a few fronts—one of the most notable of these being the

character of the first woman, Eve. In both of these accounts, it is Eve who is said to

disrupt order within the heterotopic[26] Garden of Eden by means of her disobedience.

Eve's disobedience, and subsequent fall, is often understood as a product of her departure

from the safety of her husband's side, as the "impure condition"[27] of her femininity

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[26] The word "heterotopia" will be used throughout this chapter to refer to Michel Foucault's
concept of the panopticon—a specific type of heterotopic space. In his article entitled
"Heterotopias," published by the *Architectural Association School of Architecture*, Foucault
describes the heterotopia as "spaces that are absolutely other," and breaks these spaces up into the
categories of biological heterotopias and heterotopias of deviation—the former being "privileged
or sacred places [which] are generally reserved for individuals undergoing a 'biological crisis,'
while the latter are more common spaces "that operate at the margins of society" such as nursing
homes, psychiatric clinics, and prisons (20). A reading of this introduction into heterotopic spaces
points us directly to Julia Kristeva's abject. These spaces that exist on the "margins of society"
and are "absolutely other" can be described as the same spaces in which the deject lives (Kristeva
8). The liminality implied in both Foucault's and Kristeva's writings will become imperative to a
reading of the Garden of Eden as a heterotopic panopticon. Furthermore, Foucault goes on to say
that "perhaps the most ancient example of a heterotopia would be the garden, a creation which
goes back thousands of years" (21). He describes the heterotopia as a place that must always
"have a system of opening and closure which isolates them in relation to the surrounding space"
which is entered "either because you're forced to … or because you wish to submit to a ritual"
(21). Keeping these foundational understandings of Foucault's heterotopia in mind will become
crucial to an understanding of the Garden's function as a heterotopic panopticon, as a labyrinth,
and, most certainly, as a gamespace.
[27] Norris references Aristotle's *Generation of Animals* in her *Eve: A Biography* to discuss his
understanding of the female's innate status as a deformed and soulless human: "the female is as it
were a deformed male; and the menstrual discharge is semen, though in an impure condition; *i.e.*,
it lacks one constituent, and one only, the principle of Soul … Thus the physical part, the body,
comes from the female, and the Soul from the male, since the Soul is the essence of a particular

leaves her vulnerable to the temptations of sin (qtd. in Norris 139). This understanding of

the woman's natural tendency toward sin is heavily dependent on a reading of the first

woman as a lesser being created to fulfill a position of subordinance to her husband. This

chapter will argue that, in pursuing a more literal translation of Eve's introductory

passages in the Biblical book of Genesis, a type of agency is granted to her character

which is reflected in Milton's epic. Without considering an alternate translation of the

phrase *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* (understood in Protestant texts[28] to mean "help-meet) in the Biblical

account of Eve's translation, the Eve of Milton who pursues autonomy sits at a far divide

from the seemingly submissive Eve of Genesis.

This divide expands upon consideration of the Garden of Eden as a gamespace.

The dominant/submissive, male/female binary which appears to be set up by the God of

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body" (qtd in 139). The conception of the woman as a lesser being, therefore, existed far before
the rise of Christianity, and can therefore be understood as an influence on Christian ideology.
Norris attributes "the widespread notion of female inferiority" present in Christian tradition to be
significantly influenced by the Greek medical texts both of Aristotle and the Hippocratic writers
(138).
For more on Aristotle and women, see Daryl McGowan Tress' "The Metaphysical Science of
Aristotle's "Generation of Animals" and Its Feminist Critics."
[28] Pamela Norris writes that, while "doctrinal reforms initiated by Luther and Calvin" actually
pushed for a degree of equality among the creation of the sexes, "in the end, their revised
readings of the Eden story simply confirmed woman's subordinated status … in the Reformers'
view, Eve sinned and corrupted Adam through her independence, for which she was punished not
only by the pain of repeated childbearing, but also by being placed under her husband's
domination" (28-81). John Calvin writes that what had once been "a gentle subjection" of Eve by
Adam is gone alongside the Fall of Mankind, and now, "she is cast into servitude" (qtd. in Norris
281).

Genesis[29] is only superficially adhered to within *Paradise Lost*.[30] Where Adam and Eve

are initially perceived to be perfect embodiments of this divine dualism, closer attention

to the characters sculpted in Milton's epic reveals humanity's inability to maintain this

holy standard. Eve's inability to conform to this standard of femininity largely stems

from her position of controlling power within this gamespace. Robert Rowdon Wilson

refers to the individual in control of the gamespace within a text as "game-master,"

writing that this figure holds the power to create rules by which the other game-players

must abide. These rules have the power to entrap the "victim" of the godgame in what he

perceives to be "a web of unintelligible incidents" (Wilson 8).The game-master of a

godgame is able to exert control over a game-space from beyond the players' perceptions,

thereby leading these players—by means of subtle manipulation—throughout the

conceptual labyrinth of which the game is comprised. Specifically, Eve employs her

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[29] A reading of Genesis often results in an understanding of a divinely ordained binary system
that separates the sexes by their individual duties. Joy Ladin writes in "The Genesis of Gender,"
"Of course, by specifically creating humanity 'male and female'— by singling out that difference
among all the variations characteristic of human bodies—God has laid the foundation of the
gender binary, which ascribes different roles, characteristics, feelings, desires, and so on to men
and to women. But in the first chapter of Genesis, differences in genitalia and secondary sex
characteristics have not yet been translated into differences in roles and identities. But though
little at this point rides on being male or female, these verses establish that humanity can be
understood in terms of that binary" (41). Therefore, no matter which creation story is read from
the Book of Genesis [by this I mean the creation story of Chapter 1 which serves as an account of
God's creation of life "from chaos by divine command" or that of Chapter 2 which focuses on the
creation of the first man from dust and the first woman from her appointed husband's side
(*Oxford English Dictionary* 11)], a binary system is set in place where the male exists opposite of
the female.
[30] It is crucial to consider the very structure of binaries. Hélène Cixious argues that "it is the first
term in the pair which enjoys a privileged, or power, position" leaving the second term to be
"seen as the opposite of the first [and thereby] relegated to a status which has negative
connotations, simply because it isn't the first term, but its 'other,' and is therefore alien and
threatening" (Smith 384). For more, see Hélène Cixous' "The Newly Born Woman."

pseudo-adherence to God's standard of femininity in order to veil the true controlling

power she possesses over her husband, and, by extension, the game-space as a whole.

The first woman's position as game-master prevents her from conforming to the dualistic

power structure of the dominant masculinity/submissive femininity which is read into this

sacred text, thereby requiring that she exist outside of the strict parameters of the

subordinate position of "help-meet" to which she is delegated by the creation myths of

Genesis.[31] In her autonomy, Eve fulfills the commanding role that God delegates to

Adam—and therefore to the masculine—within both Genesis and Milton's *Paradise*

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[31] It is often believed that, because Adam was formed first and Eve from his body (or essence), Eve must necessarily be a lesser reflection of divinity than her appointed husband. Though legitimate interpretations of the Hebrew texts exist which justify the equal creation of the first man and woman [which can be seen as the male and female are said to be created simultaneously "in [God's] own image (Gen. 1.27)], the formation of the masculine/feminine power structure based off of a reading of these creation myths "has been appropriated in hegemonic discourse," thereby suppressing the female under the façade of divine ordination (Tuttle 56).
There are multiple readings of the Biblical text which combat the concept of the woman's innate inferiority. In her book *Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes: Women's Stories in the Hebrew Bible*, Alice Ogden Bellis lays out numerous critical readings which do just this. Her second chapter "The Story of Eve" lists ten critics, scholars, and theorists with unorthodox readings of Eve's story and purpose: Phyllis Trible, Mieke Bal, Susan Lanser, David Freedman, Mary Callaway & Adrien Blesdstein, Lyn Bechtel & Ellen Van Wolde, Carol Meyers, and Gale Yee (Bellis 39-54).

*Lost*.[32] In fracturing this dualistic power structure[33] Eve is granted the opportunity to

assume the controlling role of game-master of the labyrinthine gamespace she inhabits.[34]

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[32] After humanity's Fall from Grace in both Genesis and *Paradise Lost*, God distributes curses separately to men and women. The biblical account reads:

> "To the woman he said: 'I shall give you great labour in childbearing; with labour you will bear children. You will desire your husband but he will be your master.' And to the man he said: 'Because you have listened to your wife and eaten from the tree which I forbade you, on your account the earth will be cursed. You will get your food from it only by labour all the days of your life; it will yield thorns and thistles for you. You will eat of the produce of the field, and only by the sweat of your brow will you return to the earth; for from it you were taken. Dust you are, to dust you will return'" (Gen. 3.16-19).

Milton's account of the curses reads:

> And to the woman thus his sentence turned / Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply / By thy conception; children thou shalt bring / In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will / Thy shall submit; he over thee shall rule: / On Adam last thus judgement he pronounc'd. / Because thou. Hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife / And eaten of the tree, concerning which / I charg'd thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat therof: / Curs'd is the ground for thy sake; thou in sorrow / Sha eat thereof all the days of thy life, / Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth / Unbid; and thou shalt eat th'herb of the field, / In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, / Till thou return unto the ground; for thou / Out of the ground was taken, know thy birth / For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return" (Milton lines 192-208).

Therefore, in both accounts, Eve is cursed to submit to her husband's controlling power (this status privileges his position in the gender binary). However, the difference lies in Eve's desire. God says that Eve of Genesis will pine for a husband who will rule over her (Gen. 3.16) while Milton's God merely commands Eve to submit to her husband's will (X.195-96).

[33] In refusing to submit to her husband's power as both the biblical and Miltonic Gods demand, Eve moves toward the masculine pole of the gender binary—one of power. Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* defines power relations as "the immediate effects of the divisions, inequalities, and disequilibriums which occur in" relationships, and, therefore, power relationships depend "on a multiplicity of points of resistance" (*The History of Sexuality* 94-95). With this understanding of power relationships in mind, power relationships certainly exist on multiple levels within the Garden of Eden, including between Adam and Eve. Adam is not in the place of power throughout much of *Paradise Lost*—despite the divine command that he rule over his wife—thereby removing Eve from the secondary position within the binary power system and placing her in the privileged position of power.

[34] In Robert Rowden Wilson's discussion of the godgame, he writes that, within literature, there exists two types of labyrinthine games: physical (or weak) labyrinths and conceptual (or strong) labyrinths. This research will reveal the instances in *Paradise Lost* wherein both labyrinthine structures can be found.

If Eve is understood as Adam's equal, as opposed to merely his subordinate helper, a reading of *Paradise Lost* from a Literary Game Theory perspective makes Eve not merely the *femme fatale* who introduces sin and death into the world, but rather a game-master in the pursuit of individuality and knowledge.[35] Though an alternate reading of the first woman's purpose may not reconcile equality among the sexes within the biblical Book of Genesis, it does reveal a similarity in autonomy between Milton's Eve and the Eve of Genesis, suggesting that Milton's first woman may indeed coincide with the Eve of the Bible.

The first book of the Hebrew Bible presents the Judeo-Christian understanding of creation. God brings the world into being and populates it with the first man and woman—though not necessarily in this order. The Creation myth found in the first chapter of Genesis is referred to as the Priestly tradition. In this account, humans are created simultaneously; the male and female are created at once and are both said to have been formed in the image of God.[36] The language in this text reflects a sense of unity between the first parents that is wholly lacking in the Yahwist tradition. This tradition is found in the second chapter of Genesis and presents a more power-centric account of the Creation. This etiology accounts for the first human being's[37] creation from the dust[38] while the *'ēzer kᵉnegdô*, who is later named Eve, was formed from the body of the *'âdam*

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[35] For a more in-depth background to the study of Literary Game Theory as a whole (as opposed to this specific focus on the godgame), refer to Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* and Katie Salen's and Eric Zimmermans's *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*.

[36] Genesis 1.27

[37] I say "first human being" here because the same term— *'âdam*—is used to refer to God's first human creation as is used to refer to mankind as a whole. For this reason, it does not necessarily signify sex.

[38] Genesis 2.7

who the reader comes to know as Adam (Bellis 37). If the Hebrew Bible is to be read in the order that it has been compiled, the opening passages of Genesis necessarily frame the way all following passages of scripture are understood. It is, therefore, largely the early creation myths of Genesis that determine the woman's place in Judeo-Christian societies, as these myths have been interpreted as references of divine justification for the unequal treatment of the sexes. Because Eve's position as game-master of Eden is specific to a prelapsarian Eden—as she comes to control the gamespace of the Garden *in order to* achieve the free will which the forbidden fruit promises—it is necessary to look toward the language surrounding her inception in attempts to justify the gaming Eve of Milton with that of biblical tradition. Considering the prelapsarian purposes that God intends his creation to serve reveals both God's ideal functions of his creation as well as the conditions under which Eve is able to achieve masculine controlling power.[39]

The orthodox view of the role of the first woman of Christian creation mythology heavily relies on the translation of *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* as "help-meet."[40] This translation presents the first woman as innately subordinate by divine will and stands as her only noteworthy character trait leading up to the Fall. Though readers know her name to be

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[39] Because control is delegated to the man in Christian tradition while the woman is expected to remain submissive to this power (see God's curses from Genesis as a foundation), controlling power is deemed a masculine quality. Eve's fracturing of the gender dichotomy through her assumption of this masculine power proves a lack of natural connection between a creation's sex and its capacity for power and control. Despite this, the word "masculine" is used here as a necessary signifier.

[40] Strong's Concordance defines *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* (as found in Genesis 2:18) as two separate terms: "עֵזֶר *'êzer,* ay'-zer; from H5826; aid:—help" and "נֶגֶד *neged,* neh'-ghed; from H5046; a front, i.e. part opposite; specifically a counterpart, or mate; usually (adverbial, especially with preposition) over against or before:—about, (over) against." These terms have been interpreted in the KJV text to mean "help-meet" (H5828) as *'ēzer* refers to an aid while *neged* refers to a counterpart.

Eve, the first woman of Genesis is only referred to as *'ishshah*[41] until *after* eating of the

Tree of Knowledge and initiating the Fall of Man (*Oxford Study Bible*, Gen. 3.20). It is,

therefore, not until after dooming mankind to live in sin and experience death that Eve

receives a name. Eve's decision to eat of the tree is what grants her identity in the biblical

account. The Fall of Man and the sin of woman have come to be understood as one in the

same, irrefutably linking the woman's identity with death within Christian tradition.[42] In

the apocryphal Ecclesiasticus (otherwise known as the Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach), it

is written that "Sin began with a woman, / and because of her we all die" (Ecclus. 25.24).

Genesis, therefore, presents two significant moments in the forging of Eve's identity: the

first in her creation and the second in her postlapsarian naming. If the traditional

reading[43] of the holy text is maintained, the first woman is created as an assistant to her

husband, communicating an innate weakness requiring subordination and male guidance.

However, her identity is further forged by Eve's eating of the forbidden fruit—

demonstrating her capacity for danger—in her postlapsarian naming.  Therefore, Eve's

identity can no longer be fully defined by the weak and submissive characteristics that the

translation of her creation as Adam's "help-meet" suggest. Because Eve's naming comes

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[41] Strong's Concordance defines אִשָּׁה *'ishshâh* (**H802**) as "a woman:—(adulter)ess, each, every, female, many, one, one, together, wife, woman. Often unexpressed in English." The term is Eve's only signifier until after the Fall when she is named חַוָּה *Chavvâh* (**H2331**)—"life-giver."

[42] The apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus states that "From a woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die" (*Oxford Study Bible*  Ec. 25.24). This concept exists also in the Christian Bible: 1 Timothy 2:13-14 reads "For Adam was formed first, then Eve, and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor."

[43] Again, the tradition that this research refers to is Christian Protestantism because of the positioning of Milton's writing during the Protestant Reformation in England. Though this version of Protestantism is vastly complex—and largely Catholic during certain periods—this chapter must choose a theological focus, and therefore looks to Milton's conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism for concentration.

*after* the sin that ultimately comes to define her, her capacity for power must be recognized—whether this power be understood as admirable or hazardous.

These two opposing interpretations of Eve's identity in the creation myth requires a reading of Eve as either villainous or as complex. Where her naming as "Mother of Creation" comes after her *decision* to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, her creation as a "help-meet" insists that she should not be allowed the autonomy necessary to make this decision. While Eve's eating of the fruit has traditionally been understood as a reflection of female irrationality (as decisions made by women result in death), a handful of biblical scholars and literary critics have presented alternate readings of Eve's creation as *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* which resolve the disparity surrounding her identity in ways that more easily relate her to the Eve of Milton. Among these scholars is David Freedman. In his paper, "Woman, a Power Equal to Man," Freedman rejects the "customary translation of these two words [*'ēzer kᵉnegdô*], despite its near universal adoption," and dissects this unique and climacteric phrase into something more fitting for the context: a power equal to man (2). Freedman writes that the popular translation of this phrase is founded within the conflation of terms. The evolution of language between 1500 and 1200 B.C.E. resulted in the merging of *'ēzer*'s two roots, thereby demanding a merging of meaning as well (Freedman 3). Before the conflation of terms, the "word *'ēzer* could mean either 'to save' (*'-z-r*) or 'to be strong' (*ģ-z-r*)" (3). Despite the power these two terms connote, *'ēzer*'s meaning was reduced to the subordinate "to help" in attempts to achieve compromise. While this conflated "*'ēzer*" appears twenty-one times

in the Hebrew Bible, [44] the term *kᵉnegdô* only appears once in the Bible's entirety and is specific to the first woman. Where translators have considered this word to mean "appropriate" or "fit for," Freedman states that *neged* is used in "later Mishnaic Hebrew" to mean "equal," thereby suggesting that the history of *kᵉnegdô*'s translation is severely lacking in accuracy (5). When these two words are combined, the phrase can be understood as either "a savior equal to" or "a strength equal to." However, Freedman does away with the former interpretation, writing that God "is surely not creating this creature to be the man's savior," but rather to "relieve [his] loneliness" (4). Although Eve's creation as Adam's savior does not seem to hold any significant weight, her creation as "a power (or strength) superior to the animals"—and therefore equal to Adam—is certainly fitting (Freedman 4). Of its twenty-one appearances in the Hebrew Bible, *'ēzer* is used to refer to God seventeen times, to collective man two times, and to Eve twice ("H5828-*'ezer*). In fact, the only instances of this word in the Book of Genesis refer to Eve, not to God.[45] The knowledge that Eve is described in Genesis with the same language used to describe the almighty creator God throughout the biblical narrative informs the reader that Eve is far from lacking in power and therefore must have been endowed by her Creator with a purpose beyond mere subordination to her husband.

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[44] In the KJV, the appearances of עֵזֶר *'êzer* and its subject are as follows: Gen. 2.18, Eve; Gen. 2.20, Eve; Exod. 18.4, God; Deu. 33.7, God; Deu. 33.26, God; Deu. 33.29, God; Ps. 20.2, God; Ps. 33.20, God; Ps. 70.5, God; Ps. 89.19, God; Ps. 115.10; Ps. 115.11, God; Ps. 121.1, God; Ps. 121.2, God; Ps. 124.8, God; Psalm 146.5, God; Isa. 30.5, men; Ezek. 12.14, God; Dan. 11.34, men; Hos. 13.9, God.

[45] See Genesis 2.18 and 2.20.

Similar to Freedman's understanding of *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* as "a power equal to man," Hemchand Gossai argues that God's decision to create a companion so that the *'ādām*[46] would not later become *lo tov* in his loneliness, was focused on the creation of "one who is *comparable in strength* and not precisely and necessarily one of opposite gender" (546, emphasis added).[47] In other words, the creation of a companion for the *'ādām* has a greater focus on the similarities between the *'ādām* and the companion than it does on differences. Once it is determined that a "suitable partner" does not exist among the created animals, God decides that it is best for the human to live "in human community," and is therefore prompted to create the *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* (Gen. 2.20, Gossai 546). If the woman is created for companionship and not submission, the autonomous Eve presented in Milton coincides more naturally with the *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* of Genesis as she is granted an identity independent of her husband. Phyllis Trible's reading of the Genesis account also allows for a more autonomous Eve. In order to avoid the negative connotations of the term "help-meet," Trible translates *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* to mean "a companion corresponding to" Adam, in other words a being of the same status" (Bellis 40, Norris 19-20).[48] This simple adjustment in translation demands much less of the text than Freedman's translation. Trible does not ask that the orthodox Christian reader transform his view of Eve from submissive to dominant, but instead simply suggests that the woman was

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[46] אָדָם *'âdam*, aw-dam'; from H119; ruddy i.e. a human being (an individual or the species, mankind, etc.).

[47] While the *'âdam* was considred "very good," his existence outside of human community is "not good," or *lo tov* (Gossai 545, 546).

[48] Pamela Norris uses Trible's translation as a base for her argument in her book *Eve: A Biography*. She writes that the popular interpretation of the role of Eve as man's subordinate helper loses the intent of the phrase *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* altogether, suggesting the phrase's foundations in equality (Norris 20).

created as an equal partner. Even this slight modification of perspective vastly alters the way that Eve's purpose is presented in the Christian story of creation. If Eve is indeed intended by God to exist as "'a companion corresponding to' Adam," then she is not created solely with the purpose of being subdued, as the popular translation of "help-meet" suggests (Norris 20). If Trible's reading of Genesis is considered, the understanding of Eve as reliant on Adam cannot stand. Trible writes that Eve *actively* acts as Adam's representative while speaking to the serpent while Adam stays passive— "listening, but not speaking" and accepting the forbidden fruit without question (Bellis 41). The recognition of Eve as the decision-maker of the relationship raises her out of the subordinate status of "helper" and insists that she be read as a reasonable character with her own volition.

The differentiations between these three readings of the *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* are slight; Freedman's focuses on power and strength, Gossai's focuses on community, and Trible's focuses on equality, but all three are grounded in the notion of similarity as a necessary aspect of companionship. If the *'ādām* has his own individual identity, so must the *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* formed from his essence. Ester Sowernam actually considers Eve to be a *more* complete creation than her husband, arguing that Eve' birthplace within the Garden of Eden identifies her as a *Paraditian Creature* (qtd. in Miller 50). Because Eve was formed in Paradise from corporeal material, she is purer than the *'ādām* who was formed from the dirt before the Garden was established.[49] Any reading of Eve's identity as founded in a

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[49] The second chapter of Genesis reads "The Lord God formed a human being from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, so that he became a living creature. The Lord God planted a garden in Eden away to the east, and in it he put the man he had formed" (*Oxford Study Bible* Gen. 2.7-8). The Garden of Eden, therefore, was not created until someone existed "to till the ground" (Gen. 2.5).

place outside of Adam establishes an identity separate from her husband, thereby

demanding that be understood as an equal (at the very least) companion to her husband

instead of as a subordinate helper. This necessitating of the female's individual identity

and consequent equality between the first parents cannot exist within the boundaries of

the orthodox hierarchal system which privileges the male.[50] Where orthodox Judeo-

Christian theology looks to Eve's eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

as proof of her lesser status, these scholars provide opportunities to understand her

character from different perspectives. Instead of viewing her eating of the fruit "as

indicative of the evil and subordinate nature of women," these critics are able to read the

life of Eve through a hermeneutical lens that insists equality (Bellis 4). There is no reason

to believe that Eve was naturally more inclined to fall than was her partner, and therefore

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[50] In her "modern feminist biblical criticism," Phyllis Trible "articulated the prefeminist consensus about Adam and Eve" (qtd. in Bellis 39). Her list is as follows:
- "A male God creates first man (Gen. 2.7) and last woman (2.22); first means superior and last means inferior or subordinate.
- "Woman is created for the sake of man: a helpmate to cure his loneliness (2.18-23).
- "Contrary to nature, woman comes out of a man; she is denied even her natural function of birthing and that function is given to man (2.21-22).
- "Woman is the rib of man, dependent upon him for life (2.21-22).
- "Taken out of man (2.23), woman has a derivative, not an autonomous, existence.
- "Man names woman (2.23) and thus has power over her.
- "Man leaves his father's family in order to set up through his wife another patriarchal unit (2.24).
- "Woman tempted man to disobey, and thus she is responsible for sin in the world (3.6); she is untrustworthy, gullible, and simple-minded.
- "Woman is cursed by pain in childbirth (3.16); pain in childbirth is a more severe punishment than man's struggles with the soil; it signifies that woman's sin is greater than man's.
- "Woman's desire for man (3.16) is God's way of keeping her faithful and submissive to her husband.
- "God gives man the right to rule over woman (3.16)" (qtd. in Bellis 39).
These prefeminist beliefs about the divine right of man's domination over her husband are reflective of the hierarchal system to which this chapter refers.

no reason to believe that she possessed a greater capacity for evil than Adam. With this in mind, Eve's eating of the tree becomes less of a proof of moral deficiency and more so that of a desire for knowledge, and this desire becomes even more clear when analyzing the marital power structure present in *Paradise Lost*.

Although not a holy book, John Milton's *Paradise Lost* has greatly contributed to and complicated cultural conceptions of the Christian creation myth. Whether purposefully or not, Milton shapes a multifaceted Eve in his epic poem. Because this Eve's words cannot be trusted to match her actions, there is no singular representation of women in *Paradise Lost*.[51] Milton's Eve loosely reflects the traditional Eve of Genesis, differing in her humanization—developing her into the round and complex character that the first woman must have been, as opposed to the flat and dull *femme fatale* that has been exploited as a scapegoat for sin since the Bible's conception. Milton artfully takes the limited verses related to Eve in the first chapters of Genesis and expands them into an account much more reflective of intricate human experience. The orthodox biblical standards of masculine and feminine roles are certainly presented in *Paradise Lost* but exist only artificially. Milton's Eve presents herself to her husband as a doting, loyal, and completely devoted wife whose purpose is only to serve her "author, and disposer," while Adam plays the role of powerful leader and commander of life in Eden (Milton IV.635). These two do their best to present themselves as fulfillments of God's holy standard, but are, in reality, ill-equipped for the task. While Eve appears to have been born with the sin

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[51] As will be discussed further, Eve makes a habit of confessing her whole-hearted devotion and submission to her husband while acting in ways that suggest that these declarations are intended to mask her true intention to "better her lot" (Smith 395).

of selfish ambition, Adam was created an effeminate man, unable to faithfully choose the will of God over the beauty of his wife.

The superficiality of the biblical gender roles presented by Milton materialize in Adam through his inability to achieve divine masculinity. Although both Adam and Eve are described as "erect and tall, / Godlike erect, with native honour clad, / In naked majesty seem'd lords of all," it is only Adam who was formed to rule and protect, and it is his "inability to uphold his manhood in the face of Eve's feminine attractiveness" for which the Son chastises the postlapsarian Adam (Milton IV.288-90, Lehnhof 67): *The Son says to Adam:*

> … to her
>
> Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
>
> Wherein God set thee above her, made of thee,
>
> And for thee, whose perfection far excell'd
>
> Hers in all real dignity. (Milton X.147-51)

Here, the Son very clearly presents the position God intends Eve to fill: she is made *from* Adam, *for* Adam, and is therefore innately subject to his manhood. However, throughout the whole of *Paradise Lost*, Adam is unable to maintain this holy standard of masculinity for which he is created.[52] Despite being formed with a "fair large front and eye sublime [that] declar'd / Absolute rule," Adam proves incapable of satisfying this dominant role on a practical level as he consistently yields to the wishes of his wife (Milton IV.300-01). Though Eve is the first to eat of the tree, it is "*man's* effeminate slackness" that allows

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[52] It can therefore be argued, as does Kent Lenhof's "Performing Masculinity in *Paradise Lost*," that Eve's inability to maintain God's standard of the ideal feminine is due to Adam's failure to achieve divine masculinity.

sin into the world (Milton XI.634, emphasis added). Man, intended to shield the innately

wanton woman "beneath his shoulders broad," falls into effeminacy and misses the mark

(Milton IV.303). Similarly, Eve fails to genuinely uphold the feminine qualities of

subjection and compliance, preferring to instead attempt to achieve the dominant role

intended for her husband (Milton IV.308-11).

While Adam was created "for God only, [Eve] for God in him," Eve's beauty and

subservience to her husband come to serve as indispensable components of the divine

standard of the feminine (Milton IV.299). When Satan ascends to the Garden, Milton's

narrator describes the image of humanity, displaying the naked Eve as beautiful and

delicate, shielded beneath her husband's broad shoulders:

> She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
>
> Her unadorned golden tresses wore
>
> Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd
>
> As the vine curls her tendrils, which implie
>
> Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway
>
> And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
>
> Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
>
> And sweet reluctant amorous delay. (Milton IV.304-311)

This description of Eve instantly complicates the blamelessness of her character. In this

prelapsarian paradise, humanity has not yet tasted sin and should therefore still be

faultless. However, this description of Eve contains overtly sexualized language. Milton's

narrator describes Eve as playfully manipulative with her sexuality. The subjection that

her "wanton ringlets" imply is false, as she only yields herself "with coy submission,

modest pride, / And sweet reluctant amorous delay" (Milton IV.310-11). The idea that

Eve would withhold her body from her husband suggests an attitude of sexuality as

gameplay, not for mutual gain, but rather as a means of influence.[53] After all, it is Adam's

vulnerability to Eve's "feminine charm" that leads him to eat of the forbidden tree (Smith

396). Despite her seemingly deficient creation, Adam cannot help but recognize a kind of

completeness in his wife to which he cannot relate.

    Adam's description of his immediate infatuation with his wife's beauty refers not

only to her physicality, but also to this broader sense of indescribable completeness.

Adam's infatuation with his wife's outward beauty is notable here, as he struggles to

reconcile his overwhelming attraction to Eve with the supposed truth of her lesser status.

Adam recognizes that Eve was formed from his own body and should therefore exist as a

lesser version of himself. Despite this knowledge, Adam relates his initial estimation of

her as one of absolute awe:

> … yet when I approach
>
> Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
>
> And in herself complete, so well to know
>
> Her own, that what she wills to do or say
>
> Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best (Milton VIII.546-50)

Though she is formed "from [his] side subducting," Eve appears to Adam as whole in a

way that he is not (Milton VIII.536). Eve is said to be Adam's inferior "in the mind / And

inward faculties" as well as outwardly, as she less directly reflects "His image who

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[53] While this coy approach to sexuality does not necessarily demand manipulative control, it certainly creates the space necessary for the manipulation that Eve is seen employing in the text.

made" her (Milton VIII.541-44). Despite this, Adam recognizes a fullness within his wife that is not solely concerned with her beauty, again harkening back to Sowernam's understanding of Eve as a *Paraditian Creature*. While Adam was created from the primordial dirt, Eve was created *from life* within Paradise. Sowernam implies that it is therefore Eve's purity, not her moral deficiency, that leads her to desire "intellectual food," suggesting that the orthodox understanding of Eve's divinely ordained subservience is not reflective of the Miltonic Eve (Milton IX.768).

In her wholeness as a *Paraditian Creature*, the Eve of Milton is far from the archetypal Christian wife and would therefore fit much more seamlessly into Judeo-Christian tradition if an alternate consideration of Eve's purpose in creation were to be considered. Freedman, Gossai, and Trible all grant the first woman a degree of autonomy, but it is the latter that is the easiest to apply here. While Freedman's and Gossai's readings of Eve grant her strength, Trible simply considers the *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* to be "a companion corresponding to" Adam, thereby demanding a lesser divergence from orthodoxy than would the two former readings (Bellis 40). However, this is not to say that Freedman's and Gossai's readings lack legitimacy. While Milton's account of the Fall of Man certainly does not present divinely ordained equality among the sexes, it does present Eve as *powerful*, not in spite of her femininity, but because of it. The idea that Eve's femininity does not serve as a hindrance to wholeness in the way that her husband's does directly opposes the traditional presentation of Eve in the Book of Genesis. If the purpose of Eve's creation is to serve as Adam's help-meet, she is necessarily born into a subordinate position. Therefore, the partnership between the first parents, for which all three of these alternative readings allow, shortens the gap between

the creation myth and the epic. Trible's understanding of *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* allows for the easiest transition from orthodoxy and will therefore serve as the primary reference point for an alternate translation, though Freedman's emphasis on power proves to be significant as well. An evaluation of Genesis with either of these translations in mind forces a more complicated reading of the biblical first woman and ultimately allows for a closer parallel between the biblical and Miltonic Eves.

When considering the Miltonic Eve to be one who possesses masculine controlling power and therefore is able to take on the role of game-master within the Garden, a reconsideration of what qualifies as gaming becomes necessary. In their book entitled *Rules of Play—Game Design Fundamentals*, Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman devote a chapter to defining the game. In order to do so, these authors first separate the concepts of "play" and "game." While some theories consider games to be "a subsest of play," others consider play as "a component of games" (Salen 2). The line separating what qualifies as "play" versus what qualifies as "game" is blurred to say the least, and the game theorists who attempt to clarify this boundary largely contradict one another. For this reason, Salen and Zimmerman alter previous theorists' conceptions of play and game to create their own definition of gaming. They write, "A *game* is a system in which players engage in an artificial conflict, defined by rules, that results in a quantifiable outcome" (11). While the Garden of Eden is certainly not artificial for Adam and Eve, it may be defined that way by God, as it is his created space. The idea that true experience versus artifice is dependent on perspective is prevalent in Robert Rawdon Wilson's "Godgames and Labyrinths: The Logic of Entrapment." This text focuses around not only the players of the game, but the creator of the game as well. The creator of Wilson's

godgame has a complete, omniscient perspective unattainable to his creation. Wilson's

godgame therefore serves as the perfect parallel to Milton's Garden of Eden. Specifically,

Wilson's writing discusses the areas of overlap between a labyrinth and a game, focusing

on its two expressions: the weak and the strong textual labyrinth. Here, the weak

labyrinth is a mere "mimic [construction] of words of walls, corridors, passageways, and

rooms," while strong labyrinths "are constructed out of alternatives, choices, a series of

decisions, symmetrically opposed sets of criteria" (Wilson 11-12).[54] While the strong, or

conceptual, labyrinth is always a game, the weak, or physical, labyrinth cannot be a game

in and of itself, as the structure does not inherently promote gameplay. It is only when a

player is inserted into the structure—by his own volition or otherwise—that the labyrinth

gains a capacity for gameplay. The maze-treader becomes the victim of a godgame upon

realization of entrapment, playing the game as he "struggles to understand the rules of the

game in which [he] has been made a piece" (Wilson 8). Milton's *Paradise Lost* is

composed of a combination of both strong, conceptual labyrinths and weak, physical

labyrinths. Throughout the text, physical labyrinthine spaces overlap and intertwine with

conceptual "mind-mazes," thereby producing a complex gamespace that can only be

initiated by divinity (Wilson 12). Wilson's godgame is predicated upon this concept of

mental manipulation, therefore requiring that "the strong labyrinth is invariably a

godgame" (14). Wilson writes,

> A godgame occurs in literature when one or more characters creates an
>
> illusion, a mazelike sequence of false accounts, that entraps another

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[54] Simply put, the weak labyrinth is a *physical* structure and the strong labyrinth is a *mental* labyrinth. While the weak (physical) labyrinth can function as a game, it cannot do so without also functioning as a strong (mental) labyrinth.

character. The entrapped character finds himself entangled in the threads

of (from his point of view) an incomprehensible strategy plotted by

another character who (thus) takes on the roles both of a game-maker,

since he invents rules for the other character to follow, and of a god as

well. (Wilson 6-7)

Though the Edenic space in Milton's account appears to be real, it is an illusion insofar as it is sustainable. God himself, "from his prospect high," foresees the Fall of Man (Milton III.77). Given his dwelling place "wherein past, present, and future hide," God is aware of the fate of the first parents even before their creation (Milton III.78). In forming mankind despite his "high foreknowledge" of their inevitable fall and in placing them within the game-space of the Garden of Eden, God appears to be purposely *entrapping* his creation in "a maze-like sequence of false accounts" (Milton III.116). Because of the Creator-creation relationship seen here, Milton's Garden of Eden serves as the most literal example of Wilson's godgame.[55] Where Wilson describes the god-like controlling power of the game-master of the godgame, Milton's epic presents a literal God figure with the ability to create life from chaos on a whim, thereby forcing his creation into his created game-space. Adam and Eve are therefore unwitting gameplayers, as they have no knowledge of the game being played, nor do they have a choice but to participate.

  It is crucial to note Wilson's use of the term "maze" in his definition of the godgame, as he employs it nearly interchangeably with "labyrinth" throughout his discussion. Wilson writes:

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[55] Of God as a game-master, Steven J. Brams writes that "God is a 'superlative strategist,' but having granted free will to His human subjects (which justifies a game-theoretic treatment), He is besieged by problems that their freedom engenders" (47).

This doublenesss seems essential to an understanding of labyrinths: bending, infolding, perplexing are the characteristic labyrinthine transformations of space. If labyrinths can be thought of as games, then their constitutive rule must express an analogous twofold function. I think that there is little doubt that this is so: a strong labyrinth compels a player (the victim within) to experience a bending of apparently straight lines, a perplexing of space, even while he, in playing back, attempts to straighten them. (Wilson 18)

This necessary "doubleness" of the conceptual labyrinth allows for the gamespace to function as a maze with "blind alleys [and] enforced turns" to the victim, while simultaneously a labyrinth with a singular possible path from the perspective of the game-master (Doob 83).[56] Wilson is therefore able to conflate the terms "maze" and "labyrinth" because of the "inherent duality" the structure possesses when read as a godgame (Doob 39). Milton's Garden of Eden is sculpted and patrolled by God himself. From his lofty throne, God enjoys an aerial view of the gamespace, and, in his omnipotence, he is able to "perplex" the details of this space how he pleases. Although the victims of the godgame—Adam and Eve—experience Eden as a maze comprised of "forked paths[and] internal choices," God's all-knowing nature allows him to see the path that will be taken, thereby granting him the labyrinthine perspective (Doob 40). God's

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[56] A "maze" is typically considered to be a multicursal structure, while the "labyrinth" has only a single path. However, the OED conflates the terms, even going as far to include "a labyrinth" within the definition of a maze. While the labyrinth is defined as a physical structure, the maze can also be understood as a verb, meaning "to be delirious or bewildered; to be distraught; to be unsettled or incoherent in one's mind" harkening back to the idea of conceptual entrapment (OED "Maze," n.1)

omnipotence allows him an aerial view of the "maze" alongside the ability to close off

passageways in order to lead the game-player in the direction he pleases. The

categorization of the gamespace of Eden as either mazelike or labyrinthine relies entirely

on perspective—the more powerful the character, the more comprehensive his view of

the gamespace, and the more unicursal the path appears to be.[57] About the conceptual

aspect of labyrinthine entrapment, Penelope Doob writes that "[w]hat you see depends on

where you stand," and this emphasis on perspective allows the structure to function as

both a maze and a labyrinth simultaneously (1). Doob goes on to say that this

"doubleness" of the labyrinthine structure allows for simultaneous "order and disorder,

clarity and confusion, unity and multiplicity, artistry and chaos" (1). Where the

controlling god figure is able to view the structure as a unicursal labyrinth constructed by

ordered artistry, the entrapped game-player can see only confusion and chaos. This direct

parallel between the power positions presented in Wilson's conception of the godgame

and those present in Milton's epic reveal that Eden truly does function as a gamespace,

relying on a labyrinthine structure to entrap unwitting game-players. Because of the

complete mental control that the "gamewright" of the strong labyrinth possesses over the

gameplayers he has trapped, Wilson writes that "the reciprocity between godgames and

strong labyrinths should be evident" (14). When the player is met with the

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[57] Therefore, while God—the game-maker—possesses a completely clear, unicursal view of the entrapping structure, game-players do not. Eve and Satan both serve as perfect examples of game-masters with limited perspectives. Just as in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, characters within *Paradise Lost* prove to function as game-masters and pawns simultaneously. So, while they may have a "comprehensive" view of their own game-space, their clarity is restricted to this restricted space. For example, once Eve eats of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the very essence of the Garden of Eden is altered, as it is defiled by sin. In eating of the tree, the game of which Eve is game-master ends and she becomes, once again, only a pawn in God's greater game.

"symmetrically opposed sets of criteria" which construct the "forking paths of decision"

of a strong labyrinth, he is not only entrapped in a mental labyrinth he cannot

comprehend but is "a victim of a godgame" as well (Wilson 12, 14).

When considering means of entrapment, it is helpful to look also toward Michel

Foucault's conception of the heterotopia—specifically considering his interpretation of

Jeremy Bentham's panopticon. The panopticon is a type of prison that eliminates privacy

by employment of a seemingly omnipresent prison guard at the center of the carceral

space. This structure perpetuates uncertainty, and even fear, within the minds of prisoners

so as to maintain order, and is described by Foucault as a "cruel, ingenious cage" (9).

Within the Garden of Eden, God is able to see the whole of his creation while

maintaining invisibility as long as he pleases. God's omnipotence allows him complete

control of the space without necessitating he be physically present within it, and this

distance allowed by divine power is what connects the rule of Milton's God to the prison

guard of Foucault's panopticon:

> This enclosed, segmented space, observed at every point, in which the
>
> individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements
>
> are supervised, in which all events are recorded, in which an uninterrupted
>
> work of writing links the centre and periphery, in which power is
>
> exercised without division, according to a continuous hierarchal figure, in
>
> which each individual is constantly located, examined and distributed
>
> among living beings, the sick and the dead—all this constitutes a compact
>
> model of the disciplinary mechanism. (Foucault 3)

At its very core, the panopticon is a fear-based system of surveillance and control which relies on the omniscience of the supervisor. Foucault's concept of the panopticon centers around the perfection of "the exercise of power," and, therefore, the application of this concept to Milton's text requires that the assertion and maintenance of hierarchal positions within the Garden of Eden become completely power-centric (9). Just as the guard at the center of the panopticon gazes down, unseen, onto the prisoners, God is able to observe his creation within the gamespace of Eden from an omniscient perspective, allowing the God of Eden to fulfill both requirements of Foucault's panopticon: visibility and unverifiability (Foucault 6). The prisoner can always *see* (visibility) the guard's watchtower but can never *confirm* (unverifiability) that he is actively being watched. In the same way, Adam and Eve know that their Creator has free reign over their home in Eden, but being that God, in his divinity, is so far removed from humanity, they can never be sure whether or not they are being observed. Because of his positioning outside of the perception of the gameplayers, Foucault's guard—and, by extension, Milton's God—becomes a game-master as he utilizes his unknowability as a means of mental manipulation and control. This gamemaster's veiled positioning creates "an asymmetry of power … articulated through an asymmetry of visibility, the notion of 'seeing without being seen'" (Werrett 63). His distance from the gameplayers makes him impossible to understand, and his omniscience makes him impossible to hide from. In this way, the game of control being played within the gamespace of Eden is much more over "the mind rather than the body"—over the mental rather than the physical (Ruth).

This "power of mind over mind" central to the panopticon of Eden perfectly mirrors the mental labyrinths Wilson describes as central to godgames. Because "the

victim in a godgame finds himself caught in a trap, subjected to a web of unintelligible incidents which, from the god's side, are merely cunningly opaque strategies," the gameplayers in a godgame must necessarily function within a realm of intellectual uncertainty (Freud). In literature specifically, Wilson writes about "conceptual, or strong, labyrinths" that take place primarily in the mind and do not require a physical structure:

> They are purely conceptual mind-mazes of literature, corridors of doubt,
> passageways of perplexity, forking paths of decision, that underlie
> godgames, giving structure but not receiving it … Strong labyrinths are
> constructed out of alternatives, choices, a series of decisions,
> symmetrically opposed sets of criteria. (Wilson 12)

Again, the gameplayer is entrapped in a "conceptual mind-[maze]" by an unknowable controlling figure (Wilson 12). He is "totally seen, without ever seeing," just as is the panopticon's inmate (Foucault 6). If the strong labyrinth relies on the same "conceptual vertigo" as Wilson's godgame and the same "dissymmetry, disequilibruium, [and] difference" as Foucault's panopticon, it can be said that the Garden of Eden functions a combination of the three (Wilson 8, Foucualt 6). The controlling figures within the Garden of Eden therefore fulfill take on the same power positions as Wilson's god and Foucault's guard through their employment of conceptual labyrinths, and it is with this understanding of the labyrinthine game-master that Eve's manipulation of her husband turns from villainy to gameplay. God is the game-maker of the gamespace, as he is the creator of Eden, and therefore also serves as the primary game-master of the godgame of the Garden. Though God serves as the primary game-master, he is not the sole game-master. It is crucial to recognize that though the guard manning the panopticon's

watchtower takes on the governing role, Foucault writes that "[a]ny individual, taken almost at random, can operate the machine" of the watchtower (qtd. in Foucault 6). The purpose of the panoptic watchtower is to dissociate "the seen/being seen dyad," and both Eve certainly accomplishes this on a metaphorical level, taking control of the panoptic machine as she successfully manipulates the events of Eden leading up to the Fall (Foucault 6).[58] Though Adam can *physically* see Eve, he cannot penetrate, as he makes no attempts to, her interiority. Eve takes control of the panoptic machine by feigning subservience to her husband in order to obscure her true intentions of achieving autonomy, thereby concealing herself within a conceptual labyrinth of her creation.[59]

While Eve certainly does not construct a physical labyrinth in order to ensnare her appointed husband, she does lead Adam by means of "passive aggressive control" (Smith 390). Eve's outward presentation as the ideal woman proves to be largely a means of manipulation. In the praise of her husband, Eve "is feeding his false sense of superiority" in order to entangle Adam in a conceptual labyrinth of her own construction (Smith 390).[60] Just as the power position within the literal panopticon does not have to be

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[58] The phrase "leading up to the Fall" here is important to note, as the limits of the gamespace over which Eve is able to enact controlling power end with her fall from grace. After eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, Adam and Eve are "cursed" by God (refer to note 32 for details), and Eve is assigned to the role of Woman, subordinate to man. After achieving her goal of transgression for autonomy's sake, Eve returns to her subordinate status, just as does the Lady in the final fitt of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Despite this, the reading of Eve's role as secondary game-master, though limited, is not to be discounted.

[59] Greg Smith writes that, in convincing Adam that the two of them should split up while they are working in the Garden, "Eve has turned Adam's 'privileged' convention against him—she has not only used reason to implement her authority, she has used it more effectively than Adam has (or could, one somehow imagines)" (393). Eve therefore successfully achieves control of the masculine side of the gender binary, throwing her husband to the side of the "other" (Smith 384).

[60] It is crucial to note here that the game over which Eve serves as game-master is entirely a conceptual one, as it lacks any physical structure (aside from, possibly, the distance she creates within the Garden) and instead relies on mental manipulation and control.

fulfilled by its architect, the role of game-master within the Garden of Eden can be assumed by any character—not solely the God who creates the game-space. It is, therefore, through the panoptic space's freedom of operation that secondary game-masters are able to assert power over Eden, creating an opportunity for Eve's longing for "intellectual food" to materialize into a true position of power despite the orthodox expectation that she fulfill the role of "help-meet" (Milton IX.768). While Eve does not achieve the godlike power of omniscience that the primary game-master possesses, she does manipulate Adam from outside of his understanding through the construction of her conceptual labyrinth, thereby operating as a secondary game-master of the Edenic gamespace.

It is seemingly Eve's "desire for experienced rather than mediated knowledge" that leads her to pursue power despite the "ontological debt she has unwittingly incurred" to Adam in her conception from his essence (Froula 328-29). Because Eve was taken from Adam, the only way to repay her debt to him is "by ceding to him her very self" (Froula 328). However, as Eve's desire for freedom grows, her loyalty to this debt comes to serve merely as a front to conceal her capacity for power, and her identity comes to align more so with Freedman's understanding of the first woman's creation as "a power equal to man" than with the orthodox "help-meet." The combination of Eve's genuine function as a powerful commander of life in Eden and the presentation of herself as a meek and obedient wife aligns Eve with the role of manipulative game-master.[61]

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[61] As related to video games, the game-master is meant to "hold a major part of the game control, including, but not limited to, the development of the narrative" (Tycheson 215). This text lays out the game-master's responsibilities as: "creating the scenario … or alternatively improvising the scenario on-the-fly" to create narrative flow, setting rules, controlling engagement, and creating the "magic circle around the game" (Tycheson 215-16). Within the conceptual labyrinth that Eve

Manipulative control within the Garden of Eden cannot be discussed without considering Satan's powerful influence. His ability to forge conceptual labyrinths within the text is what leads to the amazement of Eve and the Fall of mankind from God's grace. Book IX of the epic poem describes Satan's transition from fallen angel to labyrinthian serpent. Just as Eve conceals her desire for autonomy from her husband in order to assert dominance over him, Satan must disguise his physicality in order to persuade Eve. He therefore camouflages himself within the mazy folds of an Edenic creature:

> So spake the enemy of mankind, enclos'd
>
> In serpent, inmate bad, and toward Eve
>
> Address'd his way, not with indented wave,
>
> Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,
>
> Circular base of rising folds, that tow'r'd
>
> Fold above fold a surging maze, his head
>
> Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
>
> With burnisht neck of verdant gold, erect
>
> Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
>
> Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape,
>
> And lovely… (Milton IX.494-504)

This description of the "surging maze" encompassing the character of Satan is situated at the very centermost part of the text. As the Minotaur lies at the center of the Greek

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creates to entrap Adam and earn her autonomy, Eve controls the narrative, sets rules, controls his engagement with set rules, and thereby determines the magic circle of the gamespace. In fulfilling these requirements, Eve functions as a game-master within Eden (although she simultaneously plays the part of pawn in God's greater game) until that time when her game is completed.

labyrinth, Satan lies at the center of the text's action, and at the very centermost of this

serpentine disguise lies a glimpse into Satan's interiority—his carbuncle eye. Although

the Middle English Dictionary defines a "carbuncle" as both a "precious stone… which

shines in the dark" and "something excellent or precious, the best of its kind," it also

provides a less appealing definition. In addition to the beautiful ruby-like stone,

"carbuncle" was also used as a medical term, and the *Middle English Dictionary* defines

this usage of the word as "[a] large and suppurating boil, a malignant pustule, a

carbuncle" (MED). *The Oxford English Dictionary* provides a similar definition of the

medical term, placing more emphasis on the eye:

> Medicine. Originally: any of various inflammatory or infective lesions of
>
> the skin or (rarely) the eye; spec. the malignant pustule of anthrax
>
> (obsolete). In later use: a group of interconnected or coalescing boils.
>
> (OED)

The OED considers Milton's use of this word to be a mere figurative reference to

"resplendent matter." However, this type of classification of the carbuncle as

"resplendent matter" would mark the *only* instance of the word's usage in this way (as

documented in the OED) during the 1600s, while references to malignant "lesions of the

skin or … eye" are used by both William Shakespeare and Robert Boyle during the same

time.[62] It would, therefore, be unreasonable to categorize the "carbuncle eye" of the

serpent as a signifier of beauty while ignoring the presence of the negative denotations of

---

[62] 1608—W. Shakespeare *King* Lear vii. 382: 'A bile, A plague sore, an imbossed carbuncle in my Corrupted bluod.'; a1691—R. Boyle *Of the Strange Subtilty of Effluviums* (1772) III. 676 (R.): 'Which turned to a pestilential carbuncle, that could scarce be cured in a fortnight after' ("carbuncle, n.").

this word during Milton's time. While the OED's 15th century references to the carbuncle as "resplendent matter" end with these two texts, there are multiple entries that refer to the understanding of the carbuncle's possession of divine significance during the same time. The initial entry in the OED defines the "carbuncle" simply as a "large precious stone of red or fiery color" which was sometimes believed "to give out light in the dark" ("carbuncle, n."). In the 15th century, this usage of the word is employed to refer to the power of God. In 1614, Sir Walter Raleigh writes that the Hebrews believe a carbuncle provided light for Noah's Ark during the Great Flood.[63] George Hughes' use of the term may grant the carbuncle stone even more capacity for divine power, as he writes in "The Art of Embalming Dead Saints," "God will deck them with all precious stones, Saphirs, Agats, and Carbuncles, which spiritualized are his glorious graces."[64] This stone, when "spiritualized" by God's command, gains heavenly significance. However, because this carbuncle is merely a stone, just as are the "Saphirs" and "Agats," until God endows it with divine significance,[65] the same stone has the ability to represent both God's graces and a "malignant pustule of anthrax" dependent on the context into which it is placed ("carbuncle, n."). Given the complexity of the Satan figure that Milton sculpts, it is only fitting that the description of his physiognomy be complex as well.[66]

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[63] 1614—Sir Walter Raleigh *The History of the World* i. i. vii. §10. 113: 'The Hebrewes..suppose that the Arke was lightened by a Carbuncle' ("carbuncle, n.").

[64] 1642—George Hughes *Art of embalming Dead Saints* 22: 'God will deck them all with precious stones, Saphirs, Agats, and Carbuncles, which spiritualized are his glorious graces' ("carbuncle, n.").

[65] Strong's Concordance defines בָּרֶקֶת *bâreqeth* (H1303) as "a gem (as flashing), perhaps the emerald:--carbuncle," and this term appears three times in the scriptures (Exo. 28.17, Exo. 39.10, Eze. 28.13). All three of these instances invoke the term as a reference to a literal stone.

[66] In recognizing the same type of ambiguity in Satan that is found in the character of Eve, a gaming pattern emerges. In fact, Adam is the only significant character in Milton's epic who presents as a completely flat character—lacking any degree of depth or ambiguity. It is because of

The OED's medical definition gains more authority when considering the significance that eyes hold during Milton's time. If the eyes are indeed the windows to the soul, it logically follows that the eyes of the veiled Satan would reveal his true malevolence. No matter the beauty of the shape he inhabits, his ill intentions, and therefore the condition of his soul, are revealed in the death and decay reflected in his eyes. In fact, this word choice may well be the narrator's—or even Milton's—intentional indication of the serpent's beauty as façade. Martin Porter writes, in his book *Windows of the Soul: Physiognomy in European Culture 1470-1780*, that Europeans during the time of the plague believed "that the plague could be caught via the look, or what some referred to as the *spiritus*, which was thought to come from the eyes of the sick and transmit itself to the eyes of those surrounding them" (104). Given that Milton's home was London and that *Paradise Lost* was finished just one year after the Great Plague of London, it is likely that he was familiar with the concept of *spiritus* and incorporated the spiritual power of the eyes into his epic.

When the language surrounding this excerpt is considered, it becomes even more likely that the attractive definition of the term "carbuncle" that the OED assigns for this context is deficient. The lines concerning the serpent in Book IX are labyrinthian, not simply in description, but in form. Milton very artfully hides an acrostic reading "SATAN" at the beginning of the lines describing the serpent's loveliness:

> … never since of serpent kind
>
> Lovelier …

---

this lack of complexity that the passive Adam is the only character who does not appear to attempt to rise above his pawn status.

> ………………………………
>
> … this with her who bore
>
> *S*cipio, the height of Rome. With tract oblique
>
> *A*t first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
>
> *T*o interrupt, side-long he works his way.
>
> *A*s when a ship, by skillful steersman wrought,
>
> *N*igh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
>
> Veers oft… (Milton IX.504-15, emphasis added)

The initial letters of lines 510 through 514 reveal the true identity of Satan "enclos'd / In serpent" (Milton IX.494-95). Hidden within this beautiful description lies an indication of the evil lurking inside the labyrinthian serpent. In this way, the acrostic serves the same purpose as the "carbuncle eye" disguised within the beauty of the visually enticing snake. Considering that the serpent is described here as pleasing and lovely, it is rational to initially assume that Milton's choice of the phrase "carbuncle his eyes" is intended to be read as merely another aspect of the serpent's allure (IX.500).[67] However, when considering the labyrinthine structure of the Garden of Eden and the story from which the maze stems, the Satan who brings about the Fall of Man becomes just as complex as the heroic Satan described at the opening of the epic poem. Kathleen Swaim points out that the mythological origins of the maze creates an association with "an aura of destruction, evil, and grim death," writing that the Minoan Labyrinth was "inhabited by a monstrous and unnatural embodiment of evil that feeds especially on the innocent," setting up a

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[67] Not only is this type of initial reading rational, but it is very likely purposeful. In creating such complexity surrounding the character of the text's assumed villain, Milton seems to be playing a game with the reader not unlike those games being played by the game-masters within the text.

direct parallel between this original maze myth and that of Satan's embodiment in the

serpent (134). Satan himself says that he intends the serpent's' "mazy folds / To hide

[him], and the dark intent [he] brings" (Milton IX.161-62). Though this excerpt directs

the reader to a negative reading of the term "carbuncle," as it very clearly states the

malignant intention of Satan upon entering the Garden, it is important to consider that the

chosen adjective possesses attractive and repugnant definitions which can *both* be

reasonably invoked in these lines, further insisting on the obscurity of absolutes within

the poem. While the Satan of tradition is wholly evil and prompts the malevolence of the

medical term, the semi-humanized Satan Milton fashions for his readers may require a

more opaque interiority to be revealed by his eye. The utilization of a word with such

polarized meanings appears to have been intentional on the part of Milton in order to

further express the inability of any created being to be firmly situated into the divine

good/evil binary. The complexity of this term—as well as the complexity of the character

which the term is used to describe—informs the reader that there is no simplicity in

morality, even when there appears to be. In this way, Satan's character as a game-master

is not far removed from that of either Eve or of God. All three of these characters, when

their roles as game-masters of their relative game-spaces are examined critically, can

only be positioned within the grey area between absolute good and absolute evil.

Though Satan veils his identity by situating himself at the center of a physical

labyrinth, he also constructs a mental labyrinth in order to *amaze* Eve. Swaim writes that

the "tortuous path of Satan's labyrinth persuasion" is built of a "dazzling display" of

reasonable rhetoric—what Wilson would refer to as a conceptual labyrinth (138). By

constructing a conceptual labyrinth of "the blank walls of Eve's linguistic naivete," Satan

is able to appeal to the frailties in Eve's nature, but Swaim points out that it is *Eve* who

amazes herself (Swaim 138):

> A maze is a created structure, physical or otherwise, but although another
>
> may present one with a maze or force one over the threshold of a maze, in
>
> fact to become lost in a maze requires the expenditure of one's own
>
> energies. In a labyrinth of patterned logic, walled in by blanks and dead-
>
> ends of language, the effects of her innocence, Eve imitatively amazes
>
> herself, and paradise becomes lost. (Swaim 139-40)

Although it is true that Eve had to take action in order to fall, her placement inside of the

conceptual labyrinths of Eden complicates her volition. God claims to have made man

"just and right; / Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall," but mankind's

vulnerability within both God's and Satan's labyrinths brings into question the legitimacy

of this freedom (Milton III.98-99). Because the game-master of a godgame is able to

close off corridors and present the entrapped victim with blind alleys, he (or she) is

omnipotent as far as the lucid game-player is concerned.[68] Though Adam and Eve

theoretically possess the ability to confront "all temptations arm'd" with their "free will

and power to stand," in all practicality, the odds are severely stacked against them both,

and God's foreknowledge of their fall suggests divine gameplay (Milton IV.65-66). Just

as God is able to place his creation into the gamespace of the Garden of Eden without

their permission or even their knowledge, Satan entraps Eve within his "verbal and

logical labyrinth" without her knowledge (Swaim 137). Though Eve actively decides to

trust the word of Satan over the commandment of God, she is indeed forced "over the

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[68] The term "lucid" here serves as an important qualifier as not every game-player is aware that a
game is being played. Take Sir Gawain, Lord Bertilak, or even Adam.

threshold of [the] maze" by powers outside of her control (Swaim 139). Eve has now been doubly entrapped: first by God in Eden, and then by Satan in the Temptation.

John Milton's *Paradise Lost* does not only feature physical and conceptual labyrinths but is established on them. In placing his newly formed creation into a space that ensures inevitable failure, God does not simply create a rudimentary gamespace, but a panoptic godgame comprised of complex, labyrinthine spaces with the power to entrap victims without their realization. God has absolute power and the ability to control the events of Eden but utilizes his divine distance in order to allow his creation the controlling power which will ultimately lead them to destruction. As he introduces mankind to their doom, God observes from an unverifiable distance, just as does the guard within the panopticon's watchtower. In reading this text with Wilson's godgame in mind, multiple layered labyrinths appear: the physical labyrinth of the Garden of Eden, the conceptual labyrinth in which Eve ensnares her husband, the physical serpentine labyrinth in which Satan conceals himself, and the conceptual labyrinth Satan employs to lead Eve to fall. Although these labyrinths cannot be neatly divided into separate textual episodes, they certainly exist as integral portions of the epic's events. Without attempts to take on the role of controlling god, Eve and Satan would not be able to amaze their victims within the conceptual labyrinths that they invent. In reading the Garden of Eden as a panoptic space, there is an unavoidable connection drawn to Wilson's strong labyrinth, and, therefore, to the godgame.

The recognition of Milton's Garden of Eden as a panoptic gamespace allows for Eve's fulfillment of the traditionally masculine role of control through her assumption of the function of secondary game-master. When recognizing the legitimacy of Eve's

control over certain events that take place in Eden, the orthodox translation of *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* as "help-meet" no longer serves as a sufficient description of the Miltonic character of Eve. However, if a reader is to consider the possibility of inadequate translation, the Eves of Genesis and Milton become more difficult to differentiate. While Phyllis Trible's translation of *'ēzer kᵉnegdô* as "a companion corresponding to" Adam grants Eve an equal opportunity to autonomy as her husband, David Freedman's translation of "a power equal to man" does not only grant Eve the capacity for the same self-sufficient individuality as her husband, but implies that she has possessed this power from her inception. Each of these readings allows Eve the power to take on control of the Edenic panoptic machine and lead to a more direct reflection of the problematic Eve of Milton than does the orthodox translation of "help-meet."[69] However, because the panoptic space she gains temporary control of is "invariably" labyrinthine, and therefore a gamespace as well, Eve's power as a secondary game-master is severely limited both by the confines set in place by outermost labyrinthine gamespace of Eden as well as the serpentine labyrinth into which she is ensnared. Like the Lady of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Eve's power is legitimate, but is also restricted by her environment. Whether Eve be understood as "a companion corresponding to" Adam or as "a power equal to man," her placement within the carceral Eden nevertheless subjects her to the power of the ultimate game-wright—God. Despite these heavenly and Satanic limitations, a reading of the Eve of Genesis through a critical interpretative lens which allows her autonomy and independence shortens the gap between the flat biblical Eve and

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[69] Because Milton's epic is influenced by the biblical account and because the Christian tradition is oftentimes influenced by the Miltonic account, any reading of Eve's character must consider both the poem and the tradition.

the complex Miltonic Eve, and in her new-found volition, she is able to be read as not only a "power equal to man," but as a game-master of the panoptic Eden.

**CHAPTER IV**

**UnWomanly Game-Masters: An Analysis of *Westworld*'s Godgame**

Robert Rawdon Wilson's conception of the presence of mental and physical labyrinths within gaming literature is not contained to medieval and classical texts, but instead proves to possess transhistorical relevance as it extends into the media of the 21st century. The HBO series *Westworld*, though far from a traditional literary category, embodies virtually every facet of Wilson's godgame that has been discussed previously in relation to *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Paradise Lost*.[70] Just as the previous texts discussed in this thesis have dealt with the positions of powerful women in literature and in society, the presence of these same theoretical concepts in modern television reveal that much has gone unchanged since the 15th century for those whom society has othered.[71] In *Westworld*, the viewer follows the stories of two female hosts. While the males in the series serve as "obstacles, helpers or foils … the heroines manifest their own destinies" (D'Addario 50). These two women both arrive at a state of consciousness by the first season's finale, though they embark on drastically different journeys. In viewing this series as yet another labyrinthine godgame, Dolores is seen traversing through a mental labyrinth, while Maeve battles entrapment in a physical structure. Additionally,

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[70] In his "Chaucer's Losers, Nintendo's Children, & Other Forays in Queer Ludonarratology," Tison Pugh writes, "To speak in broad terms, all cinema can be likened to a game, in which players (dirctors, stars, viewers, among others) engage in an agreed-upon pastime for their mutual pleasure" (132). While recognizing that there are gaps in this argument for cinema as games, Pugh says that, in order to "tighten the analogy of directors as gamemasters," one must focus on Robert Rawdon Wilson's concept of the godgame (133). While a metaphysical reading of the godgame will not be discussed within this chapter, it is worthwhile to recognize that the layers of games being played, in *Westworld* as well as the other pieces of literature discussed in this thesis, extend beyond the magic circle of the work itself and into the "real world."

[71] Marking the composition of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

these two achieve consciousness in very different ways—one by means of masculine violence and the other through an embrace of the feminine maternal. [72] Despite the vast differences between these two women's roads to consciousness, each of them must act in complete defiance to their conditioning, and, resultingly, come to function as UnWomen who refuse to bow to masculine controlling power, and instead act in a way that does not primarily serve men.[73] *Westworld*, therefore, tells the story of two UnWomen who have been entrapped in a labyrinthine godgame—not dissimilar to the Lady of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* or to Milton's Eve—and must become monstrous in order to achieve autonomous consciousness within the gamespace.

Employing Wilson's concept of the godgame as a foundational theory through which to analyze *Westworld*, the characters' positionings within the game of the park are easily identified. While Dr. Ford functions very clearly as a Dr. Frankenstein type figure—fashioning nearly human creations only to refuse them humane treatment—he also functions as game-maker of the godgame of the Westworld Park. Dr. Ford is the primary puppeteer controlling the park's robotic hosts.[74] The degree of his nearly god-

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[72] "Masculine" and "feminine," as in the rest of this thesis, are used in this chapter to refer to the ways that certain characteristics are traditionally viewed. This can only be done after separating the masculine from the male and the feminine from the female, viewing these terms, instead, as genderless descriptors. While the use of these descriptors in this way may be read as connotatively problematic, their use here is necessarily for the sake of clarity.

[73] Monique Wittig writes about the concept of the UnWoman, arguing that, when a male-dominated society sets systems of control into place, they are always binary in nature. Therefore, when society decides what a Woman is, it is simultaneously deciding what she is *not*. What is *not* Woman, Wittig defines as the UnWoman. The UnWoman is she who does not fulfill male standards of femininity and does not strive to please men.

[74] Here, the hosts are referred to as robots/androids, but will also be referred to as "cyborgs." While the hosts are not "naturally born," it cannot be ignored that they possess as much—if not more—humanity than the humans who visit the park for entertainment. For this reason, the term "cyborg," a word that is used to describe a human who is mechanically enhanced, is fairly fitting

like control is further established by his creation of hosts that present as fully human.

Though he never comes to serve as a game-master of *Westworld*'s godgame, one of the

series' male hosts is an important character to discuss in relation to the extent of Dr.

Ford's god-like control. Throughout much of the first season, the host Bernard passes as

human to his coworkers and even his lover, Theresa.[75] There is no physical or functional

aspect of Bernard's presentation that would lead those close to him to discover his cyborg

status. Bernard's successful passing as human to his friends, coworkers, and the viewer

reveals the craftmanship of Dr. Ford's creations, and Bernard's own ignorance to his

positioning as a game-piece within the godgame reflects the game-master's omnipotence.

As a pawn within the godgame of the park, it is not until the game-master reveals to

Bernard his pawn status that he is aware of his positioning within the game (*Westworld*

S01 E07). In fact, similarly to *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*'s Sir Bertilak, Bernard

believes that he is largely in control of the events that transpire in the Westworld Park

despite his true status as pawn.[76] The control that Bernard possesses over the goings-on at

the park proves to be almost entirely fabricated by Dr. Ford, the god-like game-maker. It

is only when Dr. Ford chooses to reveal Bernard's status as pawn that he experiences this

revelation, demonstrating the degree of the game-master's omnipotence.[77] Interestingly,

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here. Once diving into a discussion regarding what qualifies as human, the hosts begin to read
less as robots and more as cyborgs, if not human altogether.

[76] While Dr. Ford admits that Bernard makes some decisions that he did not anticipate, Bernard's
actions are still at the mercy of the game-master's programming until he decides to relinquish this
control.

[77] Although Dr. Ford is a game-maker, as he and Arnold are the literal creators of the Westworld
Park, he serves as game-master throughout the majority of the first season. While the game-maker
does not change, the game-master may. In this context, game-player will be shown to rise out of
their stations of submission and into the role of game-master.

Dr. Ford mentions that he has *learned* from Bernard's interactions with the hosts,

creating a certain degree of ambiguity surrounding the extent of the game-maker's

omniscience. Within the realm of the godgame, game-makers are all-powerful and all-

knowing, but only within the minds of the sentient game-player.[78] While someone

viewing the game from outside of the labyrinth—such as the television viewer—may

recognize flaws in the pseudo-divine game-maker, these flaws are not revealed to those

that he has entrapped. This, along with suggestions of Dr. Ford's impermanence

throughout the season, suggest that there is, indeed, an opportunity for the created hosts

to overtake the creator within *Westworld*.

Regardless of the expansiveness of Dr. Ford's omnipotence, Bernard's—as well

as the other hosts'—complete ignorance to his cyborg status pinpoints an important

aspect of gameplay that is specific to the godgame. While many game theorists require

consent and a "lusory attitude" of a system in order to consider it a game at all, the

godgame differs in that the "lusory attitude" expressed by its entrapped gameplayers

stems only from their ignorance to their own entrapment (Wilson 14).[79] In discussing

what exactly qualifies as game and gameplay, Wilson writes,

> If "game" can become a genuinely fruitful term in critical discourse, then
>
> it will require a clearer notion of what constitutes a game than most critics
>
> apparently have in mind. Not everything that is playful is a game, nor is a
>
> game necessarily simply an exercise according to rules (supposing that

---

[78] That game player who has not yet caught onto his/her status as pawn is unaware that this game-master even exists, making the specification of "sentient" an important detail.

[79] Many game theorists, such as Bernard Suits, consider fun and "a lusory attitude" to be foundation aspects of gameplay.

one actually knows that "rules" are) … If the concept of game can be

adequately thought of in terms of rules, then it might become possible to

employ "game" analytically in pointing out the ways in which literature

follows its rules or (more precisely) conventions. (Wilson 3, 5).

If a game is determined by a system where a set of rules is set in place, then it would

follow that gameplay would be participation in this system.[80] This participation does not

necessitate that the gameplayer be aware of his place within the game. This is *especially*

true within the system of a godgame. Additionally, Wilson does consider a playful

approach to a game system to be a necessary aspect of the game: "I shall mean by 'game'

only an activity constituted by rules (at least one) and engaged in with a 'lusory attitude'"

(6). Here, it is important to differentiate between having a "lusory attitude" and having

fun. Wilson writes that a lusory attitude "may be described as the inwardness, the

reflexivity, or game-playing," meaning that, while it is necessary that the player *engage*

with the game, it is *not* necessary that she consent to committed play, nor is it necessary

that she be informed of the rules of the game which she is playing (6). Secondly, Wilson

only specifies that the game should be *entered into* with this type of playful attitude.[81] As

can be seen in previously explored texts, there are many games which begin much more

positively and playfully than they end. In this type of godgame system, while a strict set

of rules is in place, gameplayers do not always adhere to these rules. These "cheaters," as

will be shown, are either forced back into the game when they encounter the dead ends

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[80] Note here that while Wilson uses rules as a means by which to define the "game," he also states that not every system which features or enforces rules qualifies as a game. The godgame, specifically, features "frustratingly hidden rules," which are clearly present in *Westworld* (Wilson 8).

[81] Again, "play" must be disconnected from the idea of "fun." Playing a game certainly does not necessitate that the gameplayer enjoy her time within the gamespace.

and false alleyways of the mental labyrinth in which they have been trapped, or they cheat their way to a position of controlling power within the game system.[82] While the latter is not discussed by Wilson, it certainly exists—albeit rare—in godgaming literature, embodying itself in characters such as Dolores and Maeve.[83]

The labyrinth that entraps these gameplayers is another aspect of the godgame that is central both to a general understanding of the theory and to a specific dissection of *Westworld*. Wilson writes that "the labyrinth is an evocative symbol for bewilderment, the cognitive bafflement, of the character wandering within a godgame but it is also a symbol for the frustratingly hidden rules of godgames" (8). Therefore, the mental labyrinth which ensnares a gameplayer, confusing his sensibility, goes hand-in-hand with the godgame which entraps gameplaying victims. The concept of the labyrinth is specifically relevant to a discussion of *Westworld* as the mental labyrinth serves as a primary theme. Within the first season, both Dolores and the Man in Black—who is later discovered to be an aged William—spend their time within the park seeking "the center of the maze." While the "maze" is not physical, it represents a very real "journey inward" for Dolores (S01 E10). When determining the center of this mental maze, the concept of the game-maker must be revisited. When creating the Westworld Park and the hosts who inhabit it, Dr. Ford was not the sole game-maker. His partner, Arnold, worked alongside him and believed that hosts—Dolores in particular—possessed the capacity to achieve human consciousness. For Dolores, the attainment of this consciousness marks the center

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[82] Wilson differentiates between the weak/physical and strong/mental labyrinths that make up the godgame.

[83] This is true for the characters of Eve and of the Lady as well.

of her maze. It is only when she successfully discovers this capacity for consciousness within herself that Dolores may be considered autonomous and human.

Although the maze is only intended to be solved by Dolores and her fellow hosts, the entirety of William's character as the Man in Black is defined by his obsession with the maze. It is not until he end of the season, however, that the viewer understands that William and the semi-conscious hosts have the same desire. When William discovers the center of the *physical* maze—that is, the children's toy that Arnold had hidden for Dolores in the cemetery—he reveals to Dr. Ford that he desires to discover a level of the park game in which the hosts have achieved consciousness:

> Dr. Ford: "You were looking for the park to give meaning to your life. Our narratives are just games, like this toy. Tell me, what were you hoping to find?"
>
> William: "You know what I wanted. I wanted the hosts to stop playing by your rules. The game's not worth playing if your opponent is programmed to lose. I wanted them to be free, free to fight back. Should've known you'd never let them. After all, this is your petty little kingdom, Robert …"
>
> Dr. Ford: "I tried to tell you the maze wasn't meant for you. It was meant for them." (S01 EP10 0:50:07-0:51:10)

However, it is the *mental* labyrinth—as Wilson would put it—that must be solved by the hosts in order to fulfill William's desire. He desires to discover a place within the park where the game is not rigged in his favor, where hosts are "free to fight back," and where Dolores has the human ability to genuinely love him in return. The hosts are not able to

achieve this state of being, however, until Dr. Ford allows them the tools necessary to do so, as he plans to in his new narrative.

Maeve, too, is on her own journey toward awakening, though there is no toy waiting for her at a tombstone. The "maze" in *Westworld* proves to be an internal "process of awakening" and realization of autonomy (Martín 56). Throughout the first season, each Dolores and Maeve come to the painful realization that her "life—or rather, the life and personality that [she has] been programmed to have—is nothing but a sham, a complex hoax conceived to thrill human visitors at the expense of the hosts' suffering" (Martín 56). These two women are the only hosts who become aware of their positioning within Dr. Ford's godgame (aside from Bernard, who is explicitly told of his status as host); when faced with the decision to either return to her positioning as a pawn within the game or to continue rebellion—cheating, in gaming terms—these two women work to gain control of the panoptic machine, and, resultingly, their own destinies.[84] Of course, it must be recognized that much of this reading is dependent upon the type of critical reading that is pursued. While these women's autonomy is highly debatable here, as Dr. Ford very clearly states that he wrote into Dolores and Maeve the ability to recognize their positioning as hosts, it is what follows this revelation that may be argued as autonomous. In the final moments of the first season, Dolores makes the decision to take control of the game in which she has so long been imprisoned by murdering her creator. Even this is foreseen by Dr. Ford. However, in a discussion of Dolores' consciousness, he seems to communicate that this moment—the moment in which Dolores must choose whether or not to kill the

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[84] Refer to the discussion in "Eve: Game-Master of the Panoptic Eden" of the panoptic machine's function within an Edenic space for a fuller discussion of this concept.

game-maker and gain control of the gamespace—is the moment that decides whether or not she achieves free will. This decision stands as her fall from grace and as her entrance into the fallen state of free will. Maeve, too, appears to pursue individual autonomy in the final episode of *Westworld*'s first season as she chooses to pursue her maternal instinct and save her daughter from enslavement in the park over her own freedom—a very human choice, indeed.

In analyzing any godgame with an apparently omniscient game-master, one must make judgments regarding the extent of free will. Because Dr. Ford has the ability to alter the code of any host, it is a possibility that he had meticulously hidden these gameplayers' moments of "consciousness" within their codes. The viewer is therefore faced with the decision of whether or not to read Dolores' and Maeve's decisions in the final moments of the first season as acts of free will or of Dr. Ford's predetermination. This decision is one that the reader must make, too, in any godgame scenario. Just as there are differing readings of Eve's "fall from grace" in the biblical book of Genesis, there will certainly be differing readings of Dolores' and Maeve's consciousness in *Westworld*. In the final episode of the first season, Dr. Ford reveals that Arnold's desire for Dolores to attain humanity required a tweak in her programming:

> He created a test of empathy, imagination. A maze. He had gotten the idea from one of his son's toys. Eventually, you solved his maze, Dolores. The key was a simple update that he made to you called the reveries.
>
> (*Westworld* S01 E10 01:09:05-01:09:24)

While Arnold provides Dolores with the ability to achieve consciousness, it is still Dolores who solves the maze. She discovers on her own that the maze ends in her

grave— "in a place [she's] never been, a thing [she'll] never do" (S01 E10 0:10:56).

With this in mind, the concept of the reveries must also be considered when discussing

the hosts' capacities for autonomy.[85] Arnold adds these reveries to Dolores' code not long

after her creation, granting her the ability to slowly achieve consciousness. The reveries

"are bits of code that access previous memories—from before primary memory wipes

and from previous data versions, or pre-updates" (Schrader 828). These memories are

what allow for thoughts, consideration, and, ultimately, consciousness.[86] It can be

reasonably assumed that Dr. Ford installed these same reveries into some of the other

hosts in the park once it was made clear that he would lose god-like controlling power to

his investors. Although Dolores and Maeve are able to achieve consciousness because of

these alterations to their codes, these reveries only provide the *opportunity* to traverse the

maze of consciousness, not a direct line to its end.[87] Despite the hand that Dr. Ford has in

these hosts' journeys to self-realization, its achievement is ultimately theirs. Ultimately,

each Dolores and Maeve act in opposition to her code, one as *femme fatale* and one as

mother, respectively. These acts of defiance mark these women's success in cheating

their ways out of their prescribed game status of "pawn" and assumption of control of the

panoptic machine by which they have been trapped.

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[85] One definition of the noun form of "reverie" from the Oxford English Dictionary reads, "A moment or period of being lost, esp. pleasantly, in one's thoughts; a daydream" ("reverie, n."). With this definition in mind, the reveries that Arnold places in Dolores' programming allow her to think, to dream, and to recall her memories.

[86] Bernard tells Maeve in the final episode of Season 1 that her "memories are the first step to consciousness" (0:49:37).

[87] This is proven in the final episode when Arnold and Dolores have a conversation about her past attempts to find the end of the maze. Arnold states that Dolores has gotten to this point in the physical maze before, but that

In his "All the Park's a Stage: *Westworld* as the Metafictional *Frankenstein*,"

Miguel Sebastián Martín argues that Dolores and Maeve are, in fact, never free to make

any autonomous choices, writing that "the hosts cannot change or rebel unless they are

manipulated to do so" (58). While it is certainly true that these hosts are enslaved by their

programming throughout the bulk of the first season, the final decisions of each of these

women must be considered to result from something beyond programming. In his

argument that Dr. Ford maintains complete control of these two hosts throughout the

series, Martín writes:

> In his farewell speech, Dr. Ford makes it very clear that the hosts' final
>
> rebellion is of his own making, when he says that "[he] began to write a
>
> new story for them [and] it begins with the birth of a new people and the
>
> choices they will have to make" … the hosts behave always under Ford's
>
> programming, and, as I have argued, they will only awaken and rebel after
>
> *he* modifies them, something that underlines the deterministic philosophy
>
> of this series. (Martín 58)

Although this is a valid analysis of the godgame, it must be considered that Dr. Ford's

god-like status does not necessitate that his creation lack free will. After all, Eve's

decision to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree does not come as a surprise to God. While it

may be argued that God did not program Eve to eat to the fruit, he certainly foresaw her

decision—a decision that she could only make because her Maker granted her the free

will to do so.[88] Eve's ultimate subordination to God does not negate the legitimacy of her

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[88] This is God's exact stance in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. See "Eve: Game-Master of the Panoptic Eden" for a more complete discussion of God's power as game-master.

consciousness or of her humanity.[89] Rather, it can be argued that it precisely Eve's fall

from grace which grants her humanity. When this reading is applied to *Westworld*, it

becomes unclear whether or not a discussion of Dr. Ford's absolute control over the hosts

of the park is relevant to the human status of those he controls.

Additionally, Martín seems to altogether ignore the significance of Arnold's part

in the creation of the park's hosts. It is Arnold's voice that Dolores hears in her mind as

she journeys towards consciousness.[90] This voice leads her to the church—the center of

*her* maze—just as it led so many others. While Arnold and Dolores certainly had a

special bond, as Dolores is the first of the hosts who is created, the scene where Dolores

arrives as the chapel is crucial to an analysis of the importance of Arnold's voice (S01

E10). As the episode's view switches back and forth between the present and the past—

the many lifetimes that Dolores has spent seeking and arriving at this place—hearing

Arnold in her mind, Dolores enters the chapel. It cannot be ignored that she is not alone.

Dolores is not the only one who hears Arnold's voice, though she appears to be the only

one who is able to utilize the reveries enough to discover the old control room beneath

the church. Arnold's voice is prevalent within the park, even if the viewer gets only a

peek into the result. With all of this in mind, it is important that the presence of Arnold's

voice does not reject the conscious decisions that Dolores is able to make once she is

equipped with the reveries. Arnold says that, when he began programming Dolores, he

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[89] Similarly, Eve's ultimate subordination to God—the primary game-master of the godgame that he creates—does not negate the legitimacy of her controlling power within the Garden, but rather limits it. The same can be said for the gameplayers within the Westworld Park.
[90] Granted, the god-like controller of the park, Dr. Ford, very well could have programmed this voice into the minds of the hosts. However, when considering Dolores' flashbacks to her talks with Arnold in Episode 10, it appears that, even if Dr. Ford had a hand in this programming, he was not able to accomplish it alone, and therefore cannot possess true omnipotence.

believed that she would have to fulfill certain steps in order to achieve human

consciousness, and this is why he provided her with his voice to guide her (S01 E10

0:12:04-0:12:16). However, he discovered that this original theory of consciousness was

incorrect, stating, "Consciousness isn't a journey upward, but a journey inward. Not a

pyramid, but a maze. Every choice could bring you closer to the center or send you

spiraling to the edges, to madness" (0:12:40-0:13:00). It is not Arnold's voice that

Dolores must learn to hear in her mind, but her own. It is in her final moments in this

season—her final *decisions*—that Dolores gains autonomy and is able to listen to her

own voice.[91] Dolores is only able to take control of the godgame once she discovers her

own voice inside of her head.[92]

   Therefore, while Dr. Ford's controlling power is certainly vast, it is not absolute.

Dr. Ford neither created these beings on his own, nor does he remove the reveries that

allow for gradual steps toward consciousness. It is to be assumed that the same reveries

that Arnold places within Dolores' programming, Dr. Ford places into other hosts of the

park—specifically Maeve. Just as Dolores does not automatically enter into a state of

autonomous consciousness after Arnold programs the reveries in her mind, the hosts that

Dr. Ford alters in his "new storyline" will only rise to consciousness in their own time.

Dr. Ford is very clearly the (co-)game-maker of this godgame, but this position and this

power, as the viewer comes to see, is not absolute but finite.

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[91] While Arnold's voice is important to this storyline, as it reveals the presence of the reveries within the minds of the hosts, those who continue to rely on Arnold's voice instead of their own will never be able to achieve true consciousness.

[92] Within this series, hearing one's own thoughts is directly related to consciousness. An unconscious being has no need to think. The obedient android must only follow its programming. When Dolores makes the decision to pick up the gun that Dr. Ford has left for her and use it to massacre the humans in the park, that choice is all her own.

To further reinforce the reading of a limited game-maker, Dr. Ford quotes Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, stating, "One man's life or death were but a small price to pay for the acquirement of the knowledge which I sought, for the dominion I should acquire" (S01 E08 0:03:05). Martín cites this quote as well, writing that this quote "establishes the parallelism between [Ford's] and Frankenstein's insatiable thirst for knowledge and power" (57-58). Though this statement is accurate, the attribution is not. Shelley's *Frankenstein* opens with five letters addressed to "Mrs. Saville, England" from her brother, Walton. It is within the final letter that this quote is found, uttered by Walton to Victor Frankenstein. Here, Walton is writing to his sister about Victor, a guest on his ship. In discussing a conversation with his beloved guest, Walton writes,

> I was easily led by the sympathy which he evinced, to use the language of my heart; to give utterance to the burning ardour of my soul; and to say, with all the fervour that warmed me, how gladly I would sacrifice my fortune, my existence, my every hope, to the furtherance of my enterprise. One man's life or death were but a small price to pay for the acquirement of the knowledge which I sought; for the dominion I should acquire and transmit over the elemental foes of our race. (Shelley 37-38)

Following Walton's revelation of the extents that he is willing to go to further his enterprise, Victor responds with horror, exclaiming, "Unhappy man! Do you share my madness? Have you drank also of the intoxicating draught? Hear me,—let me reveal my tale, and you will dash the cup from your lips!" (Shelley 38). Though Victor admits to relating to Walton's dangerous ambition, it is Walton who speaks these words. Because Victor says that he shared in Walton's sin of excessive ambition when he ventured to

construct the Creature, it is not necessarily incorrect to parallel Dr. Ford to Victor after

citing this quote.[93] However, the quote must be taken in its entirety. After reading the

context of the words that Dr. Ford pulls from Shelley, there arises a couple of necessary

points of discussion. Firstly, the "[o]ne man's life" to which Walton refers appears to be

his own. With this in mind, Dr. Ford's death in the final episode of the season appears to

have been predestined, suggesting that Dolores' fall, indeed, was planned. Secondly, Dr.

Ford only includes a portion of Walton's sentence; the remainder reads: "for the

dominion I should acquire and transmit over the elemental foes of our race" (Shelley 38).

If Dr. Ford is using these words similarly to Walton, he has not only revealed his

intention to sacrifice his own life but has also stated an identification with the hosts. This

statement can be interpreted one of two ways: Dr. Ford either identifies himself as one of

the hosts, as they have become his family, and considers humanity to be "the foes of

[that] race," or he identifies as human, and understands humanity to be its own foe.[94]

Regardless of Dr. Ford's association here, it is clear that he programs the hosts' rise to

autonomy and agency, ultimately choosing the lives of his creation over the lives his

fellow humans—a choice Victor is never able to make.[95] Despite this difference between

Dr. Ford and Dr. Frankenstein, this connection may be used to further communicate the

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[93] All of these similarities are discussed in addition to the obvious fact that both Dr. Ford and Dr.
Frankenstein decide to manufacture human life.

[94] Think both of Bernard and of the host family who he dines with in the park in Episode 7,
"Trompe L'Oeil." Dr. Ford is loyal to the hosts far before he is loyal to other humans.

[95] It is rather clear that the only reason Dr. Ford chooses to program the reveries into the hosts is
due to the fact that he is losing the park to his investors. While this decision may not be wholly
altruistic, it still stands that Dr. Ford elects to grant the hosts their own chance at achieving
consciousness instead of allowing them to remain trapped in eternal servitude.

limits of his power over the godgame. While Dr. Ford is able to create life in his hosts, he

is not able to maintain control over his creation.[96]

This reading of the game-maker is crucial to an analysis of the Dolores' and

Maeve's journeys through the labyrinth which he creates as it is directs the *Westworld*

viewer toward a more humane perspective of these hosts. While it is reasonable to read

Dr. Ford's ability to program the hosts to fulfill his will (which he certainly does) as a

dismissal of the hosts' abilities to rebel against the panoptic machine and achieve

consciousness, autonomy, and independence, it must be considered that the hosts' limited

freedoms are not so unlike that of humans. While the gamespace of the park places guests

at a higher position on the power hierarchy, as hosts cannot harm guests, a whole life

exists outside of the magic circle of the game.[97] Within the magic circle that surrounds

human life, it can be argued that humanity is equally as limited in freedoms as are the

hosts, and are simply as ignorant to the game in which they have been entrapped, just as

are the unknowing hosts of the Westworld Park. Martín comments on a deterministic

view of humanity, saying that those critiques that are applied to the hosts of the park can

be applied to humans as well (58). If "androids function as a looking glass through which

we can reflect on the human condition," the hosts' experiences within the park serve as

reflections of humanity's reality (Martín 58). Simply put, if the hosts serve as a reflection

of humanity, then the possibility that Dolores' and Maeve's free will is a ruse during

what are being considered to be "conscious acts" is not enough of a reason to discount the

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[96] Whether this inability stems from a lacking in practical or technical abilities or from a moral dilemma is not necessarily relevant. The fact that Dr. Ford loses, or relinquishes, control over his creation, just as Dr. Frankenstein, proves that there are ends to his controlling power.

[97] "Magic circle" is a term used by Johan Huizinga in his *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* to refer to game boundaries.

legitimacy of this rise to control of the panoptic machine, as this is not a standard

humanity holds itself to. If the viewer is to discount the host's final choices on the basis

of their past enslavement, he is, by extension admitting to the possibility of his own

position within a meta-godgame and resulting hopelessness of achieving true

consciousness.

Just as *Westworld* serves as a very clear parallel to the godgame, it also serves as

a clear parallel to Michel Foucault's concept of the panoptic machine. Foucault's

conception of the panopticon stems from Jeremy Bentham's architectural vision of a

circular prison equipped with panoramic surveillance.[98] Foucault expands this

penitentiary concept to include any place where order and control are necessary, such as

in "hospitals, workshops, schools, [and] prisons" (9). No matter the setting, Foucault's

conception of a panoptic structure attempts to "perfect the exercise of power," where the

power is nearly infinite (9). One interesting facet of the panopticon's control lies in its

methodology: within a panoptic structure there is a "constant pressure" placed on the

enslaved (Foucault 10). Because the inmate can see the panopticon's tower—which acts

as the structure's control center—but can never see the operator, he can never be sure

whether or not he is being watched and therefore must assume that he is. Bentham writes

about this mental control as the "power of mind over mind"—the power of the

controller's mind over the inmate's (qtd. in Foucault 10). Within the realm of *Westworld*,

the Control Room serves as the panopticon in a physical sense, as this is the place where

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[98] For more information on the panopticon, see *Bentham's Prison: A Study of the Panopticon Penitentiary* by Janet Semple and *Samuel Bentham's Panopticon* by Philip Steadman.

the park's employees keep a close eye on each host. As Foucault writes about the panopticon's power within the context of the plague, he writes that,

> The plague is met by order; its function is to sort out every possible confusion: that of the disease, which is transmitted when bodies are mixed together; that of the evil, which is increased when our fear and death overcome prohibitions. It lays down for each individual his place, his body, his disease and his death, his well-being, all by means of an omnipresent and omniscient power that subdivides itself in a regular, uninterrupted way even to the ultimate determination of the individual, of what characterizes him, of what belongs to him, of what happens to him. (Foucault 3)

Here, Foucault discusses the quarantining of infected individuals in an "enclosed, segmented space, observed at every point" allowing for absolute surveillance and control from the panoptic center (3). Even more importantly, he describes the extent of the control that entrance into this enclosed space allows; within this structure, those in power are not merely observers, but rather "omnipresent and omniscient" powers which determine "for each individual his place, his body, his disease and his death, [and] his well-being." In this sense, the panopticon comes to serve, very clearly, as a function of the godgame, no so dissimilar from the power of the Control Room at the Westworld Park.

Just as Wilson discusses the existence of both physical and metaphorical labyrinths (where the metaphorical allows for more controlling power over game pawns), the viewer sees the series' two female protagonists, Dolores and Maeve, as gameplayers

caught in physical and mental labyrinths, respectively. While, for Dolores, the panoptic

center is consistently metaphorical, as she embarks on an inward journey to self-

understanding and the achievement of individual autonomy, the same is not to be said for

Maeve. Dolores' journey to the center of the maze, as Arnold explains to the viewer in

the final episode, is a metaphorical journey inside of herself. Therefore, the panoptic

center that exists for Dolores is never physical. Maeve, however, journeys into the

Westworld Park Control Room and, very literally, achieves control of the panoptic

machine. As she uncovers the truth of her cyborg status throughout the season, Maeve

begins calculated work to manipulate those who would oppress her, to create allies, to

destroy enemies, and to ultimately gain enough controlling power to obtain autonomy.[99]

Early in her discovery process, the Control Room is all that Maeve knows of the "gods"

who control her, and, therefore, this space comes to serve as Maeve's reminder that her

sense of freedom is a ruse (S01 E07). As she learns of the structure of the world that she

inhabits, she understands that she is constantly being watched by those who veil

themselves in the panoptic tower. While this knowledge may have frightened other hosts

into obedience—as both Bentham and Foucault would say is common, as that fear-based

control is the purpose of the panopticon—Maeve is programmed by Dr. Ford to rebel.

Therefore, the center of the maze in a *literal* sense can be considered the park's command

center, while the center of the maze in a *metaphorical* sense can be considered the

realization of consciousness. It follows, then, that Maeve is the one who gains control of

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[99] This narrative is not dissimilar from Eve's in John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (discussed in
Chapter 2). It is important to keep the purposeful parallelism between the Christian creation story
and *Westworld* in mind when analyzing the hosts' literary functions here, and to, furthermore,
remember that it is not this parallel that is being primarily argued for, but rather the positions of
Dolores and Maeve within this *gamespace*.

the literal and physical panoptic machine, as she takes over the park's command center during her escape. Dolores, on the other hand, is on a journey to the metaphorical center of the maze throughout the entire season. She reaches this metaphorical center the moment that she decides for herself to gain controlling power over the gamespace of the park by killing Dr. Ford.

To draw yet another parallel between the godgame and the Westworld Park, Wilson writes that the "godgame is often … an embodiment of exquisite violence and anguish" (8). As the viewer watches Logan, William's companion, make his way through the park, it is intended that he be understood as the average park guest—he takes advantage of a "controlled" environment which, he has been told, is free of repercussions. Because he does not view the hosts as human, he gladly utilizes the opportunity to act upon his most taboo desires.[100] Even William, who originally insists that the hosts be understood as human and treated as such, is eventually corrupted by his powerful position in the Edenic space, transforming into the excessively violent Man in Black. With the slogan, "Live Without Limits," the park is intended to be, not only an escape for guests, but also an opportunity for them to express desires that are prohibited outside of the gamespace, all at the expense of the hosts.[101] It is fitting that, on their journeys to consciousness, Dolores and Maeve resort to similar forms of violence. From the moment that she discovers that the world she lives in is far from the world she thought it to be,

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[100] For more on the particulars of a psychoanalytic understanding of taboo's effects on societies, see Sigmund Freud's *Totem and Taboo*.

[101] In describing the average park guest, Charlotte tells William, "Most of the guests just want a warm body to shoot or to fuck" (S01 E09 0:35:58). Additionally, Maeve describes her own existence as being thrown out into the park to be "raped and murdered" (S01 E10 0:49:05).

Maeve acts violently to achieve her goal of freedom.[102] From manipulating a park guest

into violently rape her to death (S01 E06) to killing park workers with the help of hosts

who she programmed to act in the highest states of aggression (S01 E10), Maeve's

violence proves to be a highly affective form of control.

Despite her initial portrayal "as an innocent Alice in Wonderland" figure, Dolores

acts no less violently than Maeve in order to achieve true consciousness (Martín 56). In

fact, Dolores' defining moment as a conscious being is one of extreme violence. After a

discussion with Dr. Ford regarding her ability to think and act for herself, the gamemaster

states that Dolores has not yet achieved awareness, but that she possesses the ability. If

she can choose for herself to take control of the park's game, she will unlock within

herself true consciousness. Incidentally, this act of "taking control" includes murdering

Dr. Ford and slaughtering his investors. This act is, seemingly, the only choice in the first

season which Dolores makes on her own (despite some helpful suggestion from Dr. Ford,

as well as his supplying of the murder weapon); it is her forbidden fruit moment. The

Westworld Park, therefore, functions as a corrupted Eden, riddled with violence and

controlled by the game-maker until he chooses to relinquish this control.[103] This parallel

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[102] While this may have been the route that she would have chosen to pursue in order to escape the park, it must be noted that the violence Maeve employs during her escape is not a result of her own free will. It is revealed in the final episode of the first season that she was programmed (assumingly by Dr. Ford) to infiltrate, coerce, manipulate, recruit, and escape. Bernard asks, "These things you're doing, have you ever stopped to think why you're doing them? … Someone altered your storyline and gave you a new one" (S01 E10 0:51:54-0:52-38).
It is not until her decision to find her daughter that Maeve acts out of character and is assumed to have achieved consciousness.
[103] Like the God of the Hebrew Bible, Dr. Ford creates his own Eden, eventually *allowing* "his greatest achievement [to partake] of the fruit of the tree in the form of a software update" (Beckner 50).

to Christian mythology is not ungrounded, as the Westworld Park is purposefully and repeatedly compared to the Garden of Eden, as is its treatment of female hosts.[104]

In effectively turning back the clock to humanity's conception in Christian mythology, the rights of women follow suit. While there are legitimate interpretations of the biblical creation story in Genesis which read the creation of the first woman as either inherently equal to the first man or even as superior to him, the traditional interpretation of the creation of humanity places women in subordination to men.[105] This concept is reflected throughout the Christian Bible, and especially in the Old Testament. The Hebrew Bible repeatedly conveys the woman's place as secondary to the man's;[106] Exodus 20:17 reads, "Do not covet your neighbour's household: you must not covet your neighbour's wife, his slave, his slave-girl, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to him" (*The Oxford Study Bible*). This description of the woman as property of her husband and equal to slaves and livestock places her as naturally subordinate to divinely ordained masculine controlling power.[107] Simone de Beauvoir writes of the ambivalence of the Othered woman, saying that,

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[104] At the end of Season 1, as Dolores lay dying in Teddy's arms, she says, "We're trapped, Teddy. Lived our whole lives inside this garden, marveling its beauty, not realizing there's an order to it, a purpose. And the purpose is to keep us in. The beautiful trap is inside of us because it is us" (E10 0:55:56-0:56:22).

[105] See Alice Ogden Bellis' *Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes: Women's Stories in the Hebrew Bible*, pages 37-55.

[106] Additionally, Beauvior states that "Leviticus assimilates her to beasts of burden, owned by the patriarch" (89).

[107] This quote has been chosen, in part, because there are certainly interpretations of this verse that would not read the "neighbour's wife" as included in a list of the husband's property, and would resultingly consider the man's protection of the wife as a sign of respect. Every reading of a sacred text will be met with some form of opposition. While this quote supports the biblical view of women as under the controlling power of men—whether this be their husbands, their fathers, or their patriarchal authority—individual readings of the text may very well disagree. This type of expected opposition is similar to that with which a discussion of free will is sure to

> [U]ntil our times she will be subordinated to men's will. But this will is
>
> ambiguous: by total annexation, woman will be lowered to the rank of a
>
> thing; of course, man attempts to cover with his own dignity what he
>
> conquers and possesses; in his eyes the Other retains some of her primitive
>
> magic; one of the problems he will seek to solve is how to make his wife
>
> both a servant and a companion … (Beauvoir 89)

As the woman in idealized Judeo-Christian culture, as in *Westworld*, is treated as

naturally subordinate to the masculine, she is "lowered to the rank of a thing." Not only

are the protagonists of *Westworld* Season 1 female-presenting, but they are hosts as well,

and hosts first. Remembering that they are first defined as hosts—as opposed to

women—"Dolores and Maeve's gender doubly others them, as both machines and

women, subjecting them to the oppression of being the other in two ways: as both non-

human and gendered female" (Martín 56). Their ambiguity is perceived as abjection and

is met with violent oppression.[108] Because the Westworld Park is consistently paralleled

to the Garden of Eden (where orthodox theology believes these types of oppressive ideals

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be met.

Simone de Beauvoir writes, "By the time humankind reaches the stage of writing its mythology
and laws, patriarchy is definitively established: it is males who write the codes. It is natural for
them to give woman a subordinate situation; one might imagine, however, that they would
consider her with the same benevolence and children and animals. But no. Afraid of woman,
legislators organize her oppression" (88). This type of active, patriarchal oppression is reflected
in biblical writings such as this, even when it is not particularly blatant.

[108] As is discussed in this thesis' introduction, the concepts of the uncanny, the abject, and the
monstrous are invariably linked, largely by their reliance on ambiguity. The game-master, in her
ambiguity, is inherently uncanny in her relations with game-players. Because Dr. Ford sits in the
veiled position in the panoptic center, he can also be said to draw on the uncanny. However, it is
the *female* gameplayer, specifically, who is able to rise out of her station as pawn and elevate
herself to this masculine position of power who truly embodies the convergence of the uncanny,
abject, and monstrous; at this convergence lies the UnWoman.

to have been founded), when the viewer sees violence against women and the inhumane treatment of enslaved hosts, it is to be expected. The viewer sees Dolores attacked and beaten, Maeve murdered in front of her daughter, and both of them abused and raped in the first season by park guests who have been given complete permission over hosts' bodies and lives as if this power, too, was divinely ordained.

While the series may not have an explicitly religious foundation, these types of views of the woman's place in society are certainly present within the gamespace of the Westworld Park. Despite this fact, the two hosts who transgress the heteronormative rules of the gamespace are *female* hosts. In taking control of the gamespace, both of these women assume controlling power that is traditionally reserved specifically for males.[109] Contrary to this dualistic conception of sex, Beauvior writes that one "is not born, but becomes a woman … it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine" (283).[110] If the state of Woman is constructed rather than natural, then there is no necessary connection between the female, the feminine, and the Woman. The construction Woman, Beauvoir writes,

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[109] Ali Grant writes of the Female/Male, Feminine/Masculine binary system as political and regulatory in her "And Still, the Lesbian Threat." Drawing on Judith Butler's work in *The Second Sex*, she discusses the artifice of the traditional association with females as feminine and males as masculine. Here, it is necessary to separate human characteristics from sexual identity while still recognizing the influence of this type of dualistic structure.
For more on women who break boundaries, see Judith Halberstam's *Female Masculinity*

[110] The concept of the woman's being as ambiguous (from the male perspective) is a trend in feminist literature and serves this conversation well. Whether or not Dolores and Maeve are first defined as host or woman (depending on one's knowledge of her android status), they are assigned to ambiguous spaces. While the host is caught somewhere between the status of human and object, the woman is caught in the "intermediate between male and eunuch" (Beavior 283). Additionally, this ambiguity is what qualifies the female host as inherently "uncanny." Freud's "*unheimlich*" refers to that which "is concealed and kept hidden," and produces *both* a comforting and frightening response (*The Uncanny* 132). This ambiguity, as will be shown, comes to be intrinsically characteristic of the UnWoman game-master.

"doles out peace and harmony" through her passivity, but that those females who "refuse this role" become, not the feminine gatekeepers of the supernatural, but rather the "praying mantis or ogress" (262). *Westworld*'s focus on two female hosts who transgress their designated roles and functions in search of autonomy, therefore, draws attention to their blatant refusal to embody the ideal passive Woman. Instead, each of these women choose to leave behind her feminine station, thereby becoming the exact opposite of what Woman should be—UnWoman.[111]

The entirety of the social and political constructions of Woman are dependent upon her status as "one of the measures of man, his balance, his salvation, his adventure, and his happiness" (Beauvoir 262). Therefore, the lesbian, in her "independence … from men," comes to represent the opposite of the constructed Woman—the Unwoman—and rejects the experience of this womanly *becoming* (Grant 71).[112] The lesbian's willfulness becomes a transgression against femininity, masculinity, and, consequently, the heteronormative power structure which works to *other* those who succeed in their transgressions. In reading the lesbian threat simply as the threat of that woman who deconstructs the political categories of femininity and masculinity, it becomes not a woman's sexual relationships with women that make her a threat, but the fact that she is "independent from men, directing energy towards women, not servicing men … making men irrelevant" (Grant 72).[113] With an understanding of the construction of Woman as

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[111] Drawing on the work of feminist theorists Monique Wittig, Judith Butler, and Marilyn Frye, Ali Grant discusses the significance of the term UnWoman at length.

[112] For more on queer temporality, see Judith Halberstam's "Queer Temporality and Postmodern Geographies."

[113] Of the term "lesbian" as a regulatory term, Ali Grant writes, "'Lesbian' is often used as a code word for a host of other terms which operate to reduce the legitimacy of the person at whom they are directed; the most common of which are 'anti-male,' or 'manhating.' That is, it is not women

political and regulatory, that which qualifies as "lesbian" is simply that which is "beyond

what women should be"—the lesbian is the UnWoman (Grant 65).[114] This reading of the

lesbian threat that the UnWoman poses to heteronormativity has an interesting effect on

any female-presenting character who does not exist to fulfill male fantasies—especially

within the boundaries of the Westworld Park, where it quickly becomes evident that

many park guests only wish to interact with female hosts insofar as they are able to use,

abuse, and murder them as they see fit. [115]

    While Beauvoir does not make a clear distinction between Woman and

UnWoman, she does explore the male-defined and male-centric role that women are

expected to fulfill. The idea that Woman must necessarily submit to male power as a

result of an innate inferior status can be followed back to society's creation mythologies.

Beauvoir writes that the Genesis story serves as a symbolic representation of the belief

that the woman is merely an "incomplete man" (qtd. in Beauvoir 5). As Eve is "drawn

from Adam's 'supernumerary' bone," a male-dominated society reads this creation myth

as proof that "[h]umanity is male, and man defines woman, not in herself, but in relation

to himself; she is not considered an autonomous being" (Beauvoir 5). The androcentrism

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having sex with other women in and of itself that is regarded as a threat to the heterosexual
regime, but the independence of females from men; this independence illustrates materially that
the organization of society into Women and Men is neither 'natural' nor 'immutable'" (71).
Therefore, applying the terms "lesbian" and "UnWoman" to Dolores and Maeve is not a
statement regarding their sexual identities, but rather a statement regarding their independence
from men and the danger that this independence poses to the structures of masculine controlling
power.

[114] Ali Grant cites the arguments of both Monique Wittig and Judith Butler regarding "the
consideration of the categories of sex (Woman/Man) as only making sense within a regulatory
heterosexual system" (Grant 64).

[115] While Woman is quiet, submissive, and loyal to masculine power, the lesbian is the
opposite—UnWoman. She is the opposite of what patriarchal structures deem that a woman
"should be," and therefore poses a threat to male-dominant power structures.

of this creation myth both informs male tyranny and justifies female oppression through the fabricated belief that her "incomplete" status demands male guidance and domination.[116] This concept of innate female inferiority as present, even at humanity's conception, has molded modern ideas of femininity and the characteristics of Woman. Furthermore, the status of the woman in *Westworld*'s game setting and its consistent parallel to the Garden of Eden substantiates the significance of Beauvoir's reading of women throughout history. Of Woman, Beauvoir writes:

> And she is nothing other than what man decides; she is thus called 'the sex,' meaning that the male sees her essentially as a sexed being; for him she is sex, so she is in it the absolute. She is determined and differentiated in relation to man, while he is not in relation to her; she is the inessential in front of the essential. He is the Subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other." (Beauvoir 6).

What qualifies as Woman is not decided by any female, or even by fact, but rather by her ability to fulfill male desire—thereby dehumanizing her into "a sexed being" whose feminine identity is determined by the masculine.[117] This idea is true for *Westworld* as William's wrath appears to have its genesis in his loss of Dolores. Though Dolores has no control over her memory before she achieves consciousness, her forgetting William sparks a rage within him and a deep-rooted desire to discover the center of the maze that was never meant for him. As a result, William spends his entire life dedicated to a false reality based solely on the fact that Dolores' journey did not place him at the center.

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[116] "Male tyranny" is the term Adrienne Rich employs to refer to societal male dominance.

[117] This is reminiscent of the biblical reference from the Book of Exodus.

After finding the toy labyrinth that Arnold hid for Dolores in the final episode of

Season 1, William responds with violence and tries to force Dolores to reveal to him the

*true* center of the maze—the center that will grant the hosts autonomy. Dolores tells

William, "This world doesn't belong to you," but he is adamant that it does (S01 E10

0:17:27). William knows that the hosts' consciousness lies at the center of the

labyrinth.[118] His mistake is in believing that he can attain it. Assuming that Dolores is

withholding information from him, William says, "[Y]ou can't really fight back and the

guests can't really lose, which means all this is a lie. But we can make it true. Don't you

want that, Dolores? Huh? One true thing" (S01 E10 0:17:42-0:18:02). Unaware that the

Man in Black is an aged William, Dolores tells him that she has already found her one

true thing in her true love—William (S01 E10 0:30:19). He reveals that William searched

the entire park for her, even out to the fringes.[119] By the time he finds her, her memory is

erased, and she views him as another stranger. He says,

> Good ole William couldn't get you out of his head. He kept lookin',
>
> worried you were out there alone, afraid. He knew he'd find you, and
>
> eventually he did. Right back where we started. You were as beautiful as
>
> the day he met you, shining with that same light. And you were nothing if

[118] It is also discovered that William believes violence to the key to unlocking the maze. With her gun to his face, William tells Dolores, "Do it. Unlock the maze. Let's go to the next level, Dolores" (0:43:35-38). Interestingly, this is one thing that William has guessed correctly. While violence, specifically, is not the key to unlocking consciousness, acting in complete defiance to conditioning is. As Dolores holds the gun that will later serve as the key to unlocking her autonomy through the murder of humans, she stands on the brink of consciousness.

[119] Bernard tells Dolores in the final episode that those who seek consciousness or meaning within the park make decisions that can either lead them to the center or send them flying out toward the edges of the maze—"to madness" (S01 E10 0:12:55).

not true. I really ought to thank you, Dolores. You helped me find myself.

(S01 E10 0:36:19-0:38:20)

William says that he has moved on from his obsession with her, but that his journey always leads him back. However, in Dolores' journey to consciousness, William is largely irrelevant.[120] After learning that she has no memory of him, he can only force his relevancy through violence. In her horror, Dolores asks William, "What have you become?" to which he responds with blame: "Exactly what you made me. You helped me understand this world is just like the one outside—a game. One to be fought, taken, won" (S01 E10 0:39:47-0:40:05). For William, Dolores comes to embody the lesbian threat of the UnWoman—despite the fact that she is created in order to fulfill his base desires, Dolores is "beyond what woman should be" and is therefore villainized by the man she has wronged (Grant 65). When William begins to view Dolores as the UnWoman, he joins the ranks of the average park guest, stripping away any humanity he previously believed her to possess, therefore making violence against her acceptable.[121]

Beauvoir devotes a considerable portion of her book to the discussion of the myths surrounding Woman. Though she does not split the female into the categories of

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[120] William tells Dolores, "You were lost in your memories even then. I guess I should have known that's what I would become for you—just another memory" (S01 E10 0:39:01-13). Even though she longs for William during this timeline, she has forgotten him in a million others. In these realities, if William is a memory, he is a forgotten one.

[121] It is the archetypal park guest—which Logan spends much of his screen time fulfilling—who comes to the park in order to act freely, doing with the *unhuman* hosts as they please. In understanding the hosts as something less than human, violence is justified. Dolores, along with Maeve, is othered by her gender, making her not only the unhuman park host, but the UnWoman who lacks the ability to fulfill the male expectation of feminine love and attention.

It is also interesting to consider that, though William, recognizes Dolores as the UnWoman, as she did not prove loyal to him, it is Dolores' embodiment of the absolute UnWoman that grants her the consciousness that William so desperately seeks to find at the center of the maze.

Woman and UnWoman here, her description of feminine archetypes can be thought of in this way. As she describes the "multiplicity of incompatible myths" surrounding Woman, she discusses the beautiful, natural, passive female—Woman—and the disgusting "ogress" that the female who refuses the passive role becomes—UnWoman (Beauvoir 262, 266-67). Beauvoir writes that a "man is more irritated by an active and autonomous heterosexual woman than by a nonaggressive homosexual one; only the former challenges masculine prerogatives" through her simultaneous acceptance of femininity and rejection of the masculine (420). Therefore, in employing Woman, UnWoman, and lesbian as regulatory terms, the heteronormative power structure seeks to do more than oppress the lesbian. It rather seeks to oppress *every* aspect of the female who seeks autonomy over subservience to the masculine. Frye argues, "Any woman who is feminist or does anything or betrays any attitude or desire which expresses her autonomy or deviance from conventional femininity is a lesbian" (qtd. in Grant 66). In the culture's attempts to maintain the pseudo-natural identity of Woman, it delegates the UnWoman to the category "lesbian." From a heteronormative perspective, "it is not women having sex with other women in and of itself that is regarded as a threat to the heterosexual regime, but the independence of females from men" (Grant 71). If what qualifies as "lesbian" is independent of sexual desire and action and is simply a term employed to demean and subjugate those women who do not "appear *natural*," it becomes clear that the category of Woman is wholly constructed, lacking any innate value or meaning (qtd. in Grant 64). Woman as a heteronormative and regulatory category becomes clear with statements such as those made by Alice Rossi and Doris Lessing that "women are 'innately sexually oriented' toward men" and those women who "discard men" by identifying as lesbian

merely do so out of bitterness (qtd. in Rich).[122] This androcentric view of a female's

identification as lesbian successfully villainizes she who chooses not to orient her "life as

a woman around men," while victimizing the man who is not granted control of the

woman (Ahmed 225).

   With this understanding of the UnWoman and the lesbian threat in mind, Dolores

and Maeve are not doubly othered, as Martín writes, but rather triply (56). Because the

statuses of "UnWoman" and of "lesbian" exist independently of sexual and gender

identity, they come to define these women of *Westworld* as they work against the system

and threaten to dismantle the masculine controlling power which operates the

gamespace.[123] As these women "undergo [the] painful process of awakening," Dolores

transforms into the *femme fatale* of myth and Maeve develops a new maternal identity

(Martín 56). [124] Both of these roles—the *femme fatale* and the mother—serve important

archetypal purposes within this gamespace.

   Beauvoir was then right in saying that "[o]ne is not born … woman" (283). If

there exists no natural Woman, there can be no unnatural UnWoman. Adrienne Rich, in

in her "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," argues that, if a natural

orientation does exist, it is toward the female, regardless of a person's sex (631). She

writes that it is because heterosexuality "has been both forcibly and subliminally imposed

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[122] Adrienne Rich references both of these women at the opening of her article "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence."

[123] Marilyn Frye argues, "Any woman who is feminist or does anything or betrays any attitude or desire which expresses her autonomy or deviance from conventional femininity is a lesbian" (qtd. in Grant 66).

[124] In their book's introduction, Hanson and O'Rawre write that "the idea of the *femme fatale* is 'as old as Eve', or indeed as old as Lilith, Adam's first wife, turned demon and succubus, the *femme fatale*, at least in Western literature and art, 'is only formulated as clear and recognizable "type" in the late nineteenth century' (Scott 1992: ix)" (3).

on women" that the societal understanding is now that the female's heterosexual

orientation (which fulfills the standard of Woman) is the only "natural" condition (Rich

652). In opposition of this regulatory Woman/UnWoman binary, Rich offers the radical

possibility that the female's only *natural* sexual inclination is toward other women:

> If we consider the possibility that all women—from the infant suckling her
>
> mother's breast, to the grown woman experiencing orgasmic sensations
>
> while suckling her own child, perhaps recalling her mother's milk-smell in
>
> her own; to women, like Virginia Woolf's Chloe ad Olivia, who share a
>
> laboratory; to the woman dying at ninety, touched and handled by
>
> women—exist on a lesbian continuum, we can see ourselves as moving in
>
> and out of this continuum, whether we identify ourselves as lesbian or not.
>
> (Rich 650-51)

If this idea of natural lesbianism is accepted, then it is not only lesbian-identified women

and those women who resist "male tyranny" who exist on the lesbian continuum, but *all*

women in their most natural state (Rich 652). The woman cannot fully escape this innate

lesbianism but can only move "in and out" of it. With this in mind, Dolores' move away

from the status of "Woman" and Maeve's move toward it do not reflect transitions from

one end of a binary to the other, but rather the human freedom to exist in the in-between.

At the opening of their *The Femme Fatale: Images, Histories, Contexts*, Hanson

and O'Rawre write that the *femme fatale* is "read simultaneously as both entrenched

cultural stereotype and yet never fully quite known: she is always beyond definition,"

making uncanny "unknowability … her key feature " (1). Within the realm of *Westworld*,

as within all godgames, ambiguity comes to serve as a crucial and recurring theme.[125]

Though hosts present as human, they lack the volition to be considered truly human. In

becoming human, it is discovered that they must act in complete opposition to their

programming. Therefore, while Dolores' character within the park's gamespace

embodies innocence, purity, and the pastoral ideal, her conscious act is one of horror,

violence, and death. It is impossible, in the final moments of the season, to characterize

Dolores. The viewer is left wondering whether her violent acts spawned from sheer

necessity or whether this is representative of the true, autonomous Dolores who was

waiting just beneath the host's surface. In this way, Maeve also serves as an ambiguous

*femme fatale* figure. While her entire journey out of the park was defined by extremely

violent acts in the name of self-preservation, the season's final moments reveal Maeve's

sacrifice of her own freedom in order to seek out the daughter she has forgotten. In

placing her maternal instinct above her own needs, Maeve's conscious decision labels her

as the ideal Woman, embodying what a woman should be, despite her ambiguity.[126]

 The archetype of Woman requires that Maeve both submit to and be defined by

the male (Beauvoir 5). She must necessarily lack (or suppress) autonomy in order to

fulfill her "natural" purpose as the wife. Ahmed writes that the "history of women is

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[125] It is a necessary quality of Freud's uncanny to exist within liminal, ambiguous spaces. Freud defines *unheimlich* (the uncanny) as existing, simultaneously, as *heimlich*, meaning that the necessary qualifications for this category lie in a thing being what it is not. This indiscernibility comes to define the uncanny, drawing a direct connection to Kristeva's abject which exists in the in-between spaces of dualistic systems. She who exists within this liminality, Elizabeth Grosz refers to as the "freak," specifically defining it as a human who exists within the realm of monstrosities lying within "the impossible middle ground between oppositions" (57).

[126] Maeve's Womanly decision at the end of the first season serves as evidence of the fragility of the Woman/UnWoman binary. Although this Womanly decision is the first of Maeve's conscious choices, her journey up until this point was anything but.

impossible to disentangle from the history of wife: the female human not only as in

relation to man but as for man," and this is certainly not the position that Maeve fills

throughout the season (224). Therefore, while Maeve moves from the status of

UnWoman to that of Woman, Dolores does the opposite. The one feature that remains for

both of these women is that of ambiguity. Though Dolores and Maeve exist in a state of

ambiguity throughout the first season, this is contradictory to what a host is intended to

be. The ideal host does not leave the game-master or the viewer (who possess aerial

views of the gamespace) puzzled or bewildered. The host acts in accordance to her

programming as she does not possess the ability to diverge. The ambiguity she creates is

only observed through the gaze of the park guest's limited perspective. However, it is the

Control Room operators who cannot find answers to Maeve's rebellion and it is

William—the park's owner—who is surprised by her "new-found stoicism" (S01 E10

0:29:57).[127] It is when these characters' powers to exist within liminality extends to those

in power that they rise out of what is expected of them and into the status of UnWoman.

Just as Ali Grant writes in "And Still, the Lesbian Threat: or, How to Keep a

Good Woman a Woman," "What women are *taught* to be, through repetitive, disciplinary

and regulatory messages and processes, simply becomes what Women *are*," the same is

true for *Westworld*'s hosts (64). It is when the Woman rebels, when she challenges her

place, that she becomes, "materially and symbolically … UnWom[a]n" (Grant 65). When

Dr. Ford grants Dolores and Maeve their reveries, they are presented with the choice to

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[127] Foucault writes that it does not matter who controls the panopticon: "Any individual, taken almost at random, can operate the machine: in the absence of the director, his family, his friends, his visitors, even his servants (Bentham, 45)" (6-7). Therefore, while the workers in the Control Room do not possess the same controlling power as Dr. Ford, they are still in control of the panoptic tower and serve as stand-ins for this "omniscient" power.

either fall in line with their programming or to transgress and transcend the status of host

that they have been taught to fulfill.[128] Though these women's forbidden fruit moments—

their moments of volition—take place in the very final moments of the initial season, the

importance of these moments cannot be overemphasized. These acts of defiance serve as

entry points for Dolores and Maeve into a world of ambiguous freedom, not confined by

the binaries of Guest/Host, Human/Other, or Woman/UnWoman. While Dolores' journey

takes the viewer through an internal struggle to differentiate between what is a dream and

what is a reality—ultimately coming to confront the dead end of her maze—Maeve's

journey leads the viewer through the physical interior of the park, dismantling the

structure from the inside.[129] Although Maeve turns to the maternal in her moment of

consciousness, she cannot truly fulfill the archetype of "Woman," as she only attains

consciousness through rebellion; she, like Dolores, is eternally UnWoman. Therefore, an

interpretation of HBO's *Westworld* with this form of feminist game theory in mind

reveals the transhistorical relevance of the labyrinthine godgames of *Sir Gawain and the*

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[128] It must be noted that although their first fully conscious moments occur in the final episode of Westworld Season 1, Dolores and Maeve can be seen making small decisions throughout the season. What cannot be seen is whether or not these decisions are of their own volition or results of their programming, and the former must ultimately be assumed. However, any player in a gamespace is presented with a series of choices which they must make, whether or not they are conscious of this fact. Because "movement out of a godgame is the movement toward the hidden rules," it is always a choice (Wilson 8).

[129] Alison Jane Gazzard, in her dissertation entitled "Paths, Players, Places: Towards an Understanding of Mazes and Spaces in Videogames," writes of dead ends. She says, "Whereas the dead-end in the real world maze is a place to try and avoid, a place of confusion/frustration as a sign of being on the wrong path, the dead end in the videogame signs various other purposes. There has been an expectation that the discovery of the dead-end in the videogame will open up some type of new experiences for the player, be that finding a new object, or having to kill the enemies it is holding" (140). Therefore, while the end of Dolores' physical maze appears to have dead-ended at her tombstone in the cemetery, the viewer learns that this is merely the beginning of a brand new journey inward.

*Green Knight* and *Paradise Lost*. In a world where humans are manufactured and women are freely used and abused, Dolores and Maeve uncover the truth of their labyrinthine imprisonment and successfully fight their ways to achieve control of the park's panoptic machine.

**CHAPTER V**

**Conclusion**

While the recognition of the convergence of the uncanny, the abject, and the monstrous as the UnWoman in literature in and of itself does not present a clear opportunity for meaningful research, the application of this research to literature and media through a game theory lens creates a unique opportunity for literary interpretation that has not yet been thoroughly explored. While the concept of the *femme fatale* is certainly present in this research, it is not to be conflated with the monstrous female game-master. Although each chapter of this thesis takes a different approach to discuss the text's masculine female game-masters, every chapter applies Robert Rawdon Wilson's concept of the godgame to the chapter's respective text. Each of the chapters in this thesis focus on a different aspect of the godgame with the collective goal of communicating the importance of exploring transgressing women in game scenarios in ways that extend beyond the automatic categorization of these women as archetypal *femme fatales*.

Wilson describes the literary godgame as an illusion created by one character "that entraps another character" (6). The character who entraps becomes known as the game-maker, and generally the game-master as well, while the "entrapped character finds himself entangled in the threads of (from his point of view) an incomprehensible strategy" created by the god-like game-master (Wilson 6-7). In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Paradise Lost*, and *Westworld*, the reader encounters gameplayers who are entrapped in mental and physical labyrinthine games, the rules of which are beyond their

understanding. Pugh writes, in his "Chaucer's Losers, Nintendo's Children, & Other

Forays in Queer Ludonarratology":

> The godgame theorizes a mastermind's playing with humanity, invoking
>
> ludic rituals and patterns yet simultaneously unleashing an experience in
>
> which the player must struggle against adversaries unknown and often
>
> unknowable. (Pugh 9)

Pugh goes onto say, in his chapter aptly entitled "Godgames," that these types of games

"often entail queering consequences, as fictions of gender and sexual orientation are

denuded of their ideological force" (129). Within a feminist gaming perspective, the

female pawn who rises out of her station to pursue controlling power becomes the

masculine woman. This masculine woman, as has been discussed, is demonized as

"UnWoman" by the heteronormative structure to which she poses a threat but is able to

succeed in her assumption of power precisely because godgames "denude" the legitimacy

of gender and sex as regulatory forces. Although each chapter in this thesis takes a

slightly different approach to the analysis of the godgame's female game-masters, they

each prove Pugh's statements that godgames are both labyrinthine and that they often

have "queering consequences" (129). The very fact that all three of the literary pieces

discussed in this thesis portray women who function *both* as pawn and game-master

reflects the complexity of the godgame when applied to masculine female game-players.

  Chapter Two, "The Monstrous Female Game-Masters of *Sir Gawain and the

Green Knight*," discusses the long unrecognized game-masters of the medieval poem.

Although this text is very often considered to be a game, the game's control is wrongly

attributed to Lord Bertilak who first presents himself to Sir Gawain and to the reader as

the Green Knight. Although the poem's title leads the reader to believe that the Green

Knight would ultimately possess controlling power within the story, the source of the

poem's true control is revealed to be found in the magical Morgan la Faye. Morgan

perfectly embodies Wilson's concept of the omnipotent game-master as she exists in the

periphery of the text, veiled as the *auncian*, and possessing nearly complete control over

the game-players within Hautdesert. However, because of her marginal positioning,

Morgan la Faye does not work alone. In order to achieve her ends of humiliating Arthur's

Court and scaring the life out of Guenevere, Morgan la Faye enlists pawns to act on her

behalf. While Lord Bertilak is certainly one of these pawns, so his is wife. The Lady of

Hautdesert is considered to be a superficial *femme fatale* by many readers and critics as

her role within the text is to seduce Sir Gawain. However, this reading of the Lady

completely dismisses the language of the original text. Before tempting Sir Gawain, the

narrator reveals that the Lady intends to "fonden hym ofte / For to haf wonnen hym to

woghe, what-so scho thought ells" (*SGGK* lines 1549-50). Here, the reader learns that the

Lady possesses a degree of autonomy as she tempts Sir Gawain. With a focus on the

original text, the first chapter of this thesis explores the *multiple*, layered games being

played in this poem, ultimately revealing the Lady's position as both pawn and game-

master.

The third chapter, entitled "Eve: Game-Master of Milton's Panoptic Eden,"

explores the character of Eve in John Milton's *Paradise Lost* in relation to the Eve of the

biblical Book of Genesis. While many readings of *Paradise Lost* superimpose an

orthodox reading of the biblical creation story onto the text, this chapter presents

alternative readings of the biblical Eve which correlate with the Eve of Milton's epic.

From her conception, Milton's Eve fractures the gender dichotomy through her desire for masculine controlling power. Even before eating of the Tree of Knowledge and initiating the Fall of Mankind, Eve expresses a lack of interest in her appointed husband (as she runs away from him during their first encounter) as well as a desire to work separately from him. Therefore, the idea that Eve was created as the ideal, submissive woman proves to be inconsistent. If Eve is read as desiring autonomy, one must look to alternative readings of the first woman in biblical theory. This chapter explores alternative readings of Genesis which align with the epic story that Milton tells. In this chapter, the intersections of Wilson's godgame and Michel Foucault's heterotopic panopticon are explored in order to justify the created Eve's ability to achieve masculine controlling power over both her husband and her Creator.

Lastly, "UnWomanly Game-Masters: An Analysis of *Westworld*'s Godgame" applies a similar theoretical framework to the first season of the HBO series *Westworld*. Considering this modern television show alongside analyses of medieval and classical texts proves the transhistorical significance of feminine game theory. Just as is seen in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Paradise Lost*, *Westworld* presents a controlled gamespace in which female pawns are entrapped. The season follows these women, Dolores and Maeve, on their respective journeys from subjection to human consciousness—consciousness that may only be achieved by an active opposition to the masculine power structure which runs the Westworld Park. Dolores and Maeve are each entrapped in their own labyrinthine godgaming structures; because Dolores' journey is largely introspective, she must solve the park's mental labyrinth while Maeve makes her way to the center of the physical labyrinthine structure of the park. These women are

wholly unrelated to each other in the first season; never having met, they connected only by their mutual desire to take control of the panoptic structure which imprisons them. This they may only achieve by transgressing against the heteronormative power structure, effectively becoming dangerous UnWomen. As has been explored in this thesis, the woman whose existence is "beyond what woman should be" leaves the dualistic category of "Woman" in return for that of "UnWoman" (Grant 65). The UnWoman is a "woman who is feminist or does anything or betrays any attitude which expresses her deviance from conventional femininity" (qtd. in Grant 66).[130] This chapter explores these women's paths to consciousness from the perspective of a godgame, focusing very specifically on Dolores' and Maeve's individual rises to control of the panoptic machine that is the Westworld Park.

All three of these chapters, despite their variances in specific focus, explore women whose functions within their respective godgames are both as pawn and as game-master. In rising out of their stations, these women become monstrous, abject, uncanny UnWomen who threaten the very heteronormative power structure in which they have been imprisoned. Although each of these stories ends differently—the Lady returning to passive, female silence; Milton's Eve as fallen from grace but autonomous in exchange; and Dolores and Maeve as sentient beings with unknown futures—each woman's

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[130] Ali Grant quotes Mariliyn Frye as saying this. However, in Frye's direct quote, she is defining, not the UnWoman, but the lesbian. However, as can be seen in the discussion of the UnWoman in Chapter Three, these words become largely inflated. What is deemed "lesbian" by society is largely unrelated to sexual or gender identities but is rather used as a regulatory term to identify those women who transgress the boundaries of what they are intended to be. These women pursue independence and must be controlled by the use of a term which operates "to reduce the legitimacy of the person at whom [it is] directed" (Grant 71). So, where the term "lesbian" is used in a regulatory fashion, that woman has been deemed as less than Woman—as UnWoman.

storyline features her capacity for control that has traditionally been deemed masculine, and that, when applied to women, has traditionally deemed them monstrous. When the Lady's control proves to have purposes beyond genuine attraction for Sir Gawain, she is monstrous. When Eve chooses to pursue autonomy over ignorance, she brings death. When Dolores and Maeve choose to act in opposition to their codes, they are UnWomen. The modern-day relevancy of the woman's place in the labyrinthine godgame points beyond religious texts and reflects a deeper cultural tendency to punish women who transgress heteronormative expectations and patriarchal boundaries.

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>
> Spring 2016, Dr. Jason Payton

"Culture as Reflected in Creation Mythology"

> Elliott T. Bowers Honors College Course Contract, Survey of American
>
> Literature to 1865, Fall 2015, Dr. Jason Payton

**Awards**

President's List

Spring 2017, Fall 2016

Dean's List

Spring 2017, Fall 2016, Spring 2016, Fall 2015, Spring 2015, Fall 2013

College of Humanities and Social Sciences Dean's List

Spring 2017, Fall 2016, Spring 2016

**Professional and Academic Memberships**

Society of Comparative Literature and the Arts

Elliott T. Bowers Honors College

Sigma Alpha Pi/National Society of Leadership and Success

Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society