

Introduction to Rabelais → read to page 40 only to “masks”

- Any system that relies on the boundaries sets itself up for the deconstruction of their society
- The transgression of the boundaries and the desire to react and bring forth
- A foundation of theory that we begin to accept – how Bakhtin contributes to our reading of the text

Bakhtin Introduction to Rabelais

- Bakhtin’s doctoral thesis was Rabelais – younger scholars adopted this thesis and exploded out from there
 - Looked at carnival, and dialogic
- **Ambivalence: the simultaneous and contradictory feelings and ideas about someone or something**
- His reading focused on the culture of the market place – the location or the backdrop of carnival
- Always connected official ceremonies of church fests and political fests

Official Fests/Ceremony	Unofficial – “Carnival”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatially – defined – the church, courtroom • Monolithic, hegemonic • Monologic, monoglossic • Stable • Unchanging • Perennial, timeless (history, time and tradition) • Immortal • Eternal (indisputable) “truth” • “Dogma” • Ritual • Pure • Rational • Order • Upholding norms/ideology/hierarchy • “Patriarchy” – the “Head” - head 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-air – the marketplace, the town square • Ambivalent, multiple • Dialogic, heteroglossic “billingsgate”, pun • Change – death and life and death and life • “Becoming” • Renewal (constant) • Incomplete • Equality • Liberation from order • Laughter • Parody • Hybrid • “Madness” = positive • Maternal – the “Body” • A celebration for all the people (saw it as a utopian)

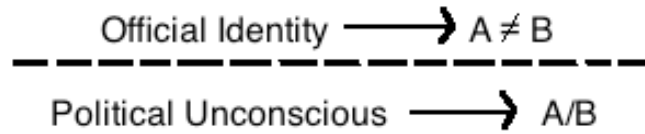
- Carnival was the true celebration of renewal of all the people (universal)
- “He who is laughing is being laughed at”
 - Laughing at someone at your own expense is not carnival laughter
 - Once one knows the fool they’ve made of themselves, then that is carnival laughter = you know what is funny
 - No one is making fun of you without you
- Turning inside-out the world of laughter – community freedom
- A completely new order of things
- Carnival is not severed from “the maternal womb of the earth” – the feminine place and development of the grotesque
- Degradation: to take it down to the reproductive zone – always conceiving (being a part connected to the earth and the ground)
 - The way that Bakhtin talks about the grotesque body

- There's nothing closed off about carnival – mixture of things going on in pictures painted of that time period
- Modern carnivals – see a lot of skulls and drinking
 - The darkness goes along with the lightness
 - Shows the modern day way of celebration

Classical Body	Grotesque Body
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks upward to heaven • Focus on face/head • “Thinking”, rational • Complete, closed, finished • Clean • Immortal • Self-sufficient • Patriarchal – the controlled and law-abiding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Down to earth, degradation • Focus on the lower stratum • Of the flesh, material • Creation, growth, abundance, change • Unfinished, open, exceeding limits, excreting • Rebirth, reproduction, fertility

- The image of the senile hags – the mouths are open, the body goes out into the world (grotesque body)
 - Acknowledges that it exists out into the world and that the world can entire it
 - The lack of boundaries between the world and body – what can go in, can come out
 - The body is open and the classical body is closed
- If there is no bodily limits, then the body is an ambivalent space
- “Carnival is not a spectacle scene, but rather they live it” (page 7)
 - Erases the ranks and the hierarchy in society
- See the opposition between classical and grotesque body in a inequality between genders
- Puns are a part of the carnival – can mean more than one thing at a time
- “Carnival takes place on life and art”
- The transgression in one domain exists in the other domain – social status, and psychic forms (the way we think about things)
- Talks about a difference between official and unofficial society – how it operates, and the divisions between high and low (hierarchy)
- Officialdom will always want to maintain the hierarchy whereas Carnival wants to erase and interrogate that order
 - The manifestations of official and unofficial/inside vs outside/high vs low

- There is a high that does the sanctioning of this (page 4)
- “The higher discourses...in society” – accept the premise to begin with
- Page 19, You cannot map out an entire society unless you know the deviance, know the horizon and the social values
- Page 193, official identity is arrived at through difference – identity through difference (you are A because you are not B)



- Page 4, 5 “again and again...of it’s own fantasy life” – the level of the political unconscious is both A/B
 - Stall and White try to maintain this idea, page 20 “what is socially...symbolically central”
 - Identity is A+B – the indifference
- By mapping out identity in this way, ambivalence is a pre-existing state – if it’s already there then carnival is always imminent

The push for gay and lesbian marriages – applies to the society of highs and lows

- Mainstream society has had to battle against the idea of gay marriage – does this mean that it has changed the mainstream society in a way it wouldn’t have before?
- Even though power still rests in the same hands, does this change the people that have power?
- Does this work in the real world, and will change occur?

Carnival may be argued to be the isolated boxed in identity, but there has been a shift/a crack in the higher power

- The low have affected the high, and now the binaries are being reduced and erased
 - The lines begin to blur

Create categories in HIGH and LOW to classify themselves into any one of the domains – will eventually create a domino affect

- The shift in one domain will shift a change in the other

Example: Michael Jackson

	BODY	SOCIAL ORDER	GEOGRAPHY	PSYCHIC FORMS
HIGH	Plastic surgery & involvement with children	Called the King of Pop from the very beginning	The fall of Neverneverland	Taking pills and involvement in alcohol
LOW				

“Towards a Definition” P. Thompson

Stall & White Continuation (See Official Identity/Political Unconscious Chart on previous page)

- Are you wearing a mask in your official identity? – A mask that always attends to the dominant ideology
 - What is considered high and official
 - Dominant ideology = official identity
 - Framed and based on what we don't want to be seen as – always a part of what we want to make ourselves seem
 - Identity is actually A/B
- Is your identity something that you see on the outside, something that exists just on the inside in the brain, or both of them mixed together?
- The blending of the two means that there is already a carnival element existing – we are always already connected to our grotesque self = ambivalent self
 - About being open and not placing limits on the world
 - Acknowledging the renewal of the earth
- The identity of A/B is already grotesque

“Towards a Definition” – Thompson

- The grotesque as an experience and coming in contact with the grotesque – isn't going to work when it comes to proving a theory inside of a paper
 - Just because you feel some feelings, doesn't mean that everyone else will feel those feelings too
- Use what Thompson is saying to apply to novels that we have read and apply to the characters
- Agreement with Bakhtin in the ambivalent and the ambivalent reaction of the grotesque
- The idea of disharmony – the experience always involves conflict of different elements
 - Should have the presence of comic and terrify in a way that is not easily resolvable (page 21 of his novel)
 - The multiple feelings at the same time = ambivalence
 - No definition between the two parts – if it is tipped to far over to one side than the problem ends up resolved = feeling grotesque
- Page 22, comedy we experience that we dare to give it a name
- Experiencing the grotesque is associated with exaggeration – the fantastic disrupts reality but doesn't separate from the real world
 - Seeing something strange, but still closely related to this world (could be, and maybe is)
 - We create connections to *The Uncanny* & Sigmund Freud
- Has to be a conscious confusion between fantasy and reality – ambivalence

- Example from reading – peek-a-boo and making your face scarier to a baby
- The grotesque is at a point which you confuse what is familiar with what is unfamiliar
- Page 27, “The grotesque is the unresolved clash...ambivalently the abnormal”

* Use Thompson to look at *Foxfire* and begin reading through – connect to the characters and Leg’s brain

Example of Shaun of the Dead movie example – discussing the grotesque

- Walks through the normal routine in the day and doesn’t realize the blood stains and the dead people walking everywhere
- We get to see the bodies but he walks through a landscape that seemed normal before to him
- Doesn’t yet realize
- An example of comic and terrifying