

The Kid Is All the Rage: (Bi) Sexuality, Temporality and Triangular Desire in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*

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*This article studies bisexuality in terms of sexual instrumentality, instead of sexual orientation. In Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*, David's sexuality is not marked by a hetero timeline hinged on marriage, a homo timeline initiated by the "coming out" moment or a bi timeline validated by sexual experiences with both genders. Instead, David's paternal aspiration and his financial need govern his opposite-sex relationship with Seese and his same-sex relationship with Beaufrey. In this bisexual triangle, David's sexual instrumentality ultimately generates an epistemology of bisexuality with regard to time, paternity and prostitution. Reconfiguring bisexuality from a matter of sexual attraction to both genders to a desire for things that particular sexual objects can offer to the subject, this article, on account of filiation and finance, deconstructs the discourse of sexual orientation.*

KEYWORDS *bisexuality, hetero/queer/bi temporalities, sexual orientation, sexual instrumentality, triangular desire, hom(m)o-sexuality, rough trade*

This article addresses the epistemology of bisexuality with regard to time, paternity and prostitution. Instead of seeing sexuality as a hetero timeline hinged on marriage, a homo timeline initiated by the "coming out" moment, or a bi timeline validated by sexual experiences with both genders, bisexual temporalities do not iron out or distill people's sexual practices, fantasies and subjectivities to honor a "true" straight or gay identity. Nor do they verify bisexual subjects by sexual attraction to both genders. Given that people may have sex with both genders for reasons other than

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sexual orientation, bisexual temporalities embrace what would be dismissed as contradictions or exceptions in linear, transitional, monosexual takes on individual sexual histories, making room for sexual partiality and multiplicity. Whereas narratives of “coming out” (e.g., a man might have slept with women, but now he comes out as gay and renounces his past heterosexual relationships) and “temporary deviance” (e.g., a man may renounce his sex with other men as fleeting aberrations from his otherwise straight identity) espouse an authentic gay or straight identity, bisexual temporalities do not erase a gay-identified man’s heterosexual histories or a straight-identified man’s homosexual encounters. Revamping bisexuality from a matter of sexual attraction to both genders to a desire for things that particular sexual objects can offer to the subject, this article, on account of paternity and prostitution, deconstructs the discourse of sexual orientation. In Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Almanac of the Dead* (1991), bisexuality is not a phase for infants or teenagers to explore or experiment their polymorphous desires before they claim their “real,” “adult” sexuality. Nor is it defined by sexual attraction to people of both genders. Rather, the instrumental aspect of desire controls David’s bisexual relationships: he aspires for a son from a fertile female (Seese), and he needs money from a male patron (Beaufrey).

At first glance, David may be seen as a straight man who has sex with other men only to make money, as a gay man who has sex with women only to make babies or as a bisexual man who is sexually confused or perverse. All these appear to think of sexuality as fluid and flexible, but they actually either promote monosexual couplehood or regard sexuality as identity based. This article, instead, studies the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle in terms of bisexual temporalities and sexual instrumentality. Rejecting narratives of “coming out” and “temporary deviance,” bisexual temporalities challenge the logic of linearity, transition and renouncement in accordance with hetero- and homosexual timelines. With David’s sexual instrumentality in view, the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle also does not designate a scenario wherein David is sexually attracted to both genders, the conventional definition of bisexuality. Rather, he has sex with Seese and Beaufrey for heirs and riches. Reconfiguring bisexuality from the identity politics of sexual orientation to a triangular desire mediated by filiation and finance, Silko complicates the discourse of sexuality. For calling David bi on account of his sex with Seese and Beaufrey alone will not only lose sight of his vested interest in the masculine insignia attached to heterosexual reproduction. It will also overlook his homosexual gratification on the pretext of monetary hustling. Even though David has more sexual experiences with men than with women, it makes little sense to call him gay by tracing his earliest relationship with Eric or privileging his later triangular relationship with Beaufrey and Serlo. With regard to the regimes of heterosexual reproduction and homosexual commerce, David’s bisexuality does not demonstrate his sexual orientation. Instead, it attests to his desires for things from different sexual

partners. Yet this does not necessarily suggest a gendered reading of sexual instrumentality: that is, only women can give a bisexual man babies; only other man can give him bucks. On the contrary, this article critiques such gendered renditions. David's bisexuality not only draws attention to the correlation between paternal aspiration and the demonstration of masculinity in heterosexual logic, but also indexes the incongruity of sexual identification and sexual identity implicated in the "rough trade" between straight-identified male sex workers and their gay clients.

The David–Seese–Beaufrey bisexual triangle, in turn, has several cultural and political implications. First, it expands on Silko's critique on the exploitation of human beings through enterprises of imperialism, capitalism and commodification. As Beaufrey and other Euro-American descendants situate themselves as aristocrats, colonizers or entrepreneurs superior to poor Whites and people of color, they steal land from the aboriginal, snatch blood plasma from the homeless and consume human bodies like Seese (by selling her drugs), Monte (by making a film out of his dissection) and David (by accessing his body through prostitution). As a result, sexuality is not about the simple choice of sexual objects in Silko. With regard to the sexual business between David and Beaufrey, to define it as a convention under the rubric of homosexuality or to trivialize it as an exception in the context of heterosexuality will reduce the complexity of David's homoerotic gratification, his financial dependence on Beaufrey, and the paradox of his sexual objectification and sexual subjectivity in this sexual commerce. David, after all, chooses to have sex with Beaufrey; his sexual subjectivity emerges or starts performing when he renders himself a sexual object for Beaufrey's consumption. Highlighting this relationship between two White men, Silko refuses to draw a clear line between White perpetrators and non-White victims. Although referring to the history of genocide, land stealing and other mistreatments on Native Americans, Silko also emphasized the fact that some Native Americans are drug dealers and arms brokers themselves. Even though Beaufrey gets away with his crimes, the novel does hint at an uprising among the oppressed from within and without the United States. In addition to the eco-warriors who transform terminally ill people into human bombs, the Army of the Homeless plans on retaking "stolen" property from the wealthy. And the revolutionaries from places like Cuba, Mexico and Korea launch on a transnational movement to counter capitalism.

Second, it deconstructs bisexuality as a kind of sexual orientation by highlighting issues of financial security, sexual reproduction and monosexual couplehood. Critics like Gayle Rubin (1975/1997), Luce Irigaray (1977/1985), Michael Warner (1999), and Elizabeth Freeman (2002) have reconsidered heterosexual marriage as a patriarchal enterprise that secures or increases men's (re)production by trafficking women; as an enacted couplehood that entails sexual monogamy, pooled property and shared living quarters; as an ethical issue that not only discriminates uncoupled people but also sanctions state

discipline of sexuality. Even though people often revile those who marry for money, for reproduction, for citizenship, for sex and not for love, such relationships are still enshrined in the sanctuary of heterosexuality. By defining marriage as a holy, private ceremony between two heterosexuals in love, people tend to see financial support and sexual reproduction as tacit obligations that deserve consideration but come after sexual attraction. Following this normative logic, the sexual commerce between men becomes anathema, for it defiles the purity of heterosexual and homosexual relationships. By emphasizing the import of progeny and property in the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle, Silko’s novel not only reveals heterosexuality as an economic and patriarchal institution, but also rejects a normative duplication of heterosexuality onto male same-sex relationship. To realize his desires for heirs and riches, David does not have to marry Seese in the normative trajectory of heterosexuality. Nor does he care for gay marriage with Beaufrey. Instead of feeling conflicted about his hetero- and homosexual feelings or timelines, David underscores sexual instrumentality. Manipulative as he is, David’s bisexual behavior also suggests an open triangle that could potentially benefit three parties. To say the least, it challenges the two-timing moral dilemma that chronically associates bisexuality with sexual outlawry or infidelity. Because Beaufrey and Seese know and tolerate each other, David does not cheat on his partners. Instead of incriminating David as a bisexual straddling between heterosexual and homosexual lovers, this article argues that David’s sexual object-choice is more thing-oriented than gender-oriented. The issues standing out in this bisexual triangle are David’s paternal aspiration for Monte and his financial dependence on Beaufrey, not his sexual attraction to Seese and Beaufrey.

David’s paternal aspiration also gestures toward the heteronormative association between reproduction and masculinity. With regard to the discourse of repro-futurity and family values, Edelman (2004) decided to say no to children, so as to expose the heteronormative underpinning of repro-futurity (p. 13). Other critics on queer (of color) studies, by contrast, start exploring the possibilities and consequences for single adults, gay couples or other queer subjects to conceive of babies through surrogates or to adopt children from within or without the United States.¹ In this light, David’s siring of Monte seems too hetero to be politically progressive. Yet, when heterosexual relationship is boiled down to reproduction, it discloses as much David’s compliance with sexual normativity as his sexual instrumentality. As critics like José Esteban Muñoz (1999), David L. Eng (2001), and Roderick A. Ferguson (2004) dismantle postwar masculinity and paternity as a White, bourgeois, heterosexual construct from a queer of color perspective, they also explore new lines of kinship beyond heterosexual paternity. In Silko’s *Almanac* (1991), Monte’s disappearance ultimately echoes queer scholars’ critique on repro-futurity. It bankrupts heterosexuality by reducing it to mere reproduction.

Finally, this bisexual triangle in Silko speaks to the abundance of bisexual characters in postwar American literature, reframing bisexuality from an ethic predicament of betrayal and promiscuity to an epistemology of male desires with regard to paternity and property. As characters in James Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* (1956/2000), Annie Proulx's *Brokeback Mountain* (1997/2005), and Michael Chabon's *The Mysteries of Pittsburgh* (1988) tend to situate bisexuality either as an ethical struggle between heterosexual and homosexual relationships or as an experimental phase prior to an established and probably fixed adult sexuality, there are few positive representations of bisexuality as a sexual identity, as a way of life. However, this does not mean that bisexuality is an impossible desire. In his afterword to *The City and the Pillar* (1948/1965), Gore Vidal contended, "All human beings are bisexual" (p. 245). Tom Spanbauer's *The Man Who Fell in Love with the Moon* (1991) even depicts various liaisons between the half-Indian, bisexual prostitute and transvestite Shed and other characters at the turn of the 20th century. In line with the problems of heterosexual and homosexual relationships in Silko's novel, sexuality should not be limited to the White, bourgeois, heterosexual ideal of the nuclear family. Nor should it be foreclosed in monosexual couplehood. Inasmuch as David underscores issues of paternity, masculinity, finance and sexual instrumentality implicated in his relationships with Seese and Beaufrey, the novel ultimately generates an epistemology of temporality, (re)production and triangular desire irreducible to the linear and monogamous analysis of relationships.

THE MAN–WOMAN–MAN BISEXUAL TRIANGLE

Published on the eve of Christopher Columbus' quincentennial "discovery" of the New World, Silko's *Almanac* (1991) maps out imperialism of the last 500 years and augurs its demise. Using Tucson, Arizona, as the focal point for dozens of characters moving across the U.S. border, this novel encompasses capitalist exploits such as colonization, prostitution, pornography, drug deals, contraband firearms, real estate and the black market of human organs. To counter such capitalist enterprises, a number of indigenous people in the Americas start to organize revolutions with their transnational allies. Some radical eco-warriors even unleash terrorist human bombing to destroy major infrastructure. Often encapsulating stories of a transnational scale in a melodrama, this novel blends political issues and criminal intrigues with family vignettes. In turn, it creates an apocalyptic text in defiance of White, bourgeois domesticity, linear, progressive temporality and border-protecting, nationalistic spatiality. Take the tribal almanac in this novel for example. It not only records anniversaries (a circular, repeated commemoration of the past events) and divines the future but is also transcribed and transported

across time and space. As Caren Irr (1999) contended, Silko's novel breaks down the Columbian metaphysics of one-way discovery and the Western concept of time (pp. 225–226). Incorporating history into cartography, this epic novel unfolds the clash of two civilizations, predicting the disappearance of all things European in the Americas.

Because Silko couches her critique of imperialism in melodrama and because many men in *Almanac* partake in sadistic sex with/to one another, critics like Jane Olmsted (1999), Janet St. Clair (1999), and Dorothea Fischer-Hornung (2007) either impose a heteronormative reading of sexuality on this novel or police its negative images of homosexuality.² The consequence of such readings is to reduce the discourse of sexuality to identity politics, overlooking the complex erotic expressions in which those male characters engage. Under closer scrutiny, the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle is not simply a bisexual drama of jealousy and manipulation. It also concerns class difference, sexual commerce, drug abuse, paternal anxiety and the porous line between male homosociality and homosexuality. Beaufrey—a descendant of European aristocracy from Argentina, drug dealer, and porn broker—treats the White, U.S. photographer David more as a kept boy than as his life partner. Inasmuch as Beaufrey exchanges money for sex with David, they are not as intimate or egalitarian as a normative gay couple. In fact, Beaufrey seems to play with David; he knows about David's sexual relationship with Seese—a blond and ex-cocaine addict from San Diego—and appears fine with such a bisexual arrangement.

This bisexual arrangement, however, becomes a mess when three other male characters—Eric, Monte and Serlo—join this triangle. The death of David's long-term lover, Eric, first underscores the ambiguity of male friendship. Eric has been pretending to be David's friend before he comes out in front of Seese. Tolerant of their relationship, Eric even befriends Seese to remain a participant in this triangle. Yet David's increasing sexual relationship with Beaufrey unsettles Eric. Feeling replaced, he finally commits suicide. Monte, the newborn of David and Seese, upsets Beaufrey. Although Beaufrey had once forced Seese to abort a fetus she had with David, Monte now siphons all of David's attention. Jealous of the baby, Beaufrey eventually has people kidnap and dispose of Monte. To look for her missing child, Seese becomes an assistant of the Yaqui psychic Lecha. Meanwhile, David remains clueless about Monte's whereabouts till his death from a horseback-riding accident.³ Apparently, the paternal bond between David and Monte trumps the homosexual relationship between David and Beaufrey. However, Beaufrey gets back at David by drawing his business partner and fellow aristocrat, Serlo, into another triangle. Despite Serlo's proclaimed celibacy, David becomes paranoid about the "imagined infidelities" between Beaufrey and Serlo (Silko, 1991, p. 539). To make the matter worse, Serlo regards David's artist status as a euphemism for "street boys" and "prostitutes" (Silko, 1991, p. 543). Feeling socially inferior and sexually unattractive, David seduces

Serlo, only to be further humiliated when his advances meet with Serlo's disinterest.⁴

Given such sexual entanglements, how does the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle differ from those usual bisexual scenarios of betrayal or polyamory? To answer this question, we need to revamp bisexuality from the discourse of sexual orientation to David's sexual instrumentality, paying attention to his paternal aspiration and his financial need. Bisexuality has long been framed as a question of sexual identity, authenticity and consistency in terms of sexual orientation: those who identify themselves as straight (or gay) cannot fall for people of the same (or opposite) sex, whereas those who see themselves as bisexual feel the urge to have sex with people of both genders.⁵ The prevalence of sexual orientation, in turn, obscures other dimensions of sexuality. As Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1990/2008) indicated in *Epistemology of the Closet*, age, class, species, frequency, physical type, symbolic investments, the number of participants and the dynamics of power also matter in discussions of sexuality (p. 8). By privileging sexual orientation as the foremost sexual category, people who are turned on by nymphets/ephebes, interracial intimacy or sadomasochism are translated into straight, gay or bi subjects. When it is age, race or power play that drives one's sexual subjectivity, an emphasis on the gender of sexual object-choice can be misleading. Those who prefer onanism or celibacy even become totally invisible for lack of sexual partners.

Steering clear of the bisexuality defined by sexual orientation, Maria Pramaggiore (1996) coins the term, "epistemologies of the fence." Regarding bisexuality as a subject position, Pramaggiore does not ask whether a man is really sleeping with people of both genders (as so to pin down his sexuality in terms of sexual orientation). Instead, she sees bisexuality as a particular sexual perspective to engender new knowledge of time, desire and ethics. According to Pramaggiore, bisexuality not only relates to monosexual ideologies, temporal concepts, triangulated desires and notions of invisibility and passing, but also concerns the difficulty of distinguishing among various identifications and desires; the resonances among notions of sexual, gender and racial ambiguity; the search for ways of thinking about identity that do not codify sexuality in terms of gender; and the tensions among gay, lesbian, queer, transgendered, transsexual and bisexual studies and politics (p. 7). Although Sedgwick (1990/2008) bemoaned the ubiquity of the homo/heterosexual definition, she still defined bisexuality in terms of sexual orientation. Employing the closet as a figure of speech to denote the silences, speech acts and other performative tactics around the gay subject, Sedgwick argued that the closet at once conceals the subject's sexuality from exposure to outsiders and reveals it to those in the know (p. 3). By contrast, Pramaggiore's epistemologies of the fence explore a myriad of bisexual scenarios irreducible to the gender of sexual object-choice. For instance, a man may be attracted to a woman for her temperamental resemblance to his

ex-boyfriend. A butch may be into other butches, but she is generally more interested in people with masculine qualities than in femme lesbians.

Along with Pramaggiore (1996), critics have tackled bisexual fantasy in literature, bisexual erotic threesomes and the ethical dilemma between heterosexual marriage and homosexual friendship. They also examine stigmas of bisexuals as promiscuous players, as two-timing cheaters, as sexually confused fence sitters or as a bridge between their heterosexual and homosexual partners during the AIDS epidemic.⁶ To attest to the infinite configurations of bisexual permutations, Donald E. Hall (1996) finally came up with an almost preposterous litany of sexual practices at odds with the bisexuality defined by sexual orientation. According to Hall,

Clearly “bisexuality” is a highly problematic term as it attempts to (or has been deployed to) embrace the dauntingly wide variety of these. [serial monogamists who have loved men and women who usually masturbate thinking about women who fuck men who play with men and women together whose sexualities have changed dramatically since adolescence(ts) who hate being categorized for sleeping with other young women or men who enjoy being penetrated and it doesn't matter if it is a man or a woman who finds role-playing more exciting than the biological sex of the role-player who watches heterosexual pornography and sometimes identifies with the woman and sometimes with the man who finally just likes a warm, moist embrace. (p. 10)

Hall not only considered what Alan Sinfield (2004) called the loop of fantasy in terms of “desire-to-be” and “desire-for” (pp. 41–43). That is, bisexuality is not just the desire for both genders. A bisexual man may desire to be a woman because he desires for the man she is having sex with in a straight porn video. He also takes into account sexual practices involving no sexual contacts with any other persons (i.e., fantasy, sex toys or masturbation), the (counter)heteronormative transition from adolescence to adulthood, gender role-playing, a perverse rejection to identity politics and polyamorous fantasy as opposed to monogamous couplehood. In this light, the bisexual subject position troubles the discourse of sexual orientation, cracking the notion of bisexuality as sexual attraction to both genders.⁷

In Silko's *Almanac* (1991), however, David, Seese, and Beaufrey develop a particular kind of bisexual scenario characterized by David's paternal aspiration for offspring and his sexual commence with gay clients. Unlike the usual heterosexual triangle, in which two men are courting the same woman, the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle involves a large group of people—sexually, financially, emotionally and ethically. In particular, Seese's son Monte, Beaufrey's money, and David's homosexual rivalry against (as well as attraction to) Serlo complicate this already knotty triad. Whereas critics have largely explored bisexual fantasy and identification from a bisexual

subject position, I am more interested in the instrumental aspect of bisexuality. Instead of calling David a bisexual man, Seese a heterosexual woman, and Beaufrey a gay man according to the gender(s) of their sexual partners, I study them as desiring entities irreducible to the discourse of sexual orientation. Specifically, this trio develops intricate triangles with other people with respect to class difference and male same-sex jealousy. Rather than ask what render David bisexual, I examine what he—as a bisexual subject—wants from other sexual subjects, and how his bisexuality becomes a strategic move in the face of identity politics. Just as Elizabeth D. Däumer (1992) proposed reading bisexuality “not as an identity that integrates heterosexual and homosexual orientations, but as an epistemological as well as ethical vantage point from which we can examine and deconstruct the bipolar framework of gender and sexuality” (p. 98), so I see the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle as a bisexual scenario to generate new knowledge of male desires. In Silko, David’s bisexual desires have more to do with heirs and riches than with the gender of sexual object-choice. Even though there is a sexual dimension in David’s relationship with Seese and Beaufrey, it seldom derives from mutual attraction. Instead, David’s desire for Seese is chiefly mediated by his paternal aspiration for offspring and his sadism in response to her masochistic demand. And his desire for Beaufrey is mainly facilitated by money and occasionally amplified by the obstacle of Serlo.

With David’s sexual instrumentality in view, this article is interested in these questions: How do David’s paternal aspiration for a son and his financial reliance on Beaufrey complicate our understanding of bisexuality? How does this bisexual triangle negotiate the heterosexual connotation of sexual reproduction and the homosexual insinuation of “rough trade” (i.e., sexual commerce between a presumably straight-identified sex worker and his gay client)? Why does David bother to have a son in the first place? How should we read the relationship between David and Beaufrey when Beaufrey establishes himself as a consumer of David’s body rather than as his life partner? And how do we interpret David’s sexual subjectivity at Seese’s masochistic demand? At Beaufrey’s objectification? The David–Seese–Beaufrey bisexual triangle, in contrast to any homo/heteronormative couplehood, is barely concerned with sexual fidelity or rivalry. It is not until other men like Eric, Monte and Serlo stand between David and Beaufrey that jealousy reigns supreme. On account of David’s sexual instrumentality, the relationship between David and Beaufrey is better described as a hom(m)o-sexual triangle hinged on Monte and a trade triangle mediated by money. Altogether, this bisexual triangle is enmeshed in the operation of capitalism and the discourse of repro-futurity.⁸

Using the triangular structure to address David’s bisexual relationship with Seese and Beaufrey, I have three goals: First, I disrupt the monosexual logic of homo/heterosexuality. Instead of framing David as a closeted homosexual or a temporarily deviated heterosexual, theories of bisexual

temporality and triangularity challenge the logic of sexual linearity, transition and renouncement in current discourses of hetero and queer temporalities. Without pinning down one's sexuality through a hetero timeline hinged on marriage or a homo timeline initiated by the "coming out" moment, bisexual temporalities favor sexual partiality and multiplicity. Second, I spell out the link between heterosexual reproduction and the norm of masculinity, in order to dismantle the heterosexuality defined by sexual attraction between opposite-sex partners. Inasmuch as David has to sire Monte to prove his manhood, such heterosexual logic of paternity predetermines David's relationship with Seese. In turn, Seese is only a tool to reproduce David's real loved object, Monte. Third, I analyze the complication of sexuality and capitalism in David's sexual commerce with Beaufrey. In the lingo of male prostitution, trade men conventionally refer to straight-identified male sex workers who have sex with gay clients. To demonstrate their rugged manhood, trade men often impose violence on their clients during or after sex. But David's relationship with Beaufrey complicates this picture. For David does not insist on playing the penetrating role to secure his manhood. Nor does he remain Beaufrey's monogamous kept boy. Instead, David has sex with Eric, Seese, and Monte's night nurse. He also seduces Serlo to provoke Beaufrey's jealousy. Although I do not veto the possibility of bisexual, polygamous love, David's sexual instrumentality requires a different vocabulary. At the heart of the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle, David's bisexuality cannot be explained by sexual orientation. Instead, we must consider his paternal aspiration, his masculine anxiety, the age and class difference between him and Beaufrey, as well as his rejection of a hetero timeline marked by marriage and a homo timeline stamped by the "coming out" moment.

HETERO/QUEER/BI TEMPORALITIES

Critics have been trying to pin down bisexuality. According to Malcolm Bowie (1992), bisexuality has at least three meanings: hermaphroditism (the possession of male and female biological organisms), androgyny (the combination of masculine and feminine psychological traits) and the sexual attraction to men and women (p. 26). Bowie's definitions are nothing but sketchy. Even when we address sexual attraction alone, questions abound. Can people call themselves bisexual if they fantasize about both genders but never act out their fantasies? If it is all about sexual acts, do people have to sleep with men and women at the same time to be "truly" bisexual? Will a straight man turn gay or bi once he has sex with another man, as may happen to prisoners, soldiers, sailors, cowboys or students in same-sex environments? Conversely, will a gay man turn straight or bi once he sleeps with a woman? Can people renounce their sexual experiences with same-sex partners and identify themselves as straight, as may be the case for some gay porn stars

and trade men? What if a man marries a woman but cruises gay bars for fuck buddies on the side? What if one falls in love with intersex or/and transgender people? What if one is attracted to people's wit, voice, skin color or/and gendered qualities regardless of their biological sex? Do bisexuals have to be polygamous or "fuck anything that moves" to be sexually satisfied and live up to their name (Queen, 1995, p. 151)?

Apparently, bisexuality, when defined as a fixed sexual identity, is prone to transgression. Even though sexologists like Alfred Charles Kinsey and Fritz Klein have devised a scale or a grid to measure individual degrees of homo/heterosexuality or to capture contradictions within individual sexual orientation, bisexuality concerns more than sexual attraction to or sexual experiences with both genders.⁹ True, the Kinsey scale refrains from classifying people into straight, gay and bi populations by rating individuals from 0 (*exclusively heterosexual*) to 6 (*extremely homosexual*). However, it does not separate people's psychological reactions to their sexual experiences from their overt behavior. According to Klein (1978), "There is of course a large difference between thought and action, between fantasy and experience. To be most effective, the 0 to 6 scale should be used once to measure overt sexual behavior, and used separately to measure the fantasy life of the individual" (pp. 15–16). The Klein Sexual Orientation Grid, in turn, registers those who prefer opposite-sex partners and hetero lifestyle despite their sexual attraction to same-sex partners. Yet it still cannot determine how race, class, age, specific physical or psychological traits and particular sexual perversity (i.e., foot fetishism, S&M, pedophilia, etc.) weigh in on the discourse of sexuality. However they reject an unequivocal identity of bisexuality, the Kinsey scale and the Klein grid highlight sexual orientation when it comes to sexuality, thus resulting in the ubiquitous homo/heterosexuality definition bemoaned in Sedgwick's *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990/2008).

To reconfigure bisexuality, critics like Däumer (1992), Sinfield (2004), and Clare Hemmings (2002) start reading bisexuality beyond the dimension of sexual orientation. In "Queer Ethics," Däumer described a woman who disrupts the postwar taxonomy of sexual orientation. Attracted to other women intellectually, the woman at issue even proposes a lesbian relationship with a man (pp. 93, 95–96). Sinfield, by contrast, ponders on personal tendencies and qualities independent of sexual orientation. According to Sinfield, "Some sadomasochists, fetishists, and pedophiles may be able to find satisfaction with either male or female partners. Concepts such as beauty, intelligence, sense of humor, and even virtue may be stimulating; they are not altogether in thrall to ideology" (p. 30). Likewise, Hemmings argued that the bisexuality defined by sexual orientation fails to recognize those who are into power dynamics (sadomasochism), sexual deviance (fetishism), age difference (intergenerational relationship), gendered roles (butch) and/or interracial intimacy (p. 24). Under the rubric of sexual orientation, a male foot fetishist may suffer from an identity crisis. Without registering his real

turn-on, the ubiquitous, hetero-privileged taxonomy of sexual orientation may write him off as a “straight” guy into women’s dainty feet. As a result, the fetishist starts to feel weird when he notices himself staring at one guy’s “womanlike” ankles. He may then begin to wonder whether he is “actually” gay or bi, or he instantly curtails such attraction as an exception to his “straight” identity. This straight-identified fetishist may act on his sexual fixation and marry a woman with beautiful feet. However, hardly would he consider marrying another guy or coming out as gay/bi for the same reason. When he privileges his fetishism and chooses his sexual objects accordingly, his bisexuality has more to do with the feet than with the gender of sexual object-choice. Instead of putting bisexuality between hetero- and homosexuality in terms of sexual identity or orientation, a broader take on bisexuality should consider fantasy, fetishism, race, gender, class, age and other sexual tendencies or lines of difference, revamping bisexuality as a subject position in infinite bisexual scenarios.

But what about bisexuality and time? Did people register their hetero/homo/bisexual feelings on the very first day they were born? Do those feelings stay the same throughout their lifetime? In “Bisexual Theoretical Perspectives: Emergent and Contingent Relationships,” Hemmings (1997) deconstructed the concept of sexual identity through the logic of repetition. According to Hemmings, if sexuality has to be defined by the consistency of sexual object-choice, the gender vacillations of sexual partners should not be seen as the problem of bisexuality. Rather, it suggests a new correlation between sexuality and temporality:

[I]n terms of chronology, bisexuality does not structurally display the requisite consistency of object-choice over time. The present can be validated only by the anticipated future, which can be validated only by a past that is retrospectively given meaning according to the present. The actual events of the past are less important than the retrospective meaning they are given. One is allowed “mistakes” as long as they are seen as mistakes, or as an interruption to the narrative of one’s true sexual identity. This makes the structure of sexual identity and desire highly precarious, because it makes sense only if and when it is repeated, and so is always anticipating that moment of repetition, always failing to consolidate its permanence. (p. 18)

Challenging the sexual consistency implicated in the discourse of sexual identity, Hemmings (1997) argued the contingency of sexuality. For to live up to the authenticity of a male straight identity, a guy needs validation from his past and future sexual practices. However, he actually often has to curb his fond feelings for other men as nonsexual friendship, and to negate his homosexual experiences (if any) as exceptions to his otherwise stable heterosexual identity. A gay man, by contrast, needs to disavow his past sexual experiences with women and dismiss any future opposite-sex

encounters as mistakes or interruptions. To be a “true” bisexual, the subject has to think of both genders at the same time. Any same-sex or opposite-sex relationship alone would be considered inadequate.

Uncovering sexuality as a narrative riddled with cases of negation, disavowal, dismissal and exception, Hemmings (1997) debunks the smoothed consistency and linearity of sexual identity. If the subjects’ sexual timeline has to be homogeneous throughout their lifetime, hardly anyone could fulfill the genuine definition of straight/gay/bi identity. Admittedly, before people identify themselves as gay or bi, they are always already subject to the interpellation of heteronormativity. When people invent homosexual and bisexual lifestyles, these nonheteronormative subjects are in turn subject to the lure of homo/binormativity. Like most straight- or gay-identified people, bi-identified subjects may experience awkward adolescence, negate their feelings for someone special, long for life partners, aspire for offspring and sometimes engage in sexual activities irrelevant to sexual orientation. But their feelings or experiences are often edited in accordance with homo/heterosexuality. A bisexual take on time, however, refuses to renounce any contradictory sexual feelings or sexual experiences that favor a hetero and homo timeline marked by marriage or the “coming out” moment. Even though the bisexual subjects are married or had once come out as gay, their sexual narratives accommodate sexual experiences, fantasies or feelings incongruous with a hetero or homo timeline. The bisexual take on time also does not frame multiple relationships as promiscuity or adultery in the logic of monogamy. It does not see any single same-sex or opposite-sex relationship as inherently deficient in realizing the subjects’ bisexual potential or validate the subjects’ bisexuality only after they have sex with both genders. In “Friendship as a Way of Life,” Michel Foucault (1981/1997) reconfigured homosexuality from an ontological issue of self-identification and soul-searching to an ethical exploration of multiple relationships through noninstitutionalized friendship: “To be ‘gay’ . . . is not to identify with the psychological traits and the visible masks of the homosexual but to try to define and develop a way of life” (p. 138). Likewise, a bisexual way of life does not necessarily set sleeping with both genders as the goal. Nor do bisexual subjects never regret any awful or harrowing relationship. Bisexual subjects may actually decide to stick to one person and rear children with their partner. However, such aspirations do not equate to subscription to state discipline of sexuality. Bisexual subjects reject monogamy as a normative ideology, but they do not necessarily abhor such a sexual arrangement.

In Silko’s novel, David’s bisexuality does not rest on his sexual attraction to Seese and Beaufrey. Instead, David troubles the narratives of heteronormative marriage, homonormative partnership, bisexual infidelity/polyfidelity, and any “coming out” statement.¹⁰ In the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle, David emphasizes his paternal aspiration for Monte and his financial dependence on Beaufrey, not his sexual attraction or commitment to any party.

While I elaborate on David's sexual instrumentality later, the rest of this section aims to answer these three questions: What are the differences between hetero, queer, and bisexual temporalities? How do bisexual temporalities clarify terms like "transitional bisexuality" (Klein, 1978, p. 17), "infantile bisexuality" (Mendoza, 2001, p. 156), and "situational homosexuality" (Kunzel, 2008, p. 102)? And how does a bisexual subject position reclaim bisexuality from current queer historiography? As Hemmings (1997) exposed the logic of linearity, transition, and renouncement in the sexual timelines defined by sexual identity, bisexuality should not be stretched into a persistent existence (i.e., people lose their bisexual status unless they keep having partners of both genders). Nor should it be diminished into a transient phase (i.e., people may be sleeping with both genders within a period of time, but they eventually have to become straight, gay or even celibate). As critics often study queer temporalities or queer historiography from a gay perspective, critiquing the heteronormative logic of repro-futurity and salvaging same-sex relationships from obscurity, bisexual temporalities entail another perspective easily subsumed under the regime of heterosexuality or homosexuality.

Although hetero, queer and bisexual temporalities imply different sexual subjectivities, it does not mean that a bi-identified man would always have a distinct take on time in contrast to straight- or gay-identified people. In fact, there are at least three senses of time involved here, and they contingently qualify the three sexual temporalities at issue. The first sense of time refers to one's lifetime. A teleological, heterosexual take on time, for instance, would see life as a timeline for schooling, marriage, childbearing, retirement and other goals in accordance to the subject's straight identity. By contrast, a gay man would see his "coming out" moment as a watershed in his personal life. He may go on to pattern his life after a heteronormative guy by finding a partner, getting married and/or adopting a child. Or, he may regard cruising or various types of friendship as a way of life. A bisexual man may share some of their straight/gay counterparts' life goals, but those goals will not render them the same. Bisexual experience, as Hemmings said in *Bisexual Spaces* (2002), has "*consistent presence* in the formation of 'other' sexual and gendered subjectivities," but it cannot be assimilated to them (p. 42). A second sense of time means "temporary," as connoted in terms like "transitional bisexuality," "infantile bisexuality," and "situational homosexuality." In this context, the subjects perform a distinct kind of sexuality within a limited period of time, and they are likely to outgrow or renounce such sexual practices once they leave one specific environment (e.g., prison, army, or boarding school) or pass one particular time period (e.g., infancy or adolescence). Last, the time can also refer to history—the history of sexuality, in particular. Instead of seeing sexuality as homogeneous and consistent across time, scholars on queer historiography may be interested in the sexual particularities in ancient Greece, early modern England, Victorian England, or such metropolitan cities as New York and London at the turn of the twentieth century.¹¹

Given these three distinct senses of time, I qualify hetero-, homo- and bisexual temporalities as follows. The hetero temporalities here have a teleological connotation. Even though some straight men would choose not to marry or to beget any children, most of them would try to fulfill the nuclear family values defined by the White, bourgeois, heterosexual couplehood. Accordingly, they tend to champion a teleological take on life; they not only “chart the emergence of the adult from the dangerous and unruly period of adolescence as a desired process of maturation,” but also “create longevity as the most desirable future, applaud the pursuit of long life (under any circumstances), and pathologize modes of living that show little or no concern for longevity” (Halberstam, 2005, p. 4). The queer temporalities, by contrast, have an affective or antireproductive undertone. Although some gay men or lesbians would love to marry their partners and/or adopt children, the queer temporalities in this context specifically denote an impulse to build a queer community across time among nonheteronormative subjects (Dinshaw, 1999, p. 1). They also denounce the normative association between heterosexual reproduction and the nuclear family ideology (Edelman, 2004, p. 2). Finally, bisexual temporalities reject a timeline marked by marriage, the “coming out” moment or sexual experiences with both genders, for these may pin down the subjects’ sexuality in terms of sexual orientation. Given that some bisexual subjects would like to marry their partners or had come out as gay before, the point is to resist normative timelines in accordance with hetero- or homosexual identity, not to turn down any resemblance to straight or gay life choices. In other words, bisexual subjects will not turn straight just because they marry an opposite-sex partner. Nor will they become gay even though they sleep with same-sex partners only.¹²

With bisexuality redefined as a subject position independent of the identity-based hetero and homo timelines, let’s reconsider terms like “transitional bisexuality,” “infantile bisexuality,” and “situational homosexuality.” Although these terms acknowledge bisexuality with regard to sexual experience or sexual identification with both genders, they usually suspect the stability and authenticity of bisexuality as a kind of sexual subjectivity. According to Klein (1978), people may use bisexuality as a bridge to change their sexual orientation from one end of the continuum to the other; they may have sex with both genders before they stick to one particular gender. Framing bisexuality as a sexual transition, Klein argued, “Often the bisexuality itself becomes the norm for that person, while a few people complete the swing to heterosexuality or homosexuality. For these few, this transitional bisexual period can be very short or can last for many years” (p. 17). Klein’s transitional bisexuality is mainly defined as a spell of time in which people switch their sexual orientation. Even though some would settle for bisexuality, others are choosing between homo- and heterosexuality. By contrast, the Freudian infantile bisexuality hinges on a heterosexual logic of identification and desire. According to Steven Mendoza

(2001), "Infantile bisexuality suggests here the identification of a little boy as a girl and his phantasy of intercourse, as a girl, with the father. Equally it implies the identification of the little girl as a boy and her phantasy of sex, as a boy, with the mother" (p. 156). In this case, children can only desire a same-sex adult through opposite-sex sexual identification. Explaining homosexuality in heterosexual logic, the discourse of infantile bisexuality also conflates children's desire for parental love with their sexual desire in adulthood. Designating a phase prior to the subjects' identification with their same-sex parent and their desire for their opposite-sex parent in the Oedipal phase, infantile bisexuality is as fleeting as Klein's transitional bisexuality. Although transitional bisexuality looks like a recurrence of infantile bisexuality, such a correlation is problematic. Moving from general, conceptual sexual identification to specific, physical sexual experience with both genders, they both do not consider individual sexual histories as a whole. Instead, they are seen as either a pre-Oedipal or an experimental phase of personal sexuality.

Finally, Regina Kunzel's (2008) study of prison sex insinuates a "situational homosexuality" that interrupts male inmates' heterosexuality. Here, bisexuality does not designate sex with both genders during a period of time (as in "transitional bisexuality"), but sex between men because no women are available. According to Kunzel, "The word 'situational' connoted an encouraging superficiality; it also communicated an implicit reassurance that when the situation changed, so would the behavior. In so doing, the concept of situational homosexuality worked to allay the anxieties of those who feared that the experience of incarceration would have permanent sexual effects" (p. 102). Framed as temporary or circumstantial homosexuality, prison sex, as Kunzel put it, become "alternately exotic and banal, alarming and uninteresting" (p. 102). It seems that people know about and even expect such a sexual practice during incarceration, but they are ready to abnegate it the moment they have done their time. Even though some men actually learn to enjoy homosexual relationship through prison sex and go on to pursue same-sex relationship out of prison, situational homosexuality is usually seen as an exception to the subjects' heterosexual identity rather than an initiation into their homosexual identity. For those who renounce it once they are out of jail, prison sex "simply vouches for the male capacity to enjoy various forms of perverse gratification and, further, to eroticize hierarchy—to be sexually aroused by the opportunity to play a dominant role in structured relations of unequal power" (Halperin, 2002, pp. 114–115). In contrast to transitional and infantile bisexuality, the inmates' bisexuality does not imply a time period wherein they are interested in both genders. Rather, such bisexuality only starts to make sense when we consider the prisoners' sexual history as a whole. Prison sex does not necessarily fulfill the prisoners' sexual orientation, for they are conditioned—or at least professing to be conditioned—by the same-sex environment to have sex with other men.

Together, these three views render bisexuality a precarious, intermediate or expedient sexual subjectivity. Premised on the logic of sexual linearity, transition, and renouncement, they often privilege heterosexuality in explicating people's sexuality. As Freeman (2007) argued, Freud "view[s] any departure from the heterosexual reproductive imperative as a sign of being struck in a developmental phase or as an endless return to the past in a kind of psychic atavism" (p. 162). This Freudian timeline passes preoedipal, infantile bisexuality, regards any bisexual or homosexual relationships as experiments and ditches situational homosexuality in prison or any other same-sex environments in favor of reproductive heterosexuality. Dismissing bisexuality as a deviation to be repudiated, as a phase to be outgrown, or as a mess to be sorted out, such framings disavow the viability of bisexuality, rendering it unthinkable in terms of sexual politics. Belonging neither to the straight nor to the gay community, bisexuals are often incriminated as closeted homosexuals who cling to such heterosexual privileges as marriage, parental rights and tax breaks (Garber, 1995, p. 85). They are also unfairly depicted as cop-outs who crave for the benefits of gay liberation but flinch at its struggles (Anderlini-D'Onofrio, 2003b, p. 3), or as double agents who would sell out for the highest bidder of pleasure (Hemmings, 1995, p. 46). When identity politics attempts to iron out bisexual subjects' multiple, contradictory desires in line with a consistent sexual identity in monosexual, monogamous analysis of relationship, bisexuals often feel normalized (if they marry or come out as gay), underachieved (if they stick to one particular gender or one specific partner), voluptuous (if they are involved in a polyamorous relationship) or at worst spurious (if they renounce their opposite-sex or same-sex relationship).

In Silko's novel, David's bisexuality points to another direction. Instead of exploring his sexual options by having sex with both genders, identifying with women in desiring other men, or being coerced into homosexual relationship, David does not accede to the discourses of transitional bisexuality, infantile bisexuality or situational homosexuality. Inasmuch as he has sex with Seese for heirs, and with Beaufrey for riches, David's bisexuality is instrumental, not transitional. Admittedly, David may establish himself as a straight man who sleeps with other men only for financial support. However, his relationship with Eric and his jealousy of Serlo may also render him a gay man with a mistress on the side for reproduction. With the contradictions of sexual identity in view, a consideration of David's sexual instrumentality would not only exculpate him from accusations of infidelity in monogamous logic but also liberate him from monosexual timelines marked by marriage or coming out. Bisexuality, as Frann Michel (1996) argued, is often misunderstood "as an unstable transitional stage on the way to the telos of lesbian [or gay] identification," "as part of a conventionalized, linear, lesbian [or gay] coming-out narrative" (p. 64). If Klein's (1978) transitional bisexuality often paves the way for people's coming out as gay, David's sexual instrumentality

exceeds the dimension of sexual orientation. Free from the sexual timelines aligned with sexual identity, David does not have to decide to be straight, gay or bi after an odyssey of relationships with both genders. Nor does he need to edit his sexual history for the consistency of sexual identity. Even though his sex with Seese and Beaufrey is situational to a certain degree, it is not because he makes do with his secondary choice when his top choice of gender is unavailable. Rather, David is conditioned by Seese as the co-producer of his son and Beaufrey as the patron of his money. In contrast to those who engage in prison sex for lack of women, David is not presumably straight.

I have distinguished David's instrumental bisexuality from Klein's transitional bisexuality and Freud's infantile bisexuality. Now I want to conclude this section by reclaiming bisexual subjects from current queer historiography. As noted, the ubiquity of the homo/heterosexuality definition has rendered bisexuality mostly a transition to a more steadfast straight or gay subjectivity. Although critics have been tracing the history of sexuality to periods prior to the discourse of sexual orientation, they often reconstruct queer historiography from a gay perspective. As a result, bisexuals have cameo appearances in ancient Greece and early-20th-century cities like New York and London, but they are often overshadowed by, lumped together with or misrepresented as gay or lesbian subjects. Rewriting the history of sexuality from a bisexual perspective, I want to highlight the bisexual potential of Greek paederasts and fin-de-siècle wolves. The point is not to show how sexual instrumentality drives people's sexuality over time, but how (bi)sexuality exceeds the dimension of sexual orientation. If foot fetishists, male prisoners and David in Silko's novel can have sex with both genders for reasons other than sexual orientation, the resilience of male desires can be found in Greek paederasts and fin-de-siècle wolves as well. Yet these two types of men do not "fuck anything that moves." In addition to their attraction to beautiful women, they are turned on by hierarchy, power dynamics and gendered difference when it comes to sex between men. Instead of picking on men of their age or gender style, they are into subordinate boys and effeminate men, respectively.

Just as sex between men has existed before Karl-Maria Kertbeny coined the term "homosexuality" in 1869, so too is bisexuality often hidden in the history of (homo)sexuality. Critics like George Chauncey (1994), David M. Halperin (2002), and Matt Houlbrook (2005) have addressed the contingency and alterity of male same-sex relationships across time and space, debunking the fallacy of seeing homosexuality as temporally and geographically homogeneous.¹³ However, inquiries into queer historiography sometimes obscure bisexuality, subtending it into same-sex sexual paradigms. For instance, the wolves in fin-de-siècle New York and the paederasts in ancient Greece, despite their same-sex relationships with effeminate fairies or subordinate boys, do not necessarily sleep with men only. According to Chauncey,

the wolves could have sex with fairies as long as the former do not dress or act like women in public and take the woman's position during sex to compromise their masculinity.¹⁴ Similarly, Greek paederasty, according to Halperin (2002), only designates the sexual subjectivity of senior men who penetrate subordinate boys. Understood as a hierarchal relationship, Greek paederasty is about "the older, 'active' partner being the *subject* of desire and the recipient of the greater share of pleasure from a younger partner who figures as a sexual *object*" (Halperin, p. 116). Although the boy may grow into another paederast, he has little sexual agency or subjectivity in this institutionalized man-boy relationship. In terms of fin-de-siècle sexology, the Greek paederasts might be considered perverse rather than perverted. For they immorally penetrate both genders, instead of identifying with women and seeking male penetration (Halperin, 2002, p. 114).¹⁵ Taken together, the wolves and the paederasts may sexually prefer fairies or boys to women, but this does not rule out their heterosexual relationships altogether. Erotically responding to good-looking women and boys, these two types of men cannot be reduced to harbingers of homosexuality today. Driven by an implicit gender or age hierarchy, the wolves and the paederasts are attracted to womanlike fairies and junior boys. From a bisexual perspective, queer historiography unearths permutations of male relations across time, and these paradigms are often compatible with—not at odds with—heterosexual relationships.

Complicating the gay perspective in recent studies of queer temporalities and queer historiography, the bisexual take on time and sexuality ultimately challenges the couplehood implicit in heterosexual marriage and homosexual partnership. As Hemmings (1997) deploys the logic of repetition to deconstruct straight, gay and bi identity, bisexual temporalities enable us to see David's bisexual relationships not as a two-timing conundrum, but as a polyamorous relationship tinged with sexual instrumentality. In Silko's novel, David sleeps with men like Eric and Beaufrey, but he also has sex with women like Seese and Monte's night nurse. Well qualified as a bisexual man in light of his sexual experiences, David nevertheless bypasses the two-timing scenario typically associated with bisexual subjects. According to Pepper Mint (2004), "Because our society conceptualizes bisexuality as inherently nonmonogamous, a single set of associations [is] drawn directly from bisexuality to cheating, instead of being drawn from bisexuality to nonmonogamy to cheating" (p. 69). Questioning the monogamous assumption in relationship, Mint embraced a "bi/poly alliance" that uses new forms of visible nonmonogamy to create visible bisexuality (p. 70). Likewise, in the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle, the three parties know one another, and they seem open, if not indifferent, to such an arrangement. Instead of vacillating between heterosexuality and homosexuality or dismissing any incongruous sexual experiences for a consistent sexual identity, David cares little about sexual authenticity. Championing multiple relationships and

bisexual temporalities, he does not disavow his relationship with Seese or Beaufrey to validate his straight or gay identity. From his bisexual perspective, monogamy is part of the ideological state apparatus to discipline sexuality; it, according to Merl Storr (1997), derives from the self-congratulatory superiority of monosexual Christianity to Islamic polygamy and the Darwinian discourse of originary bisexuality in fin-de-siècle sexology (pp. 81–84).¹⁶ Even though David probably knows nothing about the racial, imperialistic construct of heterosexual monogamy in Western society, he absolves himself of cheating by never consummating his relationships with Seese and Beaufrey in marriage or domestic partnership.

The absence of cheating, however, does not always warrant a complacent, polyamorous relationship. Although David sleeps with Seese and Beaufrey for Monte and money, respectively, his original lover Eric suffers from this sexual entanglement. Seeing himself as David's only same-sex partner rather than as his casual fuck buddy, Eric can profess to be David's friend in front of Seese and even tolerate their heterosexual relationship. However, he cannot stand Beaufrey's intrusion into this bisexual entity. As Beaufrey joins this David–Seese–Eric triangle, he does not simply become a fourth participant in a polyamorous network. Rather, he transforms this bisexual triangle into a homosexual triangle wherein Eric and Beaufrey vie for David. Even though David may be with Beaufrey just for his money, Eric feels threatened. In this case, Eric's subscription to David's sexual instrumentality is limited. He puts up with Seese because he cannot bring David any heir, but David's relationship with Beaufrey cannot be explained away by sexual commerce. Pitting himself against Beaufrey for the singular position of David's same-sex lover, Eric eventually commits suicide.

THE MAN–BOY–MAN HOM(M)O-SEXUAL TRIANGLE

In my last section, I suggest reading David's sexuality in terms of bisexual temporalities, so as to avoid the monosexual analysis of sexual timelines and subjectivities. In this section, I go on to study the triangular structure of desires, so as to elucidate the correlation between David's paternal aspiration and his anxiety about masculinity. As shown by Eric's suicide, bisexuality does not always wind up in a cheating scenario, but it often generates jealousy among participants. Although Eric befriends Seese because their distinct gender roles make room for Eric's same-sex relationship with David, Beaufrey replaces Eric in this bisexual triangle. Yet the open relationship between Seese, David, and Beaufrey does not save them from the jealousy, competition or mediated desire characteristic of a love triangle for long. As soon as Monte joins this bisexual triangle, he turns it into a hom(m)o-sexual triangle hinged on paternity. In turn, David's fervent filiation with Monte not only causes Beaufrey's jealousy, but this man–boy–man triangle eventually

negates Seese's existence. Although Beaufrey sees David as a gay man who wants a son so much as to sleep with Seese, a bisexual perspective also catches David's use of Seese in claiming his manhood through heterosexual reproduction. As Monte lies at the heart of all the turbulence, the child lays bare all the rage about repro-futurity and virile masculinity, about the operation of patriarchal kinship through the traffic in women. Yet Seese is not completely devoid of her agency in sex. In contrast to her exploited motherhood, she forms a sadomasochistic dyad with David. Demanding David's brutality while they are having sex, Seese disrupts the neat binary between active, violating, male sadist and passive, victimized, female masochist.

The triangular relationship is nothing new in the geometry of desire; theorists like Freud (1924), René Girard (1965), Sedgwick (1985) and Marjorie Garber (1995) have addressed this topic. According to Freud, the Oedipus complex disciplines the son's desire for his mother by castration anxiety. Afraid of being castrated by his father in competing for the same love object, the son has to identify with the father to obtain a maternal substitute in the future as his wife (p. 421). Given that the Oedipus complex rationalizes heteronormative male desire in the postwar nuclear family, Girard and Sedgwick transplant this man-woman-man triangle from the domestic sphere to a romantic battlefield. In *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, Girard argued that the male subject seldom autonomously desires the female object in a love triangle. Rather, he imitates the mediator's desire for the object, and such mimetic desire renders the mediator (often another male) not only a model for the subject to desire the object but also his obstacle (p. 7). Later in *Between Men*, Sedgwick elaborated on the male rivalry between the subject and the mediator in Girard's erotic schema, claiming that such homosocial desire is as powerful as heterosexual desire (p. 21). For Sedgwick, to maintain and transmit patriarchal power, such homosocial desire is often coded as homophobia; it fends off the threat of homosexuality but never quite succeeds in dispelling it (p. 25).

As Girard (1965) and Sedgwick (1985) employed triangularity to unfold the subtle correlation between male heterosexual and homosexual desires, Garber (1995) argued that the privilege of couplehood implicit in the triangle reinforces a homo/heterosexual binary. In *Vice Versa*, Garber sees the bisexual triangle as a desire of, rather than between, two objects. According to Garber, "[I]t is bisexual triangularity that provokes, explains, and encompasses both heterosexuality and homosexuality. While [Girard and Sedgwick] appear to privilege the couple, they [both] prove that the shortest distance between two points is a triangle" (p. 428).¹⁷ For Garber, any love triangle is bisexual by nature—not because it concerns a choice between male and female objects (i.e., bi as between straight and gay), but because it implicates two sexual relationships (i.e., bi as two). Instead of reading the bisexual plot as a choice between heterosexual/heterosocial and homosexual/homosocial relationships, Garber interpreted it as a polyamorous

desire for male and female partners. In this vein, terms like “heterosexuality,” “homosexuality,” “marriage” and “partnership” prove to be monosexual and monogamous in their logic of relationship. They demand that the subject select one among various choices and give up the rest. Even though the discourse of sexual orientation recognizes bisexuality as sexual attraction to both genders, it tends to frame bisexuals as unethical two-timers who play the field across the gender line. Under the rubric of monogamy, bisexuals have to redeem themselves by turning straight or gay on account of their partners. Revamping bisexuality as an issue of polyamory rather than one of sexual orientation and monogamy, Garber translates Sedgwick’s male homosociality/homosexuality in a heterosexual triangle into a bisexual desire for two objects. It values noninstitutionalized relationships such as friends, fuck buddies, trades and ex-lovers for their polyamorous possibilities instead of privileging monogamous marriage or domestic partnership.

In Silko’s *Almanac* (1991), however, the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle needs to consider the child. As opposed to a usual heterosexual romantic triangle, which depicts two men vying against each other for one woman, Beaufrey does not imitate David’s sexual interest in Seese. Nor does he compete with David for Seese’s favor. Instead, David uses Seese to beget Monte, and it is Monte that arouses Beaufrey’s desire for David through his jealousy of the baby. Initially believing that David is in love with her, Seese finally realizes that “both David and Beaufrey used others—such as Eric or her—to taunt and to tantalize” (Silko, 1991, p. 109). As Silko recasts the male rivalry in heterosexual romance into a bisexual plot, the operation of male desire eventually hinges on the child. Although Beaufrey cares nothing about Seese, he is obsessed with her baby: “Beaufrey had feared David might love the child, that the child might somehow interfere” (Silko, 1991, p. 112). Transfiguring the ambivalent male homosociality/homosexuality in Sedgwick into hardcore male same-sex relationship, the erotic desire between David and Beaufrey depends on the mediation of Monte. In particular, Beaufrey is excessively turned on when David knows nothing about his son’s mishap: “Beaufrey really got hot because David had never even suspected what had happened to the infant: something terrible. Nothing got Beaufrey hotter than pumping away at an unsuspecting asshole such as David; ignorant of everything” (Silko, 1991, p. 561). Sedgwick’s diagram, as Sharon Marcus (2007) noticed, “unseats heterosexuality as an original, primary, autonomous form of desire” (p. 74). But Silko further questions the autonomy of homosexuality. In the David–Monte–Beaufrey triangle, the homoerotic desire between men is mediated through a boy.

Seen in this light, the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle looks more like a homosexual relationship under the camouflage of heterosexual romance. If the usual man–woman–woman bisexual plot (e.g., Lillian Hellman’s *The Children’s Hour* [1934/1981]) is viewed as a decision between heterosexual marriage and female friendship, Silko highlights male sexuality mediated

through an infant. As Garber (1995) asserts that man-woman-man triads are “more culturally threatening than two women and a man, a triad that connotes ‘mastery’ and manliness (to men), but also voluptuous excess” (p. 477), what eventually stand out in the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle are David’s paternal prospect, Monte’s facilitation of the relation between David and Beaufrey, and these two men’s sexual commerce. Although the relationship between David and Beaufrey is mediated by money and Monte, Silko does not pathologize male relations in general. Just as Sedgwick (1985) theorizes male homosocial desire as the bedrock for heterosexual romance, so too would Silko include women and children in the cartography of male homoerotics. If homosexuality and homosociality are sometimes indistinguishable for Sedgwick, homosexual and heterosexual desires are not mutually exclusive for Silko.

With Monte’s importance established, let me turn to Irigaray (1977/1985) and render visible Seese’s negated agency. Following Rubin’s (1975/1997) anthropological studies of kinship in “The Traffic in Women,” Irigaray argued that men exchange women as commodities with each other, thereby superimposing economic and patriarchal transactions upon women’s corporeal, maternal (re)production. Dwelling on this man–woman–man triangle, Irigaray called it “the reign of hom(m)o-sexuality”: “In this new matrix of History, in which man begets man as his own likeness, wives, daughters, and sisters have value only in that they serve as the possibility of, and potential benefit in, relations among men” (pp. 171–172). As male homosociality operates through the traffic in women, “heterosexuality,” Irigaray went on to argue, “has been up to now just an alibi for the smooth workings of man’s relations with himself, of relations among men” (p. 172). Insofar as women function as mediators between men, Irigaray exposes the patriarchal economy in kinship. If homosexuality is conventionally limited to genital contacts between men, Irigaray’s hom(m)o-sexuality discloses men’s diplomatic, commercial, and perhaps homoerotic transactions with each other by inserting a woman in between. Here two men are not fighting for the same women in terms of the Freudian, Girardian, or Sedgwickian triangle. Instead, they affiliate with each other by means of women.

Can Irigaray’s (1977/1985) hom(m)o-sexuality explain the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle? Yes and no—yes because Seese has nearly no say in this triangle; no because it is not a heterosexual triangle. The David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle does not concern the homosocial relationship between David and Beaufrey through Seese’s mediation in the heterosexual logic. Nor do these two men demand Seese to secure or merge their patriarchal enterprises. When David and Beaufrey are lovers, the boy Seese reproduces at once satisfies David’s paternal/masculine aspiration and ignites Beaufrey’s jealousy. Once Monte was born, Seese was used up. With regard to David’s bisexual instrumentality, Seese’s value rests on her ability to reproduce heirs, not on her ability to be David’s partner. When their relationship

is reduced to reproduction, it is all about paternal business, not about any hetero timelines marked by marriage or childbearing. A bisexual who spends most time with men like Eric, Beaufrey and Serlo, but sleeps with Seese to sire a son, David turns the hom(m)o-sexual regime into a bisexual scheme. Whereas Eric befriends Seese, Beaufrey knows exactly Seese's worth. Under the rubric of David's bisexual instrumentality, female labor is paradoxically priceless and worthless: David cannot do without Seese to beget Monte, but he does not sign up for any teleological, hetero timeline with her in mind. Reduced to a laboring machine, Seese is deprived of her maternal agency and her chance to be David's wife.

Robbed of her son, Seese nevertheless claims her sexual subjectivity through sadomasochism. The sex between David and Seese is so galvanized by the heat of hierarchy and domination that they become a sadomasochistic dyad:

Dope or sex, it was all about control, and the slave, the one who served and obeyed. Seese had taught David that; she had asked David to fuck her while he was shooting her up. He had hated her for wanting that, and he had wanted to hurt her, to miss the vein. But his cock had got hard and curved up to his belly just as he got the needle in the vein; warm and white he fed it to her in steady stream and spurts. (Silko, 1991, p. 564)

Physically vulnerable but sexually charged, Seese demands David fuck her during her drug injection. Appalled at Seese's plea, David nevertheless becomes excited at the thought of sexual hierarchy and violence. Intent on hurting her, David now desires Seese not for chivalry, but for sadism. On account of such power dynamics, David and Seese resemble the S&M pair.

As Shlomo Giora Shoham (2003) argued, the sadist and the masochist could form a "Sisyphean interdependence": "The sadistic ego may device subtle and sophisticated modes of painfully manipulating its alter, so that the latter may see no choice but to willingly submit. . . . Moreover, the masochist is also bound to manipulate the sadist into providing the type of torment suitable to his specific gourmet palate for esoteric pain" (p. 75). Between manipulation and subjugation, it becomes difficult to tell who is in control. Concerning this paradox of power, Paul Morrison (2001) commented, "To the extent that [the masochist] takes pleasure in the maltreatment that [the sadist] is thus powerless to deliver, he is the top; to the extent that [the sadist] directs his sadism toward a consenting masochist who actively solicits it, he is the bottom" (p. 108). Even though it looks as if David were taking advantage of Seese, they defy a neat dichotomy between male/top/insertive/sadist and female/bottom/receptive/masochist roles. Despite her receptive sexual role, Seese demands David's brutal sex. In fact, Seese may even elicit more thrills from David's submission to her taunting solicitation than from his penetration

of her body. Under such circumstances, David does not necessarily obtain domination by penetrating Seese's body. He may fall short of his sadist edge if he flinches at Seese's command.

As David's reproductive tool and his sadomasochistic partner, Seese gives and takes away David's manhood. Yet the masculine keyword here is procreation, not domination. Inasmuch as the hegemonic masculinity encourages male homosocial rivalry and wards off anything suggestive of femininity and homosexuality, such a homophobic discourse, according to Michael S. Kimmel (2001), makes men not only paranoid about male intimacy but also high-strung about their masculine façade (pp. 273–280).¹⁸ Although some men are worried about their body or their social status, David is fretful about his sexual virility. Regarding David's obsession with filiation, Beaufrey dismisses it as a pathetic illusion for the straight image:

Beaufrey had underestimated David's need to see himself reproduced, to see his own flesh live on; it was a common hang-up Beaufrey had seen in gay men, especially the men who called themselves "straight" because they wanted to see their face reproduced on a tiny, shitting, screaming baby. Humans were like monkeys delighted with the little mirror images, until they realized any likeness was only illusion. Children, in fact, grew into total strangers. Beaufrey and his parents had loathed one another. (Silko, 1991, p. 536)

David's craving for children, though common among nonstraight people, illustrates the heteronormative discourse of repro-futurity. According to Edelman (2004), repro-futurity "preserv[es]...the absolute privilege of heteronormativity by rendering unthinkable, by casting outside the political domain, the possibility of a queer resistance to this organizing principle of communal relations" (p. 2). Because people like David cannot have children with their same-sex partners, avid champions of reproductive futurism may go to extremes and deny their right to child adoption or any other forms of nonheteronormative family.

Paternity, when viewed from the heteronormative perspective, becomes a privilege exclusive to straight couples. Yet in Silko's novel, David does not claim his paternal right as a gay man. Instead, he wants the masculine insignia attached to filiation. Conflating fatherhood with manhood, David believes that Monte's birth would make him a real man. As Beaufrey calls David's paternal aspiration a gay man's hang-up for the straight identity, the distinction between homosexuals and heterosexuals in this scenario lies in reproduction rather than sexual orientation. Clinging to the alleged superiority of straight identity, David values Monte as if the boy could redeem his father's sex with other men. Whereas some gay men worship muscles to (re)claim their manhood, David's bisexual instrumentality enables him to resort to heterosexual reproduction. For David, it is the inability to have

heirs—not sex between men—that renders people like Eric unmanly. Despite his same-sex relationships, David can keep his masculinity intact by having sex with Seese and siring a son.

As David holds Monte with masculine glee, Beaufrey rejects the conflation between paternity and masculinity, between fatherhood and manhood. In contrast to David's submission to the heteronormative concept of reproductivity, Beaufrey reads paternity in terms of ownership:

David had loved his baby son. Beaufrey enjoyed watching David's dumb pain over the disappearance of the child. Fathers who gushed over sons made Beaufrey want to smash in their faces. He despised public sentimentality over infants and small children. In private, these same infants had their heads smashed or vaginas ripped; after all, they were the private property of their fathers. The poor might be excused for their sentimentality since their offspring were all that would ever be theirs, however briefly the infant survived. (Silko, 1991, p. 536)

Against the backdrop of few happy nuclear families in Silko's novel, David's desire for male progeny seems all too heteronormative. Although some heterosexual couples—especially those from a White, bourgeois background—can afford such choices as abortion, adoption, birth control and artificial insemination to embrace or dismiss reproductive futurism for self-glorification and masculine fulfillment, David is not on an equal footing. Staying with Beaufrey, David is deprived of fatherhood and the ensuing manhood associated with paternity. In contrast to David's paternal sentimentality, Beaufrey sees children as “the private property of their fathers.” Unpacking David's patriarchal regime and masculine aspiration, Beaufrey's proprietary take on paternity translates Monte from sonhood to objecthood. Cruel as it sounds, Beaufrey sees through the economy of hom(m)o-sexual kinship; beneath David's paternal bond lurks a financial bond. When Beaufrey exclaims, “Children, in fact, grew into total strangers,” he not only denies Seese and David's parental attachment to Monte but also critiques the heteronormative repro-futurity. Although David wishes to fulfill his masculinity by siring Monte, his paternal aspiration resides in Monte's Oedipal resemblance. For Beaufrey, the Oedipal identification is a myth; the son does not have to be like his father. Taunting David for his heterosexual hang-up on paternity, Beaufrey strips fatherhood of affective bonds, laying bare the capital value of heirs in patriarchal kinship.

THE MAN–MONEY–MAN TRADE TRIANGLE

As Beaufrey thinks of paternity in proprietary terms, his relationship with David is also predominantly monetary. Having demonstrated Monte's

importance in terms of hom(m)o-sexuality, in my last section I would like to analyze David and Beaufrey's sexuality in light of sexual commerce. Because David relies on Beaufrey's financial support, he resembles a straight-identified trade man—exchanging sex with gay clients for money. Yet a bisexual perspective bypasses the conundrum of sexual orientation. Just as a straight perspective would relinquish David's sex with Eric and Beaufrey as temporary deviance from his otherwise stable heterosexual identity, so a gay perspective would interpret David's sex with Seese and the night nurse as those weak moments where a gay man yields to the lure of compulsory heterosexuality. In contrast to such monosexual logic, a bisexual perspective would acknowledge David's multiple needs and desires without pegging his identity. In fact, David may not even champion a bisexual identity because it often carries romantic connotations of polyamory or immoral implications of promiscuity. Driven by his sexual instrumentality, David has sex with Seese and Beaufrey to fulfill his paternal prospect and to secure his financial stability.

What does David's sexual and financial relationship with Beaufrey tell us about bisexuality or male desire in general? To sort these two men out, we should put them in a man–money–man triangle, instead of a man–man dyad. If David's relationship with Seese reveals the patriarchal economy of hom(m)o-sexuality, his relationship with Beaufrey further discloses the intricate complicity between male intimacy and capitalism. Such sex between men not only concerns Beaufrey's sexual exploitation of David's body and David's economic dependence on Beaufrey at a personal level, but also implicates class difference in the aftermaths of imperialism and colonialism. The translation of physical or sexual labor into wages, in other words, gestures toward a larger context of commercialization of human bodies, exemplified by Black slaves, transnational houseboys or housemaids and global sex workers. Even though the sexual commerce between David and Beaufrey is between two White men, Beaufrey's notion of European aristocracy and his role as the sex client complicate the picture of transnational male prostitution. In conventional narratives of transnational gay tourism, a White, (upper) middle-class gay man from the United States or any affluent European countries embarks on sexual adventures in the Caribbean, the Arabic Orient, Thailand, East Europe or any other economically disadvantaged regions.¹⁹ In Silko's novel, David is not the consumer of Third-World prostitutes. On the contrary, this U.S. photographer depends on an aristocrat from Argentine. Making loads of money by trafficking drugs and porno videos, Beaufrey does not denote a financially deprived Latin American origin. Instead, he pays a White, male U.S. trade man for sex. Here, the sexual commerce does not necessarily suggest a counterattack, backfire or implosion of imperialism. For Beaufrey's European aristocratic lineage and his wealth give him a class and capitalist niche incongruous with his Latino nationality. Even though he

is from the Third World, Beaufrey does not change the commodification of human bodies under the rubric of capitalism.

A jargon in the profession of male prostitution, the term *rough trade* concerns money and masculinity. Originally referring to the customer of a fairy prostitute, the term *trade*, according to Chauncey (1994), has collapsed from any “straight” man who responded to a gay man’s advances in the 1910s to straight-identified men who worked as prostitutes serving gay-identified men in the middle third of the 20th century (pp. 69–70). Although the designation refers first to the client and later to the sex worker, the trade man always establishes himself as a macho guy in contrast to the effeminate fairy prostitute or the supposedly passive gay patron. In the first case, a wolf poses a masculine demeanor and plays the penetrating role in his relationship with fairies at the turn of the 20th century. In the second case, the straight-identified trade man in the postwar era would perform a limited repertoire of sexual acts with his gay clients to secure his masculine integrity. According to Vern L. Bullough and Richard D. McAnulty (2006), the straight-identified trade man would usually insist on playing the “insertive” or “active” role during oral and anal (if any) sex (pp. 308–309). Inasmuch as the “passive” role is often associated with a “feminine” position, the trade man refrains from activities suggestive of femininity on his part. Anxious about their masculinity, some trade men may even go rough with their gay clients—hurting them during or after sex in compensation for their same-sex shame. Associating violence with masculinity, homosexuality with femininity, the trade man usually claims to be “hustling money—not sex” (Boles & Elifson, 1994, p. 44). Framing their sex with other men as occupation, as exceptions to their hetero timeline, trade men may have girlfriends, get married with women and even raise a family.

The trade man, in other words, is bisexual in terms of sexual experience, but not necessarily in terms of sexual subjectivity. Telling his same-sex sexual experiences from his heterosexual identity, the trade man collides with the heteronormative, monogamous ethics of relationship. An elusive figure in the postwar taxonomy of sexual orientation, the trade man poses a tension between sexual agency and sexual objectification, between sexual identification and sexual act and between romance and finance. If he marries a woman and has a family, his sexual relationship with gay clients cannot be purely seen as extramarital affairs. Instead, the trade man’s wife may consent to such a sexual arrangement, for the whole family relies on those gay customers’ financial support. As long as the trade man feels “It’s a business doing pleasure with [other men]” (T. G. Morrison & Whitehead, 2007, p. 1), his bisexual behavior is not necessarily attributed to his sexual attraction to both genders. In this man–money–man triangle, the trade man usually can dodge the blow of emasculation by acting tough. Even though his straight identity and his heterosexual marriage may actually cover his preference for

same-sex partners, the trade man would cling to his heterosexual privilege by professing a straight or bisexual identity.²⁰

In Silko's *Almanac* (1991), the Seese–David–Beaufrey triangle adds a twist to the straight-identified “rough trade” scenario. On account of his sexual instrumentality, David does not insist on playing the penetrating role when he has sex with Beaufrey. Instead, Beaufrey enjoys “pumping away at an unsuspecting asshole such as David.” Even though David is as anxious about his masculinity as do most trade men, he demonstrates his manhood by siring a son, not by imposing violence on Beaufrey. The “failure” to maintain a consistent straight, active image, then, makes room for David's flexible sexual subjectivity. Instead of commanding a rigid alignment between sexual position and sexual identity, David would play the “passive” sexual role and even enjoy it. Although he might play a subordinate role in case that he vex his clients, David can choose his customers as a trade man. Seen in this light, David's sexual subjectivity emerges upon his submission to Beaufrey. His sexual objectification is masochistic, but not forced. Regarding sex between men, David does not coerce his partners into passivity. Just as Seese demands David's sadist penetration, so David might long for Beaufrey's sexual domination. Even though David strongly links fatherhood to his sense of manhood, such masculine anxiety does not permeate his relationship with Beaufrey. From his bisexual perspective, the “straight” hang-up on paternity does not preclude David from having sex with other men or playing a “passive” role.

Driven by his sexual instrumentality, David conflates sexuality with patronage. In his sexual commerce with Beaufrey, homosexual desire is at once fortified and eclipsed by money. A kept boy financially supported by a sugar daddy, David creates a much steadier relationship with Beaufrey than do most hustlers with their intermittent clients. Formerly “work[ing] for an exclusive Malibu escort service—live-in stud, for three to six months maximum,” David served “rich old queers in Bel-Air” more for money than for sex (Silko, 1991, p. 59). However, when it comes to Beaufrey, David now advertises himself as a rising photographer financed by the tycoon: “All of his life David had imagined an older man like Beaufrey—rich, aristocratic, and ruthless; someone who would be his patron, so that David would be invited to shows all across Europe” (Silko, 1991, p. 551). Trading his body for Beaufrey's money and a ticket to high society, David hopes that Beaufrey would give him an economic edge in photography industry. However, David may also see Beaufrey as his ideal life partner. According to Barry D. Adam (2000), a younger gay/bisexual man may choose a senior partner because age often comes not only with financial security, intellectual mentorship, emotional stability, and sexual experience, but also with the taboo of (child) molestation. Regarding this taboo, Adam argued, “Yet this discourse is deployed ironically—or queered, one might say—as the [junior

partner] interpolates himself as the molested youth in a transgressive narrative in which the prohibitions against being a desired youth and desiring an older man are played as grounds for sexual excitement" (p. 418). Purposefully rebelling against the normative sexual propriety, some junior gay/bi men see the age difference as a raging turn-on. Although David may not share this molestation fantasy, he does claim his sexual subjectivity in his relationship with Beaufrey. Predominantly commercial as the sexual trade is, David cares about Beaufrey enough to partake in the David–Serlo–Beaufrey triangle. Fretting about the "imagined infidelities" between those two business partners, David seduces Serlo to undo Serlo's celibacy and provoke Beaufrey's jealousy.

By contrast, Beaufrey seems attracted to David's rustic beauty and his gullible simplicity. Using money and dope to keep him around, Beaufrey accesses David's body like a connoisseur and eugenicist:

Beaufrey would be the first to admit the rich were ugly; only great fortunes had made it possible for ugly blue bloods to continue reproducing themselves. Beaufrey knew that David, Eric, and all the other "rough trade" only stayed as long as there was dope and money. Street punks looked blank if they heard the term *blue blood*; occasionally one might confuse the word with *blue ball* or scrotal congestion. Still, life's mystery was that the loveliest, most tender pieces of beauty were "rough trade"—the boys of the street dripping their pearls in the soot. (Silko, 1991, p. 537)

Beaufrey values David's body not only as a beautiful object to look at but also as an ideal mate to better the stock of the aristocracy. Even though David cannot bring Beaufrey any offspring through same-sex reproduction, Beaufrey takes delight in imagining a child that comes from their loins. In this case, paternity designates a biological imaginary, not a biological fact. It does not boost a father's masculinity but enhances a same-sex client's homoeroticism. In contrast to David's masculine anxiety about filiation, Beaufrey believes that David would make up for the physical flaws of his blue blood. Such paternal imagination, in turn, reinforces the dichotomy between a rich, ugly, sophisticated aristocrat and a poor, beautiful, naïve commoner. Although David is cunning enough to develop a bisexual triangle, he is subject to Beaufrey's sexual whims. A capitalist of trade men, Beaufrey can dispose of David the moment he becomes tired of David's looks.

Revamping homoeroticism in eugenic terms, Beaufrey eventually envisions a queer future in which the "ugly blue bloods" assimilate intellectually inferior but physically superior trade men like David. Instead of advocating a homosocial/homosexual democracy that transcends class difference, racial discrimination and national boundaries, Beaufrey thinks of his same-sex relationship with David in hetero, imperialist rhetoric. Such

rhetoric, however, does not mean that Beaufrey is straight-identified. Rather, it bespeaks the complicity between imperialism and heterosexual reproduction. Just as imperialists would rape indigenous women in the Americas to better the latter's generic stock, so too would Beaufrey consume David to continue his imaginary aristocratic lineage. Seeing through the patriarchal logic of hom(m)o-sexuality, Beaufrey nevertheless still subscribes to a homoeroticism governed by the discourse of repro-futurity. Here, Beaufrey does not desire David so as to reproduce a more beautiful race. On the contrary, he deploys the eugenic, imperialist discourse to reinforce his desire for the trade man.

To complicate this sexual commerce, Beaufrey adds his business partner and fellow aristocrat, Serlo, ultimately transforming this same-sex dyad into a homosexual triangle. Knowing that Serlo despises plebeians like David, Beaufrey deliberately leaves David alone with Serlo, just to see whether David can seduce the celibate: "For years, Beaufrey had tried to seduce Serlo with luscious young men procured all over the world. . . . He [Serlo] had enjoyed their confusion and shame when he'd revealed he wanted nothing to do with them or any filth" (Silko, 1991, p. 556). Jealous of Serlo's intimacy with Beaufrey, David tries to sleep with Serlo to revenge himself for Beaufrey's neglect and Serlo's contempt. With his scheme foiled, David dies a sudden death. Attempting to impress Serlo with his equestrian skills, David rides a horse faster than he should. When he loses control, the horse batters him at its fall. Till his death, David remains clueless about his lost son Monte. In this homosexual triangle, David serves more as a plaything between Beaufrey and Serlo's sexual tension than as Beaufrey's beloved boy. Beaufrey does not desire to consummate his relationship with Serlo in sex. Nor does he vie against David for Serlo's attention. Disrupting the mimetic desire in Girard, Beaufrey instead uses David to try Serlo's impregnable celibacy.

But what about Seese? Does Seese play the same role as Serlo between David and Beaufrey? Why does Beaufrey barely regard Seese as a force to be reckoned with? When we see David, Seese, and Beaufrey as a whole, this bisexual triangle collapses what Sedgwick calls the male homosociality/homosexuality mediated by a woman. After aborting Seese's first baby with David, Beaufrey lets David keep her. Regarding this odd arrangement, we may look at the sexual triangle between the rough boy trade in Larry Clark's photography, the boy's pregnant girlfriend and gay readers. According to Muñoz (1998), women in Clark's photography are not posed as sexual objects for gay readers. Rather, they—often with child or/and experimenting with drugs—are "the symbols of a decayed moral responsibility, the weighted anchor that holds these boys to the world of heterosexuality" (p. 170). In other words, though Clark's photographs often show a heterosexual couple, they do not reinforce a heteronormative sexuality attuned to the taste of a White, bourgeois nuclear family. Instead, they arouse gay readers' desire for

the boy but keep such homoerotics in check by inserting a pregnant woman into the picture. With the couple stranded in a teleological, hetero timeline marked by the girl's pregnancy, straight readers are unlikely to gravitate to such a disrespectful heterosexual arrangement. They hardly would desire a woman with child or/and on drugs. Nor would they identify themselves with the miserable lad. Gay readers, by contrast, are attracted to the wicked boy in the pictures. His unpropitious financial circumstances may render his body exploitable in same-sex sexual commerce.

Regarding the sexual tension between the rough trade boy and his male spectator, Clark contends that he wants to be—not to have—the boy in the picture. Yet Muñoz (1998) argued, “While the narrative suggests the former, the latter is always set up” (p. 175). In particular, when Clark captures one woman overwhelmed by a cluster of boys/men in some group-sex pictures, what exude from the photographs are not only heterosexual violence but also a male homosociality verging on homoerotics. According to Muñoz, “The gang-bang fantasy seems like another extreme depiction of the homosocial. Within the homosocial, men ‘get off’ on the notion of collective sexual experiences but do so not by having sex with each other but, instead, by sharing/using the same woman” (p. 172). Although Clark emphasizes the violent, straight masculinity of his rough boys, Muñoz—as a gay reader—sees the roughness as a fearful and desirable quality for a trade man in male prostitution. As Chris Cagle (1996) aptly depicted gay men's ambivalence toward trade stars in gay porno, “some gays denigrate representations of the trade man as encouraging self-hatred among gay men; others . . . revel in fantasies of doing the inaccessible straight man” (p. 245). In the heterosexual logic of the trade–woman–Clark triangle, the photographer not only desires to be the boy but also desires to have the woman. In the homosexual logic of the trade–woman–gay triangle, the viewer gravitates to the boy despite and because of his brutal heterosexuality.

Translating the gay desire in Clark's “straight” photography to the bisexual plot in Silko's novel, we can now see why Beaufrey pays Seese no mind. Instead of buffering his desire for David through Seese in a gang-bang fantasy, Beaufrey desires and has David directly. Rather than feel jealous of Seese, Beaufrey sees her as a titular anchor that holds David to the world of heterosexuality. As long as David is not romantically attached to Seese or decides to settle down with her in a monogamous relationship, Beaufrey may even feel aroused by his capability to have sex with an otherwise inaccessible “straight” man. A gay client who visits his straight-identified boy more for sexual pleasure than for any stable relationship, Beaufrey does not object to such a bisexual arrangement. In fact, to make his relationship with David charged with drama, Beaufrey even adds Serlo to the triangle, rendering David at once a rival against Serlo for his attention and a seducer to undo Serlo's celibacy. The birth of Monte, however, breaks down the delicate balance between these participants. Now that paternity trumps the

David–Seese–Beaufrey bisexual triangle, the David–money–Beaufrey trade triangle, and even the David–Serlo–Beaufrey homosexual triangle, the excluded Beaufrey has to get rid of Monte in presiding over this sexual commerce.

CONCLUSION

I have argued that the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle is characterized by David’s sexual instrumentality and a bisexual temporality independent of a hetero timeline hinged on marriage, a homo timeline initiated by the “coming out” moment, or a bi timeline validated by sexual experiences with both genders. In Silko’s *Almanac* (1991), David’s bisexual relationship with Seese and Beaufrey is driven by his aspiration for male offspring and his need for financial support. Bisexuality, when defined in terms of sexual orientation, does not fully register David’s multiple desires. Even when we consider bisexuality in terms of bisexual temporalities—that is, rejecting the logic of sexual linearity, transition and renouncement—we still miss David’s sexual instrumentality. In the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle, bisexuality thus not only concerns the correlation between sexuality and time. It also insinuates the coalescence between masculinity and heterosexual reproduction, as well as the complication of romance and finance in male same-sex prostitution.

With Monte and money at the center of all these sexual intrigues, David’s bisexuality exceeds the usual discussion of sexual orientation. Instead, it generates an epistemology of temporality, (re)production and triangular desire irreducible to a linear, monosexual, monogamous analysis of relationship. It also attests to Silko’s critique on the aftermath of imperialism, colonialism and the commodification of human bodies in capitalist society. True, David’s desire for a baby does not have to be seen as a heterosexual desire or a right exclusive to straight couples. However, his manipulation of Seese renders heterosexual relationship an enterprise for reproduction alone. It bankrupts heterosexuality as a love relationship. Yet insofar as the David–Seese–Beaufrey triangle is not situated in the dilemma between heterosexual marriage and homosexual partnership, it does not fit in the cheating scenario in the logic of monosexual couplehood. As David uses Seese to beget Monte, he in turn exchanges his body for Beaufrey’s financial support. An exploiter of Seese’s maternal body, David is now subject to Beaufrey’s consumption. Beaufrey, despite his misogyny toward Seese, his abhorrence of Monte, and his manipulation of David, sees through the logic of hom(m)o-sexuality. He tolerates David’s relationship with Seese because he can control David by money; he makes fun of David’s paternal aspiration because fatherhood implicates not only masculinity but also patriarchy and property. To complicate his sexual commerce with David, Beaufrey even introduces Serlo to the game, just to see whether David can undo Serlo’s

celibacy. However, when Monte inserts himself between him and David, Beaufrey knows that he has to vie against the child for David. If Girard's or Sedgwick's theories can be any guide, David puts himself in the position of the desired object for Beaufrey to fight against Monte. Because Monte's resemblance to David also intensifies the father's narcissistic interest in the baby, Beaufrey is in a losing battle. Jealous of and threatened by Monte, he finally sends people to get rid of his competitor. As Monte becomes the raw material of Beaufrey's dissection video, David is finally used up as well. After his death, his photography becomes lucrative. Initially a beneficiary of his own sexual instrumentality, David ends up being reduced to money himself.

NOTES

1. See, for instance, Eng (2003) and Lewin (2009).

2. Olmsted (1999) is aghast by the "deviant" sexualities in Silko. According to Olmsted, "It's difficult to find instances of healthy, loving sexuality in *Almanac of the Dead*. . . . There is no question that the homosexual men in the novel are pathological or pathetic . . . , and heterosexuality doesn't fare well either" (p. 471). Olmsted's normative take on sexuality—heterosexual, monogamous, and happily married with children—renders monstrous any male desire beyond the pale of the nuclear family. St. Clair (1999), by contrast, reads Silko's representation of homosexuality as a metaphor for greed and brutality. But her conflation of homosexuality with capitalism entails a misleading term, "cannibal queers." According to St. Clair, Beaufrey, Serlo, and Trigg—because of their involvement in the traffic of drugs, the production of torture videos, and the marketing of human organs—incarnate "the insane solipsism and androcentric avarice that characterize the dominant culture" (p. 207). Because these men also engage in grotesque sex with/to one another, St. Clair argued that they perpetuate the homosexual stereotypes of being "narcissistic, promiscuous, predatory, exploitative, amoral, and malicious psychopaths" (p. 208). Following St. Clair's logic, Fischer-Hornung (2007) designated homosexuality in Silko's novel as an abject metonym (p. 109).

3. As the David-Seese-Beaufrey triangle eventually leads to a futile search for Monte, it is worth noting that Monte's name alludes to the gambling game, three-card monte. Just as the confidence trick designates one guy as the dealer to ask the victim, or mark, to identify the money card among three face-down playing cards, so too do Seese and David try to outsmart Beaufrey in locating Monte, but to no avail.

4. As the sexual imbroglio around David becomes knotty with issues of paternity, masculinity, finance, and jealousy, the representations of male sexuality in *Almanac* need to also consider incest, disability and race. Serlo's grandfather, for example, used to massage his orphaned, prepubescent grandson at night. Such nocturnal intimacy raises taboos of incest, homosexuality and child abuse. Trigg, another tycoon in this novel, is having an affair with a married woman. The paraplegic has sex with Leah Blue not only for the thrill of adultery but also for the testimony to his virility. This violation of heterosexual marriage, however, is not the worst part. To make money for his plasma center, Trigg fellates homeless men while draining their blood. Analogous to David's case, Trigg's bisexuality concerns less with his sexual orientation than with the sexual boost he needs to ensure his male ego and the financial profit he can obtain through sex with other men. Finally, Ferro—a broker of contraband firearms and Lecha's mestizo son—is sexually attracted to a White undercover cop, Jamey. For Ferro, interracial relationship is hot. The differences in their ages, body types and physical appearances only make Ferro want Jamey more. As sexuality is entangled with race, capitalism, masculinity and the discourse of repro-futurity in *Almanac*, accusing Silko of homophobia—on account of those negative representations of male same-sex relationships—would miss her message about the complexity of male desires.

5. Gibian (1992) called the fixity of sexual orientation "sexual stasis": "We basically buy the notion not only that we are who we sleep with, but also that we are who we sleep with *today*. Lesbian communities accept and perpetuate this as much as the heterosexual world does. And what a narrow definition it is: it invalidates past actions, past feelings and present feelings. It doesn't allow conflicting feelings to coexist, denying the possibility of paradox and discouraging ambiguity. It says: you must stay

still so we can see who you are" (p. 5). As Gibian points out that lesbians who fall in love with men are unfairly labeled as traitors to their gay community, Eadie (1993) addresses bisexuals' anxiety about the legitimacy of their sexual identity. According to Eadie, "Monogamous people [bisexuals] feel they should be having more relationships, and people in multiple relationships feel they are perpetuating a stereotype. People who have had primarily same-sex relationships feel they are expected to have opposite-sex relationships, and people in opposite-sex relationships feel they have not proved themselves until they have had a same-sex relationship" (p. 144).

6. In addition to the accusations of promiscuity, exploiting heterosexual privileges, and betraying the gay community, bisexuality has prompted tons of other issues. Anderlini-D'Onofrio (2003a) draws a parallel between American playwright Lillian Hellman and her character Karen Wright in *The Children's Hour*. According to Anderlini-D'Onofrio, just as Hellman passes as a nondescript American and heterosexual woman despite her Jewish identity and her bisexual desire in a time of homophobia, bi-phobia, and anti-Semitism, so too does Wright in *The Children's Hour* establish herself as a survivor in the Darwinian, homophobic society (pp. 91, 108). Dollimore (1996), by contrast, showcases an erotic threesome wherein a bisexual man watches another man having sex with a woman. According to Dollimore, this scenario generates a wishful theory of multiple identifications across gender for the bisexual male voyeur. Although the bisexual subject may want to have/be the man/woman directly and/or through his/her partner, his sexual charge is intensified by the mutual attraction between the couple (p. 529). Following Dollimore, Alan Sinfield (2004) explains this loop of bisexual fantasy in terms of "desire-to-be" and "desire-for": that is, the voyeur has desire-to-be the man because he has desire-for the woman; he also has desire-to-be the woman because he has desire-for the man. According to Sinfield, "Bisexuality is usually glossed, quite simply, as a static split: desire-for both genders. This is not an adequate account of the positionings of Dollimore's protagonist: he is performing an elaborate psychic loop through the possible permutations" (p. 41). Even posited in the context of monogamous, heterosexual marriage, bisexuality still involves numerous ethical dilemmas. A bisexual subject, for instance, would have to choose between his or her same-sex and opposite-sex partners. A married husband may be cheating on his wife and having an affair with another man. Or, a lesbian decides to marry a man because bisexual people are castigated as a bridge between heterosexuals and homosexuals during the AIDS epidemic (Däumer, 1992, p. 94).

7. As bisexuality does not necessarily mean sexual attraction to both genders, critics also start to see masturbation and celibacy as particular kinds of sexual subjectivity in defiance of the homo/heterosexual binary. See Dodson (2004), Francis (2004), and Kahan (2008).

8. On the discourse of repro-futurity, see, for instance, Edelman (2004), Halberstam (2005), and Dinshaw et al. (2007).

9. In the wake of the Kinsey scale—which rates individuals from 0 (*exclusively heterosexual*) to 6 (*extremely homosexual*) based on their sexual experiences and reactions—the Klein Sexual Orientation Grid further specifies such variables as sexual attraction, sexual behavior, sexual fantasies, emotional preference, social preference, self-identification and hetero/gay lifestyle (Klein, Sepekoff, & Wolf, 1985, p. 39). For an assessment of the Kinsey Report, see Cagle (1996, pp. 236–238, 240–242, 246).

10. On the history of the polyamory/polyfidelity movement or a personal account of nonmonogamous partnership, see, for instance, Robins (2004) and Ray (2004).

11. On recent scholarship on queer historiography, see, for example, Halperin (2002), Hammond (2002), Traub (2002), Vicinus (2004), Marcus (2007), Chauncey (1994), Houlbrook (2005), Cole (2003), and Kunzel (2008).

12. On queer temporalities, see Dinshaw (1999), Jagose (2002), Edelman (2004), Halberstam (2005), Love (2007), Doan and Waters (2000), and Dinshaw et al. (2007). In particular, Halberstam questions the *Bildungsroman* narrative as a normative genre that endorses a hetero, linear transition from childhood dependency through marriage to adult responsibility (p. 153). Instead of seeing queer/adolescent subcultures as a stage prior to mature adulthood, Halberstam contended, "For queers, the separation between youth and adulthood simply does not hold, and queer adolescence can extend far beyond one's twenties" (p. 174). Halberstam speaks to the modernist discourse of sexology and psychoanalysis, which depicts sexual and gender deviants as infantile, primitive, regressive or backward in favor of the teleological timeline of heterosexual reproduction. In addition to the critique on sexual maturity, queer temporalities also begin to tackle such ugly feelings as shame, loneliness and withdrawal to attest to "the experience of social exclusion" and "the historical 'impossibility' of same-sex desire" (Love, p. 4). If subjects of hetero, teleological temporalities have to outgrow their perverse infancy and rebellious adolescence for a reproductive adulthood, those of queer temporalities are not only eager to attach meanings to

past experiences and set up queer communities. They are also more willing to register unwanted feelings and account for the sexual subjectivity of bachelors, celibates, homosexuals, and other nonheteronormative individuals. Even though they may still write off their opposite-sex relationships in line with their gay identity, they are more aware of the illogic of sexual temporality than most heteronormative people.

13. The emergence of queer historiography reconfigures sex between men in Western society. Chauncey (1994), for instance, challenged the myths of isolation, invisibility and internalization in contemporary thinking of homosexuality by elucidating the culture of “fairies” in New York at the turn of the twentieth century (pp. 6–8, 47–63). Similarly, Houlbrook (2005) explored the “amorphous bachelor subculture” among working-class men in London before the mid-20th century (p. 168). Halperin (2002), taking his cue from Chauncey, argued that terms like “effeminacy,” “paederasty,” “friendship” and “inversion” have their particular historical and cultural meanings incommensurable with what we know as homosexuality today. *Effeminacy*, for example, describes womanly men who “liked to be fucked by other men,” but it also denotes womanizers who “preferred the soft option of love to the hard option of war” (Halperin, p. 111). Before the gender of sexual object-choice became the defining principle in the discourse of sexuality, age, class, social status, gender style and/or sexual role, according to Halperin, all unevenly contribute to the incoherent definitions of homosexuality today (pp. 134–136).

14. Chauncey (1994) and Houlbrook (2005) contended the prevalence of gender hierarchy before the homo/heterosexual axis took ascendancy in mid-20th century, for working-class bachelors—immigrants, sailors, and hustlers, in particular—in fin-de-siècle New York and London could have sex with other men as long as they did not behave like women and compromise their masculinity. In other words, provided that they retained the active, penetrating role during sex and avoided womanly demeanor, they were exempt from the stigma of gender deviance attached to female-identified invert, flamboyant fairies and effeminate pansies. Interestingly, the fairies, though regarded as an anomaly, were rarely a threat to the gender order in working-class society. According to Chauncey (1994), “He [the fairy] was so obviously a ‘third-sexer,’ a different species of human being, that his very effeminacy served to confirm rather than threaten the masculinity of other men, particularly since it often exaggerated the conventions of deference and gender difference between men and women” (p. 57).

15. Although the Greek paederasts’ interest in both genders resembles the libertines, rakes or roués in later Western society, they have different cultural meanings: the former are honored in antiquity (despite/because of its implication of sex as hierarchy), whereas the latter imply excessive sexuality.

16. According to Storr (1997), “For both [Henry Havelock] Ellis and [Richard von] Krafft-Ebing, bisexuality is an original physical state—both phylogenetically, as a primitive state of ‘species,’ and ontogenetically, as a predisposition of the foetus—from which the mono-sexuality of two distinct and coherent sexes, male and female, ultimately evolves” (p. 84). Instead of following the logic of transition in addressing individual sexuality, bisexuality here takes on an imperialist charge: The more advanced a race is, the less likely for its people to be bisexual.

17. Garber (1995) also refers to the lesbian coupling in Terry Castle’s reconfiguration of Sedgwick’s triangle. For Castle, the woman-man-woman triangle can be the pretext for female homosociality/homosexuality.

18. Also see Messner (2001). According to Messner, straight and gay men would boast about their sexual conquests of women in the locker room, not only to demonstrate their manhood by objectifying women but also to hide their feminized homosexuality in a homophobic group (pp. 261–263).

19. On transnational gay tourism, see, for example, Padilla (2007), Schifter (2000), Boone (1995), Holden and Ruppel (2003), Van Esterik (2000), and Ryan and Hall (2001).

20. Although I focus on the elusive sexuality of trade men in the postwar sexual taxonomy of sexual orientation, the boys in ancient Greek paederasty and the sex workers in contemporary Dominican Republic provide historiographic and ethnographic counterparts. Yet the Greek paederasts are not susceptible to the gay shame to which the straight-identified trade men and the sex workers in the Caribbean are often subject. See Halperin (2002, pp. 113–117) and Padilla (2007).

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