Why

Operating under the assumption that a reader will be familiar with the concepts within the more established rhetorical frameworks, and hence be predisposed to consider, consciously or otherwise, those factors when reading texts, we can start to consider what might be missing. We have the appeals (ethos, pathos, and logos), audience, author, purpose, topic, constraints, salience, and context/kairos, depending on how one approaches those terms (Bitzer, 1968; Vatz, 1973; Aristotle, 2000). These are all, with varying weights depending on the text, considerations that can be used during analysis; however, they are notably static, in the way that a photograph or a film are static, being minute finite objects. They can be, and are, useful in examining how a text comes into being in some cases, but this is by no means a truism, with the type of rhetorical situation theory one prefers determining in great part the chicken-or-the-egg temporality of rhetoric and situation in a text regarding its creation and deployment. Without casting dispersions on that discourse, as it can be very generative and interesting to consider, Recuperative Rhetorics contains no such compunctions, due to its focus on cycles and inflections, which is what separates it from, and builds upon, rhetorical situation theory, as rhetorical situation separated itself from and built upon classical rhetoric.

To use a visual metaphor, classical rhetoric examines the point, concerned with analyzing and deploying the pure performatics of a text; rhetorical situation then examines the circle, taking into consideration the context the text finds itself in, either because the context necessitated the text or vice versa. With enough consideration and application of kairos and related principles, rhetorical situation may be seen as examining the sphere (see chapter 2), something that is seemingly whole and fully viewable from all sides. Consider now not only the spheres that include texts and their situations, but also spheres of power, hegemony, culture, politics, resistance,

Recuperative Rhetorics

A Novel Framework for Rhetorical Analysis

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CHAPTER 3: RECUPERATIVE RHETORICS IN THEORY

As discussed in chapters 1 and 2, the theory of Recuperative Rhetorics is conceived of as a framework to accompany, and fill in the gaps left by, other more established methods of rhetorical analysis. As with any tool meant for utility, Recuperative Rhetorics is designed to satisfy its use cases, which has shaped its structure; and is the case with invention, Recuperative Rhetorics seeks to be a tool where once there was none satisfactory enough to do the job. Where classical rhetoric — as put forth by Aristotle (2000) — saw its relevant problems (namely appealing to an audience) as nails to be hammered away at from the distinct angles of the three appeals, rhetorical situation, whether that be via Bitzer (1968) or Vatz (1973), sought to introduce nuance and greater breadth of consideration for how rhetoric functions and exists as a generated/generating partner to situations. Indeed, both classical rhetoric and rhetorical situation, by nature of being both frameworks and tools, things that create understanding by way of making it explainable, they inherently impose their users to consider the factors within the framework while they read and analyze texts; this is true regardless of which school, and thus set of presuppositions, of rhetoric or rhetorical situation a reader might ascribe to, which is often times several simultaneously. I realize that this observation might feel obvious, to an extent that some might see as a pithy explanation of epistemology, but I must all the same state these facts to situate the *why* of Recuperative Rhetorics, so that we may then get to the *how*.

ing itself as, a framework. Secondly, while one might think that those academics most concerned with these topics would be those in the arts, political scientists, and economists, one would seemingly only be correct in the arts, and be surprised by the robust representation by those concerned with pedagogy, at least I was. The implications of these findings were intriguing, if not daunting. The establishment of Recuperative Rhetorics has proven to be more of an establishment than an uncovering, the results of which I now invite for review and interrogation.

Contents

larger pattern, with only those articles and scholars primarily concerned with the *history* of SI, or of particular political radicalism and art critique, seemingly aware of the concept having a set name, or the connection therein. I am usure as to why this would be, as terms like "reverse détournement" used by Kanellopoulos (2022), or phrases such as those used by Ruiz (2016) along the lines of "détourning of a détournement" feel far too verbose or clumsy to be used in otherwise very finely written works; if the cleaner option of "recuperation" was known to be available I feel that most of the authors would have defined and used it appropriately, as they all did with détournement itself. This gap in the language, and thus somewhat sub/superconscious misunderstanding/ignorance of the interrelationship between détournement and recuperation struck me as terribly relevant to the discussion at large, for as good as the insights offered by the authors are, there were gaps from the perspective of crafting Recuperative Rhetorics, or indeed a fully realized understanding of the source material, that kept the arguments presented from reaching their full heights. My hope is that, along with its efficacy as an analytical framework, Recuperative Rhetorics will also serve as a way to rejoin these ideas and phrases, so that more productive and generative discourse can occur.

Summary

While this review of the discourse surrounding détournement, recuperation, SI, and the rhetorical ideas used alongside them over several decades and disciplines is by no means exhaustive, it provided some key insights into the ongoing, if relatively sparse, conversation within academia at large. Firstly, and most notably for the project at hand, there does not appear to be a framework for rhetorical analysis using these elements. There are critiques, analyses of art, sociopolitical and economic commentary, pedagogy, and modes of praxis, but nothing I would ascribe the title of, or present-

Gaps

Through my review of various articles and discourse that engaged with SI theories, light began to shine through some surprisingly consistent theoretical gaps within the academic literature. The most obvious and concerning to me were the seeming lack of understanding of some of the base theories, and when understood, something of a disassociation of the theories, which are meant to work and be understood in relation to each other, thus creating a sort of brittleness to a decent number of the arguments presented and praxes performed.

Ervin's (2006) article diverges in its analysis of the political/economic meanings and ramifications of the SI theories from those present in other articles I surveyed, as well as my own. I feel this is important to point out not to pass judgement, but because it provides a valuable insight into a mindset more aligned with the spectacle than one might consider themself being, and how they might analyze and interact with the theories, regardless of intentionality. Given détournement's explicit acknowledgement of being its own worst enemy, this edge-of-the-coin entry into the discourse is not one to be ignored out of hand. Ervin (2006) appears to prescribe the SI's theories and actions into a non-democratic and nihilistic mode, and sees the goals of SI as largely directed towards outcomes of negation rather than transformation, which may very well be due to a misunderstanding of the last few theses in Debord (1967). This takeaway does not situate itself within the discourse offered by the other articles reviewed, which I believe is mostly due to a fundamental split in understanding of anarchism, viewed by Ervin to not be within the traditions of democratic practice or activism.

Black (2012), Ervin (2006), Kanellopoulos (2022), Mendez (2014), Ruiz (2016), and Trier (2014) present articles that, while active in the discussion of détournement, do not discuss the concept of recuperation by name, or, if they use the word at all, do not use it in the context of the opposite of détournement. This appears to be a

Praxis of the image and praxis of action may seem like two separate modes, and they very well could be considered granularly if one wished to do so, but given the foundational praxis of détournement as put forth by SI I feel they are linked in ways better examined together than apart. Bonnett (1999) and Melia (2020) examine members of SI and their works not closely perused by many other authors, and in so doing, along with analyzing works of SI inspired groups, paint a picture of historical acts of praxis that have had varying degrees of success. From this, Bonnett (1999) gives the reader a sort of gentle guide map of SI praxis, ways it can be taken, and ways it can be used against itself if not active in its maintenance. I feel that Bonnett's (1999) insights into the praxis of détournement to be enlightening not only from an analytical perspective, but also for the connection between the praxis of organizing and action, and the reasons why people would want to do so, namely collectivism and joy. Ruiz (2016) in fact creates her own framework and mode of praxis for engaging with art in *Radical Formalism*, exemplary not in just demonstrating a mode of praxis, but also how one might create one themselves; something I feel is so close to the soul of détournement as a praxis itself to almost be Platonic. Melia (2020) gives dramatic insight into past and presently active uses of détournement as a praxis in the urban space, how it affects psychogeography, and how one might use semiotics to further analyze and craft one's own détournements. Indeed, Melia (2020) offers up so many examples and the reasons behind them, that in combination with Bonnett (1999), Osel (2012), and Kanellopoulos (2022) in particular, one could begin crafting a sort of *Détourner's Cookbook For The Modern Age*; a useful almost-thing given that SI's writing, and demonstrative examples regarding détournement on a practical level, ended before the digital era began in earnest.

a form of praxis, I felt it was correct to not only note where the theories presented themselves in the literature, but in what way they were being used. While it can be said that the creation and publication of knowledge is itself a praxis, which I would agree with, I was interested to see if there were more granular forms of praxis being performed within the broader discourse, and if so, what insights I might be able to glean from said uses. I found that almost all articles that discussed the theories, outside of those that were mainly historical in nature such as Plant's (1990, 1992) writing, were pairing them with a form of praxis or practical inquiry. I have laid out the clearest examples below, sorted into general categories of praxis that I observed.

A praxis of education was found in those articles that focused on pedagogy. Trier (2014), Ervin (2006), and Mendez (2014) all put forth similar, but situationally and subject conscious, modes of praxis to engage, educate, and broaden the horizons of their students, and also to prime students for further inquiry and activism. Kanellopoulos (2022) on the other hand presents a grander mode of praxis, one that seeks to throw off the yolk of neoliberalism from the academy altogether, by détourning what he sees as the active recuperation of learning and creativity by monied interests.

Political praxis could be observed in most of the texts, especially if one were to consider education an inherently political act, which I do. But several of the authors situated their desired modes of praxis in the more expressly political. Black (2012) seeks to détourn the recuperation of Native voices, to reverse the decay of culture suffered at the hands of neo/colonialism. Osel (2012) is of particular interest in this regard, as he not only shows a desire for a praxis to be taken up, but very clearly lays out what that would look like, why, for whom, and uses a case example. Osel not only wishes to détour the object of his direct critique, *The New Jim Crow*, but also gives any reader a roadmap for enacting the mode of praxis illustrated, and by nature of his argument, argues for that mode to be applied to any number of other cultural artifacts.

Abstract

This thesis details the creation of the Recuperative Rhetorics analytical framework, which is a scalable, transdisciplinary framework for analyzing rhetorical texts, from individual speeches to societal understandings of legacy and history. It discusses the framework's theoretical underpinnings, explains how to utilize it in analyzing rhetoric and rhetorical works, and provides examples of the framework in action across multiple mediums. The framework takes inspiration from the theories and praxes of Situationist International, primarily those of the spectacle, ready-made objects, détournement, and recuperation. The framework uses these ideas, and then builds upon more established analytical frameworks to establish a base from which to observe the various ways texts exist within rhetorical cycles, identify inflection point texts within those cycles, and gain understanding and knowledge about where texts come from, how they affect epistemological and ontological understandings within their audiences, and how texts interact within and without various social and psychological spheres.

Dedication

For my Dad

and for Dean.

Today I did my best,
Tomorrow I'll be perfect,
And I will live until things are better.

The New Jim Crow engages in an operational mode and space that soothes its readers' sensibilities and dissuades any form of true revolutionary action or discourse, simply by omitting any truly revolutionary voice or thought while still wrapping itself in a language that comes off as caring and well intentioned. This article is, at its heart, a critique of the critiques of a critique, very much a part of a recursive conversation which Recuperative Rhetorics seeks to analyze. Exemplary of the common rhetorical cycle of tearing down the sanitized text of the spectacle, reaction, distillation, and then a call to action for further teardown directed towards a public. The piece demonstrates a core détournement thesis, that a grand devaluing is needed in order for the grand commodity to be defanged and dissected, its pieces taken, analyzed, and reformed into a tool of proper use against the position for which its body was originally intended. I found this article of particular interest as it engages with discourse in a way that rubs shoulders with Recuperative Rhetorics as an analytical framework. Notably, it embodies key concepts of the ideas of détournement and recuperation when it comes to discourse and the public, particularly the cyclical nature of such discourse. It also acutely examines aspects of recuperation surrounding antirevolutionary action and sentiment, as discussed in the definitions section, a necessary concept to understand when examining texts for signs of recuperation.

Modes of Praxis

As the Situationists were concerned with affecting change within people and on the world, their theories were always paired with, if not created through, practical action and intent, and thus many SI theories not only suggested praxis, they demanded it, and were inextricable from its performance[6]. Given that fact, and that I see the creation and use of Recuperative Rhetorics to itself be

[6] See the discussion of "Professional Situationists" in Bonnett (1999).

continues this analysis by looking at examples of détournement art projects that exist in urban city spaces, why they work, how they relate to the consumer-proletariat, and specifically how they are analyzed through semiotics with the spectacle in mind. Melia (2020) then provides the definition, and example examination, of so called "non-signs"; a form of détournement that is situated in semiotics, psychogeography, and pluralism (whether that be pluralism of impact or creation). The sheer fact that this article can be seen as a throughline of Bonnett (1999), and Ruiz (2016), in yet another field of study, and being extremely contemporary, was extremely beneficial to the framework as I wrestled with the implications of how to deploy Recuperative Rhetorics across vast swaths of time, and thus genres that exist in one era but not others, while remaining consistent in its usable analytical outcomes. It was also helpful in establishing what "successful" détournement means, which lead directly to the idea of rhetorical inflection points, as described in the definitions section.

The theories of SI have also found root in radical discourse. An essential example would be Osel's (2012) critique of the book *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (2010) by Michelle Alexander, or more accurately, Osel's response to the backlash of his original critique. Osel considers the most pressing examples of contradiction in *The New Jim Crow* to be Critical Systemic Immunity, which is to say that *The New Jim Crow* speaks on the problem of incarceration as a modern day caste system, but does not actually discuss the socioeconomic systems surrounding the system, or even mention the word capitalism; Black Out / Operational Whitewash, a criticism of the either purposeful or accidental, but very much systematic exclusion of historical and contemporary voices that are directly affected by incarceration, via a lens of "colorblindness" which effectively ignores the history of radical movements and people that have previously spoken and written on the topic; and The Counterrevolutionary Protest, an idea central to recouperation and applied in the critique to state that

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FORWORD BY THE AUTHOR

Before coming to Texas A&M University-San Antonio, I received my B.S. in Radio-Television-Film from the University of Texas at Austin. This is an overarching major program concerned with the production and analysis of audio/visual media, with a heavy emphasis on the creation of artistic works of media and entertainment, but an analytical focus on all forms of audio/visual texts; we would analyze everything from advertisements to major motion pictures, but only focused on the production and techniques of production for the latter category. While the program is recognized globally for its quality and pedigree, and my education was excellent, this seemingly small divide became very apparent to me at the time, and the sense of unease and injustice that it evoked has only grown as I have grown as a person and scholar, interested as a am in texts and how people are affected by them, and indeed how both shape the other in a reciprocal way.

The fact that I was taught valuable lessons about representation, and the responsible ways in which to portray people on screen, along with a deep historical survey of the wrongs against marginalized people perpetrated by the film industry as part of my core curriculum was a boon. However, that same curriculum did not have anything to say regarding the ethics of interacting with audience in any rhetorical way, which is to say that film is a medium of illusions, but the responsibility for those illusions was assumed to be taken on by the audience themselves[1], rather than that of the

[1] We were explicitly taught that the hypodermic needle model of communication was wrong and infantilizing of the audience and the artform. While I don't believe in that model per say, the complete reversal of it is, in my eyes,

received and then assembled, without instruction, by the recipient. Ruiz observes that Posenenske's work uses the tenets of formalism against itself, turning its own ideas into a critical mode made manifest. It is entirely of form, purposefully bereft of as much context, history, or purpose as Posenenske could manage. Even the worth of the art is shifted to form, being sold only for the exact cost of the elements' fabrication. In practice, Posenenske has enacted a form of malicious compliance within the concepts of formalism, which is an exemplary demonstration of détournement, as it takes the objects and ideas already there, twists them, and forces them to look at themselves through this new presentation, thus creating something both connected to and at odds with the role the original item occupied within the spectacle, escaping it if only temporarily. In this same way, Ruiz détourns the ideas of formalism to create a new and opposing force, taking a consumptive and commodifying theory and turning it in on itself to create radical formalism; an act that the Situationists would consider to be an act of true connection with reality. Ruiz presents us with two powerful examples of SI inspired rhetorical acts, a détournement of a recuperative theory, demonstrated by artistic works built (or rather pre/un-built) as a counterstatement towards a recuperative and consumptive environment, using ready-made objects. As one might imagine, this text, being one that is crafting a theory of analysis and demonstrating it, while connecting it back to SI theories was inspiring and extremely useful as a sort of early role-model for the framework.

Semiotics are another field in which SI theory, and analysis using said theories, has found enthusiastic use. Similar to Ruiz (2016), Melia's (2020) work is concerned with discussions of art and critique, but brings more focus to incorporating semiotics, and particularly urbanism. The article delves into theoretical background concerning the economics of sign-values, and begins to tie the frameworks of the spectacle, economics, and semiotics together. It discusses the relationship of the consumer to the spectacle, messages, directions of information, and urban space. Melia then

framework might be leveraged across disciplines, as well as foster communication with each other, in the case of Trier and Mendez.

A field where the ideas of SI seem to have taken a more stable hold than others, other than pedagogy and radical inquiry, is that of art. Not entirely surprising, given SI's emergence out of and connection to avant-garde art movements. One very interesting example, Ruiz (2016) offers up a discussion focused on the concept of formalism in visual art, although I see no reason why the concepts could not be adapted to work with various media forms. According to Ruiz, formalism posits, in its more extreme applications (not to be mistaken for Ruiz' concept of radical formalism), that all that is needed to understand, and judge, the worth (however one wishes to define that word) of a work of art is contained within the art; context, historicity, origin, intention, all are secondary or entirely bereft of meaning in the face of the artistic medium itself and its reception. In some fields, such as certain schools of film theory, this is similar to a technique referred to a "close reading" or "close aesthetic reading" (Richards, 1929); in the art world however, as presented by Ruiz, it is a much more concrete theory, and indeed a practice of critique, although it has fallen out of favor. Ruiz provides a thesis of a new concept of *radical formalism,* which seeks to engage with formalism in order to establish an effective method of critique. Ruiz argues that the basis of formalism, that of appreciation for the artistic form above all else, is flawed, but not necessarily entirely useless. He posits that form inherently carries political and historical information and implications, and because of this, form can be read closely by different readers in ways that are different and valuable to the masculinist normative mode of traditional formalism. He states that the form of an artistic work can indeed be an active thing in and of itself (p. 236). Ruiz uses the works of Charlotte Posenenske as a case study for the theory. Posenenske's works distance herself from the art as the author, as they are meant to be a demonstration in democratization, conceptually similar to toy sets like Lego. They are a series of square tubes meant to be

filmmakers. This seeming abdication of responsibility has always bothered me, because if magicians have a code of ethics, then certainly creators of illusory art ought to as well. People are primed to believe in the things they are presented with by another human being, especially if they are told it is real. Magic, film, professional wrestling, narrative in general, all of these mediums function because of this inherent aspect of human nature, and even when people know it isn't real, it still shapes how they think about and see the world.

When it came time to find the topic for my master's thesis, I returned to these feelings and ideas, which led me towards considerations of rhetoric as a method of creating/changing truth in the minds of an audience. This, along with some reading I had been doing unrelated to my academic program about the Discordians, helped me arrive at the works, theories, and praxes of Situationist International. Many of my frustrations with how people engage with the ideas of how media shapes our physical and mental realities were presented and acted upon by the members of SI. "Fantastic!" I thought, as surely this meant that there must be an abundance of literature regarding these theories and rhetorics that I could study and arrive at some sort of inspiration through; after all, rhetorical situation was already a foundational concept and one that has a rich history of discussion.

One must imagine my befuddled frustration when, expecting an embarrassment of riches, I was met with a dearth of crumbs. A form of near hysteria I believe most are familiar with gripped me, where, met with the reality that something that should simply exist is lacking, then one has to make for themself. Thus, I set upon this thesis project to create Recuperative Rhetorics[2], a frame-

detrimental to craft, as it begets a form of inconsiderate dismissal on part of the creative.

[2] So named because recuperation is the lesser understood of the twin concepts, détournement and recuperation, which allows it to immediately push that term to the fore of a reader's mind, and I like alliterative titles.

work for understanding rhetoric, the shaping and creation of truth within texts and discourse, based on these concepts that, to me, should have already been an established methodology. I wanted this project to already exist so that I could communicate its meaning and thus ways in which it helps make sense of the world to other people, but it wasn't there, and so here we are.

(1999), the explicit acknowledgement that the tools of détournement can be used against itself, but that in-turn they can and must be used in ever more creative ways to subvert the subsumptive sphere of the spectacle.

Further examples of SI theories appearing in academic discourse within the field of pedagogy can be seen in Ervin (2006), Trier (2014) and Mendez (2014). Trier and Mendez are direct corollaries, with Mendez' work building directly off of Trier's through method and citation. Both use the concept of détournement in teaching their students, asking the students to do miniature détournement exercises to lead into discussions. All three focus mainly in the praxis of SI theories, giving their students the theories in basic as tools to further their education in ways the authors believed to be generative and engaging, more so than standard pedagogical methods, by giving the students, teacher, and class itself a greater sense of agency and considerations. As an example, Trier (2014), through crafting his own détournement to present to his class as a point to launch into discussion, felt it was both "a process that enacted my own sense of agency as a teacher educator" and that "[t]hrough the detournement, preservice teachers underwent the initial stages of reconsidering what social agency means and how it is represented" (p. 52). Mendez (2014) writes more about the work of his students crafting their own détournements, where "The process of creating a detournement guides students in not only critically analyzing racist, sexist, and classist ideologies embedded within public discourses, but also moves students toward a personal critical reflection of their own knowledge, assumptions, and beliefs that reproduce the[se same] ideologies they seek to challenge" (p.208). Again we see the idea of détournement at play, quite heavily in these cases, without its partner of recuperation, but the articles were helpful in examining the ways different disciplines can use SI theories as methods of teaching, even when their subject matter was disparate, assisting my understanding of how Recuperative Rhetorics as a

gards as exemplary of this culture of reverse détournement (read: recuperation), and positions itself as an intervention and invitation to engage in re-thinking the neoliberal mindset in regards to creativity, and the importance for educators in creative fields to recognize and fight against this subsumptive mode, with proper détournement being a method for doing so. In much the same way Bonnett's (1999) essay does, the author refers to reverse détournement, instead of using the term recuperation. Again, this is a pattern prevalent across many academic disciplines and authors, one that I feel says something about the academic relationship to SI theories at large. The article concerns itself with the concepts of Subversive (read: détournement) Creativity vs Subsumptive (read: recuperation) Creativity. Kanellopoulos explains, "The neoliberal cooption of creativity has shaped what in this paper has been called subsumptive creativity, turning creativity into a mechanism for accumulating various forms of capital and subsuming creative processes to the laws of the market.", while proposing various forms of enacting Subversive Creativity, such as, "Subversive approaches to creativity cultivate porousness as a distinctive quality of the relationship between teachers, students, knowledge, and experience, cultivating openness to the unexpected, while refusing an exploitative gaze towards it." (p. 155). This mirrors Recuperative Rhetorics in practice because it is not only an analytical method in line with the framework, it also is clear in its rhetorical and actionable goals, in line with SI theory and Recuperative Rhetorics framework analysis, and was thus very helpful in crafting the concepts of internal praxis and intentionality into Recuperative Rhetorics as a form. The piece echoes many aspects that seem to be popular among those that engage in discourse with SI theories, such as pedagogy, art, economics, and the dueling forces of détournement and recuperation (loose terminology not withstanding), incorporating those and the subject of creativity itself in relation to the academy and the spectacle in a direct and pointed way, which very few other texts I reviewed managed. It also helps to clarify, in concert with Bonnett

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO RECUPERATIVE RHETORICS

This thesis project serves as the formal origination document of a novel framework for rhetorical analysis dubbed Recuperative Rhetorics. Recuperative Rhetorics is a framework for analyzing texts, as well as large-scale rhetorical concepts that are sociologically malleable but rooted in historical occurrences, such as legacies (of persons, movements, places, etc.), discourses, and socio-linguistic epistemology; a work by an author is a text, as well as how people feel about the author and their legacy, the ways in which these are discussed, and the terms that sufficiently influential authors or works inculcate (or permanently change the previous meaning of) into social vocabulary. It arises out of a broad and consciously intersectional and decolonial application of the theories explored by Situationist International, as well as other rhetorically minded activist groups, such as Adbusters, the Discordians, Up Against the Wall Motherfucker, and many others.

The framework is, per the foundations on which it is constructed, political in nature, though its application is broader than only texts of political interest. It follows the tradition of Western rhetoric, and is something of a cousin to rhetorical situation (Bitzer, 1968; Vatz 1973), with its inspirational ideas coming from groups contemporary to that of Bitzer, and the later Vatz. It is developed in order to provide some insight I feel is critically important to understanding and analyzing rhetorically significant

texts, but is often lacking or left out of other frameworks and their analyses. Primary concerns of the framework include the situating of rhetorical texts, their interactions/motivations within spheres of hegemony and power, and how these interactions between and within various spheres create rhetorical cycles[1]; the inflection points of these cycles being works that can be analyzed, through the framework, as being works of recuperation or détournement. It also is meant to be trans-disciplinary in scope and method, able to be used as a tool and lens by and between various academic spheres as something that is generative and flexible for researchers of various schools and backgrounds.

Positionality and Intent of the Author

Disclosure of positionality and intent is a necessary aspect of Recuperative Rhetorics as a framework. These are meant to prime readers, the author, and future iterative works to the spheres in which an author is working within, and what spheres they mean to explore and affect with their writing. Who you are and what you want to do as an instrument of theoretical action. This is an important function of the framework both on an academic level (it makes the scholarship easier to dissect, and thus easier to build upon accurately), and on an ethical level, as any text generated through using the framework (or academia at large by its very nature as a method for creating and preserving knowledge) is rhetorical, and so the outwards acknowledgement places consideration of ethics back onto the author.

Given the above, I will provide my own statement. I am a master's level student and teaching assistant of English at an urban Hispanic Serving Institution. I am white and non-Hispanic, my ethnic background being split between Italian-American from the North-

[1] See Chapter 2 for more in-depth definition and discussion of these key terms.

major questions I feel Recuperative Rhetorics is particularly apt at addressing.

While Black focused on analyzing a specific recuperation of a speech into a film, Bonnett's (1999) essay expands in scope by examining the cooperative and dialectical natures of avant-garde sensibilities and technological progress. The article uses the term mutation, with a section dedicated to explaining "technological detournement: the situationist theory of mutation" which examines how the SI concept of détournement is a form of mutation, and that combining artistic, technological, and political mutation into a single act is what differentiates détournement as a practice that "resolves much of the ambiguity associated with earlier avant-garde engagements with mutation. More specifically, it clarifies the political point of mutation." (p. 25). The article then goes on to provide an in depth summary of SI theories and history surrounding urban planning, psychogeography, and technological progress; which can be seen as a companion piece to Plant's (1990, 1992) work. Bonnett discusses how the SI's practices can and have been used against themselves, the détournement of détournement, which I would label as recouperation, and was intrigued when it was not. The emphasis Bonnett places on the importance of purpose and strategy when it comes to détournement and mutation, so as to avoid its own recouperation (though not phrased as such), is particularly noteworthy for the purposes of Recuperative Rhetorics, as it helps to establish the boundary one might draw during analysis in parsing ideas and rhetorical moves as détourned or recuperative.

To a degree I found surprising, there were a great many texts that fell into the category of pedagogy and educational theory/practice, generally at the collegiate level. An illuminating example is Kanellopoulos' (2022) work, which centers on pedagogical theory, particularly in the realm of musical education, although it also has strong roots in creative theory and economics. The essay opens by giving a contemporary overview of events the author re-

supposed elegiac speech given by Chief Seattle of the Suquamish Nation for his film *Home*. The speech, already questionable in its authenticity, is further problematized by Perry, a non-Native member of the Southern Baptist Convention, as he eliminates certain lines of the speech, and wholesale adds in new ones in order to lend "Native Authenticity" to his film's message of Judeo-Christian (mostly Christian) environmentalist stewardship. Black goes on to use this example as a jumping-off point for discussing Native-U.S. relationships with regards to authenticity, rhetorical circulation, and neocolonialism. The article defines the process of Western circulators taking Native voices for themselves and their own ends as a form of "textual decay", pairing it with the concepts of rhetorical colonialism and the forms of violence which that entails and condones. Black expounds on these concepts and connects them to rhetorical situations, claiming that authenticity of any rhetorical text is hard to determine with respect to its respective rhetorical context at the best of times; this is even more difficult with Native texts created before the mid-twentieth century. Black explains that the circulation of these Native texts results in a decay of Native voices and rhetorics, as the words are absorbed into the hegemony for its own use, rather than that of the original rhetorical situations the texts were crafted within and for. Black's analysis of the speech proper was particularly illuminating and useful for this study, both because it attributes détournement to Chief Seattle's speech, a speech far older than the concept's minting, as well as exemplifying what I see as a core aspect of Recuperative Rhetoric analysis, which is to determine the conflict between spheres of power, détournement and recuperation, colonialism and decolonialism, revolutionary and antirevolutionary praxis, the intersections, and equally important, interventions therein. While not using all of the particular terms, Black also provides a fine analysis that shows the intersection of colonialism, rhetoric, recouperation, resistance, and psychogeography. The seeing and understanding of these many intersections, or spheres, and how they nest within each other is one of the

east United States, and Portuguese-American from Hawai'i. I am politically positioned as a leftist in the decolonial and anarchist traditions. I am a natural-born citizen of the United States, having been born abroad in Japan and raised in various countries until settling in the state of Texas for secondary school to the time of writing. I am queer, autistic, and non-binary, lived realities that all heavily shape my approach to rhetoric and epistemological understanding of the world. My positionality to the Recuperative Rhetorics framework is as its creator, and my intent with this project is to demonstrate its structure, efficacy, and utility to other academics, who are my primary audience. My desire is that it will prove useful and interesting enough to have other scholars and researchers trial it in their own work, and to discuss its application and ideas amongst their peers within and without their chosen discipline.

Historical Background

The primary theoretical and inspirational progenitor of Recuperative Rhetorics is the work of The Situationist International (SI) — an anarchist organization of primarily European and American artist-activists, officially active between 1957 and 1972 (Plant, 1990) — specifically their ideas of "The Spectacle," "Détournement," "Recuperation," "Ready-Made Objects," and "Psychogeography," (Debord, 1955; Debord & Wolman, 1956; Debord, 1967; Plant, 1992; Knabb, 2006); see chapter 2 for more detailed definitions of these and other key terms. These concepts did not originate purely within SI, many having been built off of previous avant-garde, Marxist, and neo-Marxist ideas and movements, but their utilization and applications as intertwined theories and praxis was somewhat novel in implementation and coinage (Debord & Wolman, 1956; Plant, 1990). As these ideas have been iterated upon by further theorists, researchers, and activists, so too does Recuperative Rhetorics iterate on these concepts, and invites iteration in turn. To that end, I

would like to acknowledge some specific scholarship that has been influential in the development of the nascent framework's identity and iterative development, especially with regards to methodology, namely: critical discourse analysis (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000), iconographic tracking (Gries, 2013), memetic studies (Jones et al., 2022), semiotic analysis (Jessop, 2004), and radical ethnographies (Apoifis, 2017). Other inspirations for the framework on a theoretical level are the classical school of Aristotle's rhetorical appeals (Aristotle, 2000), rhetorical situation (Bitzer, 1968; Vatz, 1973), and to an extent much more inspirational than technically theoretical, literary chaos theory[2], where a decent amount of the language of cycles and spheres originated for me, mainly as a way to visually and mentally illustrate/organize the ideas Recuperative Rhetorics intends to analyze and address.

Why Situationist International?

It might seem outwardly strange or self-defeating to base a project that attempts to build a framework for analyzing rhetoric on the work of a group whose ideas, writing, origins, and activities were, often purposefully, contradictory and oppositional to formal theory. This is not lost on me, and I imagine is partly the reason why these ideas have not been brought into concert into such a framework before, and so explains the gaps in discourse I notice in chapter 2. These difficulties in (anti)dialectical reasoning present within the Situationists' theories stem from their combination of artistic movements and political action. Avant-garde art challenges reality, meaning, and meaninglessness both within itself and within the audience; it is a form of rhetoric that seeks and operates through/within ideas of negation (Debord, 1967). To combine this with political action, which is one of the most direct forms of rhetoric I can think of, action that is meant to change

[2] See Chapter 2 on Spheres.

and acknowledged the base theories, to deem a valuable survey of the literature. To better understand the discourse surrounding the theories relevant to Recuperative Rhetorics, I chose to map where the theories presented themselves the most, and in what ways they were used by various disciplines, with a primary focus on English Studies and related fields.

Mapping Usage

Given the primacy of concern present within the writing and activism of SI regarding political and economic concerns, I assumed that a great many articles using the theories would fall within the fields of Economics and Political Science. This, however, turned out to not be the case, and although most, if not every, text that engaged with the theories also concerned themselves with matters of politics/economics, those disciplines were nowhere close to the fore of the discourse. That being said, some articles did stand out in their specific choices of sub-topic, and were exemplary of some broader areas that seemed to be more engaged with SI theories than others, namely the fields of Pedagogy, Art, Rhetoric, Semiotics, Feminism, and other areas such as medicine and history to various, albeit scattered, extents[5]. What follows is a survey of various academic texts, how they relate to and use SI theories as part of their analysis, argumentation, and/or rhetorical schema.

First, we have an article (Black, 2012) that analyses an older rhetorical work, a speech, using détournement as a method of labeling and analyzing the rhetorical dimensions of the speech in a way very close to some aspects of Recuperative Rhetorics in motion, albeit incomplete (a pattern that is often seen, as discussed in later sections). Black's article comprises a discussion of Native Authenticity, using a case example of Ted Perry's co-option of a

[5] See the reference page for further reading of texts not mentioned explicitly within this thesis, but that I feel might be valuable reading for those interested in the trans-disciplinary possibilities and usage of SI theories.

(Bonnett, 1999). As an example, consider the spectacle as a sphere, when one performs détournement they take some aspect of the spectacle and turn it inside-out, liberating it, and leaving a hole inside/outside of the spectacle that draws attention and encourages examination. Recuperation is the opposite, taking things that exist in spheres outside the spectacle and morphing them in such a way that they are now contained within it seamlessly. Again, other scholars and users might use different terms to understand/explain the framework, but spheres works for me, and so I wish to provide a thorough explanation here, given that I use the terms often enough that any confusion regarding their definition would likely be deleterious to a reader.

Discourse Review

Having presented the foundational concepts and the key terms necessary for understanding and utilizing Recuperative Rhetorics, I can now present my findings with regards to researching how these concepts were being used in wider scholarly discourse. My search process initially focused on locating articles and academic texts that were using these ideas in analytical or discursive ways. However, my survey attempts proved to be much more difficult than I would have thought starting out, and that in and of itself was somewhat enlightening. My eventual strategy was to perform somewhat of a brute force method of bulk collation by keyword searching for texts within relevant fields that mentioned Situationist International, détournement, and recuperation. Then, I began to pare down that search criteria to just one or two keywords being present, as having more than one present within a single chapter or article returned vanishingly few usable documents, something I will discuss later. Eventually, I gathered and read through a number of sources that felt both varied in their usage, but still engaged with

the state of being of the populus and their living environment, is what SI championed. To be strictly personal, I find that rhetoric is present in almost, if not all human activity, and I see all art as rhetorical by virtue of it altering the world through existing. The Situationists believed something akin to this, and espoused that truth can only be arrived at through challenging the placidity of the everyday condition, and the best, and perhaps only way to open someone up to this truth is through artistic endeavor, which they dubbed détournement (Debord & Wolman, 1956). While this project expands upon these ideas, and at times goes against (some) of the SI writings, the praxis of Situationist International, the combination of art, rhetoric, and political action to bring people closer to a form of truth is core to both its inception and its development. The work of SI is both personally captivating, and has proven influential to untold people and groups (knowingly or otherwise), and so must be recognized; and in that recognition, it demands to be used, as does the framework that stems from it.

Rhetorical Analysis

The analysis of rhetoric is, in many ways, the creation of rhetoric. From the purpose-built system of Aristotle to the more complex considerations of rhetorical situation, to know is to do, and in order to do one must first know. Tautology aside, Recuperative Rhetorics is an analytical framework that creates texts of understanding, which force upon the reader and the author ways of seeing and possible truths to acknowledge and possibly accept. This is true for any formal or informal structure of making sense of reality, Recuperative Rhetorics is simply a continuation/companion to the more widely used and taught frameworks for understanding how people engage in crafting and convincing other of the truth[3].

[3] Whether or not that truth is True.

Classical Rhetoric

In the classical rhetorical framework of ancient Greece (Aristotle, 2000), we are presented with the system of appeals a rhetor is meant to consider in order to be successful in his craft of convincing and audience. This was a purpose-built system, very much a tool to be used, and like any good craftsman the rhetor must understand how to use the tools they have for the task at hand. The classical appeals assume that the rhetor is a speaker, one who is orally (as the written word at the time was meant to be read aloud) presenting to an audience with some form of intent to convince the audience of something. A rhetor might be a statesman trying to win over his fellow senators, a shopkeeper trying to convince a potential buyer, or a philosopher trying to nail down the primordial underpinnings of life and existence. In all cases, the rhetor, the audience, the medium of delivery, and the desired outcome are all presupposed and rather narrow, and notably lack temporal consideration outside of the rhetorical action itself.

Rhetorical Situation

While likely innumerable other forms of rhetoric and rhetorical analysis exist and have existed alongside the classical appeals, within the spheres I occupy they are of primacy. Looking towards the modern era, many theorists have proposed and outlined various rhetorical schema that build on the appeals, with rhetorical situation being one of the most highly positioned in my general field of study. As popularized by Bitzer (1968), and later challenged by Vatz (1973), rhetorical situation builds upon the framework of the classical appeals in several ways. It does not take for granted the situation and context, the kairos, of the rhetorical texts they seek to analyze, although the specifics about how situations and rhetorics are causal to each other is different depending on which version of the theory one uses. Either way, the greater context of a piece of

- Spheres and Hyperobjects: I use these terms as a way to visually and metaphorically express and meditate on certain ideas and thought processes within the Recuperative Rhetorics framework. The terms are in conversation with, but not entirely aligned with the usage in other theoretical texts. Aspects of Habermas (1991) and Hauser (2022) are present in the idea of spheres both being physical spaces and discursive/rhetorical arenas, although the idea is broader than just the public and greatly influenced by the SI theories of psychogeographies, along with more esoteric math and literary chaos theory (Hayles, 1990; D. Palumbo, 2002). The ways in which I discuss spheres are also related to Morton's (2010) idea of hyperobjects and their characteristics, particularly that my conception of spheres are interobjective – meaning that they are formed and defined by their relations to other objects – and phased – meaning that they are of a higher dimension than the normal special dimensions we interact with in the course of living – which shapes the way Recuperative Rhetorics "thinks" about texts, focusing on the ways texts and the rhetorics within them are part of cycles that have inflective points which are understood in their relationship to other rhetorical objects and situations. The terminology is not a critical aspect of the framework by my estimation, and any researcher or writer may choose to use, alter, or substitute it with something else that works for them personally or in the bounds of their disciplinary dialect. When I use it, I am mainly doing so as a shorthand for "concepts of things, things that can be thought of as relativistic to each other in ways both relational and positional." I see the spectacle, along with other forms of rhetoric and ideas/situations/concepts/states of being as spheres, all of which are 4^{th} dimensional hyperobjects that can move in, around, outside, or within each other; and in so doing leave marks and transformations, or mutations

- Recuperation: The act of the spectacle absorbing and neutralizing détournement and revolutionary thoughts and images into itself, to render them harmless and, if possible, profitable (Debord, 1967; Plant, 1990). It is the other side of a rhetorical coin from détournement, or elsewise conceptualized as the other half of a rhetorical cycle, where détournement and recuperation are the inflection points on which epistemological and ontological understanding of ready-mades pivot/mutate/change within the minds of an audience. Recuperation is antirevolutionary, dulling, and soothing in ways sinister and subtle. If punk is détournement, then being able to buy mass produced punk clothing is recuperation. The détournement of fashion is taken, neutered of its revolutionary meaning, and seamlessly integrated into the supply chain of images. No longer is a battle jacket a powerful and deeply personal representation of a revolutionary ethos, it is now just a fashion statement, as meaningful/meaningless as any other; banal, soothing, profitable.

- Psychogeography: An SI concept concerned with the interaction between a person and the environment or space, most notably that of urban living (Debord, 1955/2006). If the geography of a place can be written down via a map, psychogeography is the map created within oneself in relation to the space it abides, particularly affected by the spectacle's pervasive and inescapable use of images in urban space. To put it another way, urban space under the spectacle is so full of signs, so pervaded by images, that the actual space meta-psychically rots into a realm of abstraction, one which would cease to exist without said signs (Melia, 2020). Closely related to semiology and human geography, one could consider psychogeography as a field of thought from which "de/colonization of the mind" naturally flows.

rhetoric is considered under this framework, with the author's intent, the audience it is directed towards, the methods employed by the author (such as the appeals themselves), as well as the medium are all taken into account and acknowledged as inter-linked with one another. Thus, when using this framework to examine, and subsequently explain texts in a rhetorical manner, these ideas are ingrained into the researcher, as well as the reader. This framework is a necessary expansion from the classical framework, as genres and mediums had become far more varied and complex in the prevailing millennia, and while the appeals are a useful tool, they were not sufficient in addressing these new complexities. However, rhetorical situation, for all its improvements, is still notably static in its examinations, concerned as it is with causal relationships of the texts themselves and their immediate context, but not the higher dimensions of interaction, structural makeup, and epistemological impacts on varied audiences, intended and otherwise.

Positioning Recuperative Rhetorics

Recuperative Rhetorics is to rhetorical situation what rhetorical situation is to the classical appeals, both an expansion and companion; another set of tools in the workshop. Recuperative Rhetorics concerns itself with how rhetorical texts, and rhetoric itself, functions in cycles within meta-cultural spheres and audience milieus. Rhetoric creates, reinforces, or alters truth, and this pattern can be seen as a cycle, with inflection points where rhetoric flips between revolution against hegemony[4], and anti-revolution[5] where hegemonic structures coopt and neutralize rhetoric that threatens its power and existence. The signs, symbols, language, and concepts that enforce hierarchy and hegemony can and will be taken, twisted, and used for revolutionary action and expression. In turn, signs, symbols, language, and concepts of progressive and

[4] See Chapter 2 on Détournement.

[5] See Chapter 2 on Revolutionary Action and Recuperation.

revolutionary causes and intention can and will be taken, twisted, and stripped of their previous revolutionary power, and integrated back into the hegemonic structure, to be changed into a commodity, have their meanings permanently altered, or be forgotten entirely. This cycle repeats ad infinitum, and is the basis for the situations that form/are formed by rhetorical texts. Recuperative Rhetorics sets out to track these cycles and inflections, bringing light to how texts, and the things that make up texts, affect the internal and external truth of reality within audiences and the societies in which they live; this tracking extends backwards and forwards temporally, but also in other axes and dimensions of influence and relation, the ripples and marks that texts absorb and inflict upon human reality.

Invitation

With these aperitifs settled, I would like to present to the reader Recuperative Rhetorics in full. Over the next four chapters, the framework and all its constituent parts will be detailed, explained, and demonstrated, with inspiration on the part of the reader being a goal second only to a satisfactory understanding of the framework itself. Chapter 2 consists of a review of the literature, how the ideas that the framework is based on have been addressed, written about, and used by other scholars, primarily in the English discipline, particularly the gaps in the larger discourse. In Chapter 2 a reader will also find more extensive definitions and discussions of the key terms used throughout this thesis. Chapter 3 is a more robust theoretical foundation and explanation of the framework, both in how it is intellectually constructed, how to understand and conceive of it as theory, and how to utilize it in praxis. Chapter 4 provides examples of the framework in action, with slightly truncated Recuperative Rhetorics analyses of texts in three different mediums, the speech *What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?* by Fred-

To détourn or recuperate is to plagiarize, negate, and create, the ready-mades are the objects used.

- Détournement: A theory and praxis developed by SI (`Debord & Wolman`, 1956). It functions by taking ready-made objects, signs and images already created by the spectacle, and splices them into new objects, shining them in the face of its old masters and the public. The objective of détournement is to simultaneously create a space, or moment, of true connection to reality outside of the spectacle by rebuffing it, bringing awareness of the spectacle's existence to the public and inviting further resistance, as well as the destruction of the original sign-value of the images used to create the détournement; with a truly successful détournement rendering the original détourned object meaningless, or unusable by the spectacle, in the face of the new (Debord & Wolman, 1956; Debord, 1967). Détournement acknowledges that it is a tool that can be used against itself, but that it also a tool that can never be monopolized and can thus forever be refreshed (Debord & Wolman, 1956; Debord, 1967; Plant, 1990; Melia, 2020). I find a phrase coined during SI's involvement in the student protests in France during 1968 to be particularly demonstrative. The original phrase translates to "Under the cobblestones, the beach!" which speaks to the desires of the working class and student organizers to be recognized in both their industry and humanity, from several angles. It also referred to the act of taking said cobblestones and throwing them at police, and so people expanded the phrase to become, "Under the cobblestones, the beach! One need only pick it up, and throw it!" Here we see a détournement, using slogan, physical objects, rhetorics of protest and violence, etc., to highlight some original meanings, twist others, and ultimately, directly call for revolutionary action.

by capitalism realized, the economic system mutates from an economy of material-value, to one of image-value, or, as Melia (2020) describes, "it had been observed that, under the reign of a spectacle economy, social life had been commodified to such an extent that it had been reduced to a visual abstraction—a vast array of marketable images." The spectacle is all-encompassing, naturalizing, and renders invisible that which is against its interest. The spectacle presents a reality fundamentally alienating to those that exist within it, promising escape through the consumption of products not based on outcomes of need, but on outcomes of perception. The spectacle offers "a way out" through advertising the concepts of things, the images of a life desired, with the actual material products secondary to its propagation. The spectacle is also tautologically self-reinforcing, it "presents itself as something enormously positive, indisputable and inaccessible. It says nothing more than 'that which appears is good, that which is good appears" (Debord, 1967), which makes disrupting it difficult and inherently revolutionary.

- Ready-made Objects: These are "aspects" present in texts being analyzed through Recuperative Rhetorics (Debord & Wolman, 1956). In the original SI context, they are the things, already existent pieces and parts, that are used and abused to create détournement, or more specifically, to be détourned. If one were to create a very simple détournement, say graffitiing a billboard advertisement to say something self-deprecating, the physical object *and* the original semiotic meanings of the billboard, as well as the materials used to graffiti, are the ready-mades. Put another way, the material components of a physical object, its mimesis and semiotic function/meaning, and its situational position are all ready-mades, and so is the spray paint used to deface it, and all other aspects of the resulting creation.

erick Douglass (1852), the film *I Am Not Your Negro* by Raoul Peck (2016), and the stage play *The Hungry Woman: A Mexican Medea* by Cherríe Moraga (2001), a détournement, a recuperation, and something other, respectively. Chapter 5, which is the final chapter, discusses the implications of the framework, how it might be used or built upon by future scholars, and how it can enter into the wider discourse to find footholds in different fields, both within the larger discipline of English and elsewhere. The chapter also acknowledges lingering issues in the theory, how they might be addressed in the future, as well as some questions that the framework leaves open in its current form. Without further ado, let us proceed.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to build the framework, it was prudent and necessary to understand the contextual nature of the SI theories, their contemporary variants, and then how they were received and evolved over time. The particular names and terms that SI coined or adopted for their theories and praxes will be explained further on, along with other concepts and verbiage key to this project. After studying the SI source texts, I then proceeded to review a range of academic writing, articles, and discourse in order to understand and map out the ways in which the theories of SI have been used in prevailing decades, primarily to understand where said theories were most prevalent. My focus for this project is mainly within English Studies, but I reviewed literature more broadly from fields in the Humanities, Education, Social Sciences, Communications, and Medicine[1], to understand the scope of adoption; and I felt it was valuable to survey examples of the various methods that disparate disciplines have paired with SI theories in order to reach their particular personal/academic ends. The literature review concludes with a meditation on the gaps I feel are observable within the academic discourse that I feel must be recognized, and that this project aims to address.

[1] For a very interesting read on how SI theories can be used as a praxis for medical professionals in treating their patients, see Bridger (2013).

the higher levels of power and privilege within a hierarchical system.

- Revolutionary Action: I use this term to mean any sort of action that would be fighting against hierarchy as a whole, and hegemonic constructs in specific. If it fights "the man" then it's revolutionary. On the other hand, antirevolutionary action is just that, the opposite of revolutionary action. It is the attitude of inaction and passivity, or any action that allows for the hierarchy and hegemonic rule to continue unabated, intentionally or not (Debord & Wolman, 1956; Debord, 1967; Osel, 2012). Regardless of political position or intent, if there is a confrontation between two groups of people, whichever side is "the police", or receives greater aid/support from "the police" is anti-revolutionary, and the other side is revolutionary. This is for no other reason than states are de facto hegemons, and so state actors like police are representatives of hegemony, and thus reinforcers of hierarchical dominion. These concepts are particularly important to consider when deploying the framework towards, or examining works that concern themselves with, de-coloniality and post-colonialism. If one does not seek a continued understanding of hierarchy in relation to the works they examine under the framework, they risk engaging in an unnecessary frustrating process, erasing the subaltern voice (Said, 1979; Sharp, 2009), or arriving at seemingly incongruous conclusions[4].

- The Spectacle: A theory put forward as an evolution of Marxist socioeconomic theory (Debord, 1967). The spectacle is the result of capitalism meeting its original goals and now needing to justify its continued existence. With all the needs of living met, the promises of societal betterment offered

[4] See the note on nuance, and discussion of reflux analysis in chapter 3 for more.

text for the thesis at large, and is thus referenced by other chapters readily. I have attempted to order these terms in such a way, taking inspiration from Debord, so that they may be read in order and build upon each other in a sort of knowledge-foundation, while at the same time being self-contained enough to be easily referenced when called upon by other sections of this project.

Definitions and Discussion

· Anarchism: A radically democratic form of organization. Emphasis is placed on the democratization of action and discussion, and the elimination of hierarchy and rulers (Bookchin, 1982). In short, anarchism is a reverse of "standard" power structures, where power is derived from a "bottom up" approach as opposed to a "top down" approach such as in a representative democracy or monarchy. I wish to be very explicit in this concept, as SI were an anarchist organization, and so their theories were anarchistic in nature. Without the understanding that anarchism is a form of democratic, and specifically non-hierarchical organization (as opposed to a popular misconception of it being a lack of any sort of organization at all) I fear that a reader will be unable to properly understand or use the theories or the framework as presented. For more on anarchism, in general and in the particular ways in which I and SI deploy it, I recommend reading through the works of SI, which are available online[3], the book *Situationist International: Anthology* (ed. Knabb, 2006), and the works of Murray Bookchin, particularly *The Ecology of Freedom* (1982).

- Hegemony: I use this term to mean dominant, ruling, or of primacy in a socio-political context. This concept pairs with hierarchy, referring to a system in which things are ranked in separate categories of importance, with those above having more power over those below. Hegemonic means to be at

[3] At https://situationist.org/

Theoretical Background

The best and most accessible secondary source on the subject is the work of Sadie Plant (1990, 1992), whose writing presents us with a historical analysis of Situationist International that helps to define and theoretically situate the concepts of Détournement and Recuperation, as well as the over-theory of the Spectacle, in a way that is often far easier to understand than the texts written by SI themselves. Plant provides a quite thorough analysis of the history, theories, works, reception, and influence and interplay with other theories that SI engaged in. From the outset, she notes the common presentation of SI and its members as an artistic movement, and the simultaneous omission of the work done by SI in the fields of politics and philosophy, even when their artworks were intrinsically linked to, and explicitly about, philosophy and political theory. Plant goes on to describe a key text and sociopolitical concept of SI, *The Society of the Spectacle* (Debord, 1967), a theory that builds on top of Marxism by presenting alienation and lack of control over one's own life as the defining aspects of the proletariat, as both consumers and producers of commodities will eventually (and arguably already did/do) have their entire existence subsumed by the spectacle, simultaneously and inescapably both a spectator and consumer, inside and outside, product and producer, all within the grand spectacle that shields the proletariat (being comprised of anyone that cannot exert control over their existence in relation to roles assigned by the spectacle, a near impossibility) from truly existing in the world, promising them a cure to this existence if they simply consume more commodities (the amount of memes, both ironic and genuine, that echo this sentiment in the present day I feel is enough to justify SI's entire thesis on their own). Plant also orients the Situationists and their theories within the traditions of the avant-garde, notably Dadaism and Surrealism. The works, both of art and philosophy (to SI these are not separable), of the Situationists stemmed from and influenced the avant-garde; with

Détournement being both an artistic concept and praxis, the actions created by said concept (the situations) being their own end-goal. Plant (1990) provides some more historical context of SI and their influence, namely their involvement in discourse, and their works of discursive art, which influenced the 1968 May Revolution in France, an association that Plant is sure to point out the common ignorance of. Plant (1992), more closely examines postculturalism, its relation to SI methods of critical discourse, how they are seen as similar, and how they are in many ways actually contradictory, with Situationism demonstrating the concepts of postculturalism as self-delegitimizing, defeatist, and inherently anti-revolutionary.

While Plant (1990, 1992) provides readings that I would point any interested party toward, should they wish to have a more than surface level understanding of SI, their theories, and their cultural and historical work and impact, there is no escaping a discussion of what many consider the ur-text of Situationist thought, the above mentioned *The Society of The Spectacle* (1967), authored by arguably the most famous of the Situationists, Guy Debord, along with the earlier *A User's Guide to Détournement*[2] (1956), by Debord and fellow Situationist, Gil Wolman. Debord's (1967) book is a collection of numbered theses/aphorisms/axiomatic statements, consisting of observations, détournements of previous works of philosophy and theory (see Kenn Knabb's annotations in Debord (1967)), and arguments. These are arranged into chapters in order to somewhat distinguish the primary focus of each chunk of theses, but the list is unbroken, and is seemingly meant to be read in a sequential order so that Debord's observations and arguments make sense in their totality, the core takeaways as they pertain to this project are as follows. The advent of capitalism has given rise to something called the spectacle. The spectacle is both a descriptor of society,

[2] I greatly appreciate this title, as appending "A user's guide" to any Situationist text would be fitting, and indeed makes them easier to understand in many ways, as they were always meant to be things people used.

and a self-reinforcing semi-conscious entity that shapes society; a point similar to some social-economist philosophy on why capitalism as a system has been able to maintain itself for so long, just from a slightly different angle. The spectacle commands what is right and what is visible, and under the spectacle those are one and the same; what is good is seen and what is seen is good, anything else is and must be invisible and anathema. To defeat the spectacle is to succeed in revolution, and revolution can only succeed if it is arrived at and understood fully by the proletariat; which is to say that the proletariat must understand that they are performing revolution, understand why, and believe in the revolution. Debord spends quite a long time on this point, which is a main differentiating factor between his work (and that of the SI more generally) and other leftist tracts, being that Debord and SI are anarchists, a distinction I will elucidate more fully in the next section. In order to perform any and all of the required aspects of revolution, Debord, along with Wolman and other writers in other texts published by SI, lays out the idea of détournement, the theoretical and practical weapon wielded against the spectacle, as well as the spectacle's response to détournement, recuperation. Moving to the next section, I will dive deeper into these terms, what they mean generally, as well as particular points of focus or contention I feel necessary to address with regards to this project.

Terms

Below I have chosen to provide a list of key terms relevant to this project. These are terms that I feel are used in the text in ways that either must be understood and are likely to not be due to my use being different than that of others, or are simply not well-known terms in the case of SI's theories. This section is meant to accomplish two-fold, to make sure there is as little ambiguity in the writing and arguments of this thesis, and to provide additional con-

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Recuperative Rhetorics
A Novel Framework for Rhetorical Analysis
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revolution; all that the spectacle is, and all that it is not. Recuperative Rhetorics, then, means to examine the hypersphere, the sphere-of-spheres, or the nesting and overlapping of various spheres and how they interact, grow, destroy, mutate, and reflect/refract one another. I do not mean this to say that Recuperative Rhetorics is above or can in any way usurp or replace other frameworks or theories of rhetorical analysis, only that these interactions, between texts and their situations, between and within these spheres, exist, that the implications and ramifications of those interactions exist, and that all of this demands acknowledgement and examination. This unrealized obligation, in any satisfactorily formal or systematic way, to observe these cycles and interactions, and to create knowledge and meaning from the acute and habitual analysis that follows, is the foundational *why* of Recuperative Rhetorics.

How

The *how* of Recuperative Rhetorics is, much like other frameworks, variable, based on the types of text being analyzed, the specific methods being used (often determined by the medium of the text), as well as the analyst themselves, as both their disciplinary and personal background will influence their choices and determinations throughout the process. This again may seem obvious to the point it could go unstated, but I feel it is important to something so concerned with examining relations as Recuperative Rhetorics, which is why the framework asks that its users to draft a statement of positionality and intent to foreword their work. These statements can be of those general sorts found in some disciplines within the social sciences and humanities, but should be especially focused on demonstrating to prospective readers the relation the author has to the project, the why, and the spheres that they as person and analyst operate under that can/might/do interact with the relevant subject matter/text. An example can

be seen at the beginning of chapter 1 of this thesis. I would like to be abundantly clear that this part of RR is meant to situate works built under the framework so that further scholarship can more easily examine the analyses as part of rhetorical spheres and cycles in generative ways, without the false veneer of objectivity or ethical arbitrariness.

With the prefix complete, one can proceed with a Recuperative Rhetorics analysis in the following general way (see Figure 3–1). Please note, that while the steps laid out in the following paragraphs are indeed a valid shape for an analyst to trace, much like in cooking and jazz, they should by no means be treated as fully prescriptive or exhaustive. Therefore, I will mainly address those steps that I see as entirely necessary, such as the one above, regardless of the medium of the text being examined. Depending on the specifics of the "what" and "why" a Recuperative Rhetorics analysis is being deployed, certain steps might be repeated several times (which I refer to as reflux analysis), additional ones may be included (such as those that are specific and conventional to certain genres or disciplines), and even those described may be altered to various degrees. I say all this so that when one reads through these steps, and examines the chart provided, they can be confident in their instinct to fill in any gaps they see as present for their own individual efforts to be realized.

All steps are described in greater detail in the following sections, but I will provide a short walkthrough should one wish to follow the chart. The process would start at the top by choosing the text one wishes to analyze using the framework. They would then determine the ready-made objects that make up the text (this process is dependent on the text and field), paying attention to both what the text is made out of, and also perhaps what it is trying to not be made out of, or obfuscate from its origin. One then weighs the ready-mades as being revolutionary or hegemonic (see chapter 2 and the sections below) and follows the arrows accordingly. While the chart has discreet terminal points, these are not fixed stops in

the process. They can be, should the answers in those boxes be the goal of analysis, but the work up to that point can be plugged back into the chart with consideration of further nuance or viewpoints, as well as taken to be used in further discussion or analysis under other methodologies; this is what is displayed as "reflux analysis" in the chart.

Targeting the Text

The determination of the text to be analyzed is of course up to the discretion of the researcher. However, the choice of analytical framework is one that is nonetheless a consideration, and like any other framework, Recuperative Rhetorics is more suited to some analyses than others. In targeting a text for a Recuperative Rhetorics analysis, it is helpful to consider the "surface level" results that one might get just by thinking about said text in a Recuperative Rhetorics manner, such as: is the text revolutionary; is it a détournement or recuperation; what texts preceded it, and what texts have/will follow in its cycle; where does the text fit within the spheres I as a researcher am most interested in/well equipped to analyze; etc. If these are questions that feel valuable for one answer and/or ask about a text and its relational properties, then it is likely fit for a Recuperative Rhetorics analysis. If, instead, one wishes to perform a different sort of analysis, such as a purely aesthetic close reading of a text, then Recuperative Rhetorics may not be the best choice; although if one wished to use the results of said close reading in a larger analytical project, then Recuperative Rhetorics may indeed be very well suited to that task.

Determining the Ready-Mades

Operating under the assumption that an appropriate text has been targeted, the next step in a Recuperative Rhetorics framework analysis is to determine the ready-made objects (see Chapter 2) that

make up a text. This process is useful in several ways, being the primary basis on which a great deal of further analysis is dependent, and it also assists with determining whether a text is a work of détournement or recuperation (or possibly neither), if that was not already known. This is a critical insight, and indeed a worthy enough exercise on its own in certain situations, demonstrative of how Recuperative Rhetorics can be used in whole, but also sometimes in part of different schema, affording greater insight into analytical endeavors and readings that don't sit totally within its boundaries.

When determining what ready-mades are in a text, one can approach from several angles. Starting at the surface level, one can observe what other texts the target-text is referencing, or in some cases, physically made of (Debord & Wolman, 1956; Bonnett, 1999; Mendez, 2014; Trier, 2014; Ruiz, 2016). This can take the form of quotations, parody/pastiche, memetic conversion/collage, remixing/sampling, appropriation, adaptation, thefts both blatant and subtle, and the materials and medium the text in question is constructed of. These are the primary ready-mades that make up most texts, and often times are purposefully apparent; these cases are particularly welcoming to Recuperative Rhetorics, as the more a text wants its lineage to be considered when it is read, wearing its interobjectivity on its sleeve, the greater the ease with which we can examine its interactions with surrounding spheres and cycles it intersects with.

There are some less obvious ready-mades as well, sometimes simply taking a singular text and placing it into a different context in relation to hegemony and power can make previous versions ready-mades within the new. For this, many examples fall to matters of markets and commerce. When something is new, or rare, or expensive, it has a different meaning, and exists in a different point of consideration when viewed as a part of a Recuperative Rhetorics rhetorical cycle, than when that same object becomes abundant, old, and/or "cheap". Examples can range from performative texts such as clothing and fashion, to consumptive texts like

Activism in the United States and western Europe. *European Journal of American Studies*, *14*(1), Article 1. https://doi.org/10.4000/ejas.14395

Ybarra, P. (2008). The Revolution Fails Here: Cherríe Moraga's The Hungry Woman as a Mexican Medea. *Aztlan: A Journal of Chicano Studies*, *33*(1), 63–88.

recipes and thus cuisine, to even texts of great social import such as the preaching of the gospel in the vernacular, and indeed the advent of common literacy, all demonstrate rhetorical shifts of texts into new spaces within larger spheres, even if the texts themselves do not change.

From a more standard academic angle, identification of ready-mades is often done automatically through research and review of the literature. When conducting a thorough review on the scholarship of a text, one should pay particular attention to all of the things that other scholars point out about a text that are not necessarily the text itself, but its influences, historical examples of form, rhetorical strategies (and how those compare to other works), genre predecessors, contemporary works that a text would have been responding to, references to other texts (explicit or otherwise), and so on. If another scholar in any way mentions that a text is in dialogue with another text that came before it, however specific disciplines might go about making those conclusions, then it should be marked by a scholar engaged in a Recuperative Rhetorics analysis as important, confirmed, and then included in the assemblage of ready-mades within the text they are analyzing. This entire process can be, depending on what exactly one is trying to accomplish and their own personal work habits, rather part and parcel with already established methodology, while for others it may prove a more lengthy endeavor. Nevertheless, it is a crucial step, because through cataloguing the ready-mades, and then analyzing the way the text is exploiting/deploying them within its rhetorical schema, a Recuperative Rhetorics analysis can move on to its next step.

Détournement or Recuperation?[1]

In order to determine whether a text is one of détournement, one of recuperation, or neither, one must examine both the text and

[1] This section is in constant discussion with both (Debord & Wolman, 1956) and (Debord, 1967)

its ready-mades, and then carefully consider the following questions. Does the text use ready-mades that are hegemonic in nature, are the ready-mades objects of the spectacle; or are the ready-mades inherently revolutionary, as in they are non-hegemonic? Depending on the answer to that question, one would then need to ask the same question of the text itself, which can be done via whatever method that the researcher feels is the most appropriate to answer that question. If the answer to both of those inquiries match, the ready-mades and the text are all hegemonic in nature for instance, then the researcher can be relatively certain in concluding that the text is neither a détournement nor recuperation, at least not acutely. Texts that fall under this equal mean of ready-made and textual rhetorical direction are likely a text falling along a longer lineage, one that can be traced backwards (or forwards in some cases) until a researcher finds the text in the cycle that has opposing answers to the primary questions asked above; this is where détournement and recuperation can be seen acutely, and not as memetic echoes of later texts following the same path. Détournement and recuperation can thus be thought of as the inflection points of rhetorical cycles.

As an example, consider if a text had revolutionary, anti-hegemonic ready-mades, but was in fact hegemonic in intent and/or impact; that is to say that it fostered anti-revolutionary sentiment (see: Osel's (2022) analysis). When this sort of rhetorical inversion occurs, it is a strong indicator that the text is a recuperative one, as it rhetorically situates the revolutionary ideas and objects that it crafts itself from back into the hegemony of the spectacle; it takes away the rhetorical power of its ready-mades to bring them back into the fold, rendering them safe. Advertising is a phenomenal genre to examine when looking for examples in this vein, as a core tenet of many advertising schools is making customers feel like they are making a difference, or that what they are doing (or will be doing once they purchase the product)

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is somehow important and revolutionary, while at the same time being fundamentally safe and ok; see chapter 3 of Debord (1967).

If, instead, one finds that the ready-mades of the text they are analyzing are hegemonic in nature, but that the target-text is rhetorically revolutionary, meaning that it encourages revolutionary thought and action in its audience, then the researcher can approach this as a work of détournement. Much like the rhetorical inversion described above, a détournement is a rhetorical inflection point where hegemonic objects are used to create anti-hegemonic sentiment. However, it is important to note that in order for a work to be a true détournement, and not simply an appropriation, the target-text must demonstrate the ability to alter the ontological or epistemological understanding of the ready-mades it invokes within its audience. A détournement text must, in the same way that recuperative text alters and destroys the power of its revolutionary ready-mades, alter and destroy the power held by the hegemonic ready-mades. This is accomplished in ways that are too numerous to list, and likely too vast to ever personally know, but there are some generalities to look for. If a text appears to effectively alter the foundational way that an audience interacts with or considers one or more of its ready-mades, in service to the text's primarily revolutionary purpose, then it is likely a détournement, especially if it is not primarily designed to generate profit, which should always be strictly scrutinized. Put another way, if a text uses a hegemonic ready-made, and radically (perhaps permanently) changes the conversation around and about that ready-made through its rhetorical dissemination towards a revolutionary bent, then it is almost certainly a détournement. In either case, a true détournement or recuperation must *do* something, and not simply present itself as an example of theory.[2] For examples of how one might develop

[2] While somewhat contradictory by design, theses 201–211 in Debord (1967) discuss how détournement and recuperation are acts of negation, often of nega-

these determinations, please see the case texts in chapter 4 of this thesis.

A note on nuance. When considering works that are addressing several layers of hierarchy, including hierarchies within generally non-hegemonic groups, it becomes necessary to locate our thinking and gaze as close to that of the author as possible, and consider what hegemonies they are under and affected by, rather than those familiar to us as individuals. This is an explicit act of empathy, so that we might contextualize our interpretation more accurately to the text we are analyzing, and is another reason why the ethic of the intentionality statements in a Recuperative Rhetorics analysis is imperative to the framework. The layers of hierarchy are manyfold, the oppressed can also perform oppression, and so too goes revolution. The spectacle does not like to be disturbed, its power is frightening to oppose, and fear can make dictators of us all; that is to perform counter-revolution, to recreate the false-truth of the spectacle by imitating what it has shown. These ideas must not be lost when making determinations or observations as part of a RR analysis, and is another reason why the statements of position and intent are important to the framework in practice.

The determination of whether a text is a détournement, a recuperation, or neither[3], is the first step that might be considered terminally effective in a Recuperative Rhetorics analytical process. If one were to stop here, they would have come to a valuable conclusion that is characteristic of Recuperative Rhetorics as a framework, and created knowledge and understanding of a text in a specific way that is not endemic to other rhetorical analyses. Of course, this does not mean that this is *the* conclusionary endpoint of any Recuperative Rhetorics analysis, only the first that we might deem

tion itself. For a détournement to be only discussed, only exist in the dialectic but not the real world, it self-negates.

[3] Recall that texts exist within rhetorical cycles, and only the inflection points are détournements or recuperations. All non-inflective texts are simply continuations of the rhetorical cycle they exist within/emerged from.

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valid of its own efforts; but for many Recuperative Rhetorics analyses this step is just that, a step.

Analysis and Reflux

The next part of a Recuperative Rhetorics analytical project, other than drawing up one's final conclusions to be entered into the greater discourse, is less a discrete step, and more of a user/project determined method of processing new knowledge. In brief, one takes the analysis and research performed in the above steps, and then performs further analysis depending on what their end goals are. One might trace backwards or forwards along a text's rhetorical cycle to find other inflection points, and then analyze the relationships between the texts, and the relationships between different spheres that resulted in those inflection points and/or created by them. One could perform a deeper analysis of the nature of the text as either a détournement or recuperation itself, what that might mean for how it influences various spheres, and what can be learned or predicted from that, especially if the analysis of the text determined that it is perhaps operating on a different axis than it would outwardly appear, or is popularly understood (see the second example in chapter 4). One might even put themselves into the headspace of a researcher with a different set of intentions or positions to the text than they have, and see if these new ways of seeing alter the conclusions they come to, and what that implies. The researcher could use this analytical effort to examine possible lessons to be extolled, or new patterns of inquiry to be more carefully considered when either crafting or analyzing other texts within their discipline for the future. This reflexive/recursive process is a strength of the Recuperative Rhetorics framework, and also one of its hallmarks.

Conclusions

Recuperative Rhetorics as a framework both provides and demands. It provides structure and tools to fulfill unmet needs that inspired its creation, with clear and concrete aspects of texts to be examined, determinations drawn, and knowledges created. But the analytical functions that can be performed with those new knowledges, while valuable in their own right, are also where the theory stands to grow the most, and thus do the most, within and between different fields of study. The questions Recuperative Rhetorics demands its users to ask are the sort that lead to greater questions, the good kinds of questions that are generative and inspiring. The why and the how of Recuperative Rhetorics are linked very purposefully to propagate ways of thinking and knowing that fills and bridges holes in awareness and knowledge, but also to be self-aware of its own limitations, whether those be limitations of construction or application. While I do genuinely believe that Recuperative Rhetorics can be a powerful tool that can span across the general field of rhetoric, it is not universal, and is not meant to be. It presents a shape, the tools to construct it, to view texts in relation to it, and ways to mount texts to said shape; in turn it invites creative and generative examination of the results of these efforts by the creator, and by future readers. I would like to extend such an invitation presently, and present curated examples of the framework in action.

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CHAPTER 4: RECUPERATIVE RHETORICS IN PRACTICE

This chapter will focus on the presentation of Recuperative Rhetorics in practice. I will present three examples of analysis under the framework, one of a speech, one of a film, and one of a play; a détournement, a recuperation, and something more complex, respectively. The first analysis will look at the 1852 speech *What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?* by Frederick Douglass. The second analysis will be of Raoul Peck's 2016 film *I Am Not Your Negro*, which is a biopic of the late James Baldwin, using his own writing, published and un-published, as the film's "script". The third will be an analysis of Cherríe Moraga's play *The Hungry Woman: A Mexican Medea* cited as the 2001 publication, but includes analysis of the varied scripts and performances that have occurred, per the flexible nature of contemporary stage plays.

I chose these works to present as examples as they are highly rhetorical scripts, which are meant to establish forms of truth and thus encourage thoughts and actions within their audiences, and all using ready-mades in comparatively open and direct ways. I also chose to present them as a form of constructive juxtaposition. I feel it is somewhat easy to fall into a thought pattern that détournements are new, and recuperations lean more towards history, as hegemony is often, and fairly so, equated with antiquated modes of thinking and structure. Therefore, I chose to use a work of rhetoric that is far older than the concept of détournement being coined to demonstrate its ability to be applied to things well before its inception, and a much more contemporary work that on the sur-

face might seem to fall into revolutionary spheres given its subject, but that I nonetheless determine to be recuperative in key aspects. The third work analyses a more complicated text in a medium that is particularly notable as fluid and dynamic, as I feel like performance studies partners well with Recuperative Rhetorics, and it also serves to put the framework through its paces. These are also texts that deal with legacy on multiple layers, which is another sphere I feel Recuperative Rhetorics is particularly apt at addressing. Ideally, these examples will serve as both soft genre guides for Recuperative Rhetorics framework analysis, and as generative pieces to help readers understand more about how the framework practically functions, and how they might use it in their own scholarship.

Analysis of *What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?* (1852) by Frederick Douglass

Introduction

This speech was given by Douglass (and later published via pamphlet) on July 5th, 1852, to a gathering of anti-slavery advocates in Rochester, NY. The speech was at the request of the Rochester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, and is, like many other speeches given by Douglass, biting in its ironic scorn and unabashed directness towards his subject matter, as well as deeply nuanced and rhetorically transformative (Douglass, 1852; McFeely, 1991; Barr et al., 2018). The speech takes on the general character of a Jeremiad, where the rhetor extols the audience for lapsing in their calling to be upright and virtuous, deriding the concept of having a formerly enslaved man give a speech on the founding day of the nation which does not want to include him and those like him amongst its citizenry. He then goes on to use many of the most general and powerfully recognizable rhetorical objects in the

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knows, it might be fun. It might even be good. If nothing else, it will be real, and it will certainly be something.

anglosphere and American state religion to point out that abolition is not just a moral good and necessity, but to fail in establishing it is to mock those that the audience members claim to aid, and also is a failure in the eyes of god and country, marking a clear example of the American Jeremiad, which is a readily recognizable political speech pattern to this day (Bercovitch, 1978).

Identification of the Ready-Mades

As is sometimes the case with very well studied and older works, there exist several scholarly sources that, although not necessarily by name, dissect the ready-mades of rhetorical texts in detail from synthesizing a great deal of preceding scholarship. In the case of the ready-mades in Douglass' speech, and for want of expediency in this example case, I will be referring mainly to the 2018 work of Barr et al. (the bibliography of which I found tremendously useful in this stage of the Recuperative Rhetorics process, and highly recommend reviewing for those interested), who have diligently provided us with a synthesized and analyzed list of the ready-mades used by Douglass, namely "the Bible, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar,* Thomas Paine, and the Constitution" (p. 56). Douglass uses the forms of extended metaphor and analogy, key linguistic markers of détournement works, throughout his speech (Debord & Wolman, 1956). He compares the heroes of America's past to its present citizenry, both in positive ways by comparing the founding fathers to abolitionists, and in negative ways as is warranted by his speech's Jeremiad form. All in all, the ready-made aspects Douglass uses are carefully and expertly chosen, being things that his immediate audience, and the future audiences he wishes to affect, would be familiar with, at least a few if not all of them intimately. Uses of ready-mades can be seen and ascribed to styles of parody and irony (Debord & Wolman, 1956; Debord, 1967), and while Douglass himself acknowledges that he is engaging in a form of irony, I do not wish to conflate these two

concepts, as irony is a form but détournement is a praxis, and so the détourned form is one specifically goal oriented towards mutating the ready-mades it uses into tools against the spectacle from which they originate (Debord, 1967). With this done, we may now proceed to the next step of a Recuperative Rhetorics exercise.

Analysis

Following our identification of the ready-mades, using Barr et al. (2018), as well as Bercovitch (1978), McFeely (1991), the observations of the researcher (although all of my personal observations in this example were confirmed by or synthesized from previous scholarly work, rather than anything monumentally novel), and ways in which they are used, we can further analyze why they might be put together, which of the spectacle's images are negated and transformed, and why? For Douglass, at this time, the answer is rather obvious; this is an anti-slavery speech, one he hopes will rouse people to action in the cause against slavery. In the act of combining Christianity, the American Civil Religion, Shakespeare, and the Constitution, he is crafting an argument that is almost subconsciously "true" to any member of his audience in cultural form/milieu, if not specific content. The specific content is where Douglass gets to peel the blindfolds off his audience, so they might see the glaring wrongness that the spectacle veils as right. His audience is alive, they are actively present with him, either physically or as contemporary readers; they can "see" the world around them, Douglass means to "show" them. Barr et al. (2018) provide a succinct analysis of some of these combinations:

Evoking Brutus's defense for having murdered Caesar, Douglass first claims that the forefathers "loved their country better than their own private interests." Then, appropriating the rhythm and sentiment of Mark Antony's speech at Caesar's funeral, he contrasts the founding fathers with contemporary Americans. Unlike the founders, who risked their lives to establish a democracy, Dou-

tournement which that side of the political spectrum creates, and the subsequent adoption of the iconography and selling of Dark Brandon merchandise by the official Biden campaign and its merchandise store (Scribner, 2023; Biden for President, 2024) as a striking example of recuperation in action; especially because I believe it was entirely unconscious on behalf of the individual people who carried out that series of events. Conscious or not, that action, and the rhetorical inflection it presented with all associated ramifications to the adjacent spheres, almost single-handedly wiped out fashwave as an aesthetic that was at all appealing to use as the power had been taken out of it, at least temporarily. Two scholars of entirely opposite political alignments could perform a Recuperative Rhetorics analysis of this rhetorical cycle, and, conceivably, arrive at very different conclusions which demand very different calls to action. This is why I have included statements of position and intent as a core aspect of the framework, to hopefully make these sorts of seemingly dichotomous outcomes easier for any discourse theorists or future scholars to parse and understand through examination of the author's ethical dimensions.

Closing Statement

I could go on at much greater length about all of the other arenas that the framework is likely to shine, shake things up in an interesting way, or needs to be tested within, such as critical discourse analysis, in analyzing the historical legacies of figures of cultural import, political science, communication studies, and others, but I feel as though the general ideas have been covered well enough in this and previous chapters, and so limit myself to the meditation already performed, with the hope that it will inspire others to consider similar ideas within their own chosen fields. If Recuperative Rhetorics intrigues you, why not give it a shot? Who

cle. The remedy for this issue is, along with the acknowledgement of the inherent hierarchies within Recuperative Rhetorics and effort to combat them, the broader adoption and experimentation by those scholars and researchers more versed in other forms of rhetorical traditions. Perhaps there is something to be developed in these crossings, I certainly hope there is, but I will have to wait and see.

Rounding out the Bases

This leads me to the final issue I'd like to address, although I would not call it a flaw, rather than a feature that should be recognized if one is to use Recuperative Rhetorics in any responsible or fully understood way. As I have stated in other chapters, particularly chapter 2, détournement and recuperation, and thus Recuperative Rhetorics as an analytical tool and methodology, are not tied to any sort of moral or political identity. It is a theory meant to be practiced, and thus must be seen as something assailable in and of itself, by itself, before it can be used or examined in any fruitful way; see chapter 8 of Debord (1967). My own political identity is that of leftist anarchism, so that is baked into how I use and have crafted the framework. But just as the situationists and other scholars have noted that détournement can at times be its own worst enemy (Debord, 1967; Plant, 1990), so too can Recuperative Rhetorics be used by anyone, likely for purposes I would not personally agree with.

The extreme right creates works of détournement just as leftists do, albeit in slightly different forms and spaces, simply due to hegemony favoring their ideas more than ours, as well as their grievances, and thus aesthetic expression of those grievances, are simply different; revolution is not morally pure after all. I give the example of the fashwave "Dark Brandon" memes that the right created in recent years (Bogerts & Fielitz, 2023) as an example of dé-

glass's contemporaries, he argues, claim that the question of slavery is "settled"; "the cause of liberty," he adds, 'may be stabbed by the men who glory in the deeds of your fathers.' (p. 56)

Here we see Douglass using several cultural symbols together to make a point that, historically, would not have been what these figures actually stood for (with the exception of Thomas Paine). Douglass further goes on to compare the founding fathers and the leaders of the abolitionist movement together, bringing images of the Bible, sailing ships (relevant to the time and place he delivers the speech), and forces of nature all at once to describe the problem at hand, how the audience could (and implicitly should) desire to be part of the solution rather than the problem, and how to enact the solutions. While some of this is part and parcel of the Jeremiad form Douglass has chosen to use, the specific deployment of the ready-mades, and how Douglass is transforming the power they hold within the consciousness of his audience to his own revolutionary rhetorical ends, is what shows that this speech is a détournement.

Douglass uses a great many rhetorical devices to establish the Constitution as "a GLORIOUS LIBERTY DOCUMENT" (Douglass, 1852), and is part of a larger project to seek constitutional reform with regards to slavery, as opposed to his previous Garrisonian attitudes towards Constitutional abolishment and separatism. Here, I believe, lies something critical. In previous speeches and writings, Douglass had denounced the Constitution as a pro-slavery document, which is not an inaccurate statement, and so practiced his activism accordingly. However, in this speech we see Douglass performing something of an about-face, not in rhetorical outcome (ending slavery is always the end goal), but in rhetorical method and strategy. My analysis leads me to argue that, instead of tossing aside the Constitution as illegitimate, Douglass is attempting to détourn it, rendering its original pro-slavery context and values meaningless, and supplanting/empowering a new version/conception of the Constitution within the minds of his audience as a

document that is "entirely hostile to the existence of slavery." (Douglass, 1852). Douglass has rendered the hegemony of what is shown and what is good into ready-made objects, ones he can use against themselves towards revolutionary ends.

Conclusions

In using Recuperative Rhetorics to analyze Douglass' speech I have concluded that the speech is characteristic of a détournement, with Douglass' attempting to détourn the Constitution, and by association the other ready-mades of American Civil Religion and contemporary Christianity (and perhaps Shakespeare?) themselves. This serves as a rhetorical focal point for the way these ready-mades are thought about and discussed within the social and cultural spheres he deploys them in, an inflection point that can be argued as still salient to this day. I also feel like this analysis lends itself to the consideration of further research, namely a Recuperative Rhetorics analysis of Douglass' own life, as this speech would indicate a détournement of his own public personhood and previous beliefs, which he might consider having been previously recuperated by those not in his own revolutionary sphere, or indeed the spectacle itself, albeit not in those terms. I see a great deal of Douglass' works, including his repeat autobiographies, as his continual project towards the personal détournement of his own image and life away from those that might use it in ways undesirable.

Analysis of the Film *I Am Not Your Negro* (2016) directed by Raoul Peck

Introduction

The film itself is both easily and not so easily described. Several film authors and scholars have earnestly discussed the construction and qualities of the film, but all agree that it is a documentary

détournement or recuperation. If a text is well within a plateau of sorts, where it follows what came before in comfortable and familiar ways, and what follows after it for a good amount of time follows in kind, then Recuperative Rhetorics most likely won't find tremendous value in application, other than perhaps if used to analyze such a text that was used as a ready-made in a much more inflective text. There isn't a remedy for this issue that I can divine, other than the framework having its limitations tested, and edges honed through the deployment of other scholars and researchers in a number of fields. Hopefully this will be something I can revisit in time.

The next limitation I see in the framework, and one that will likely be brought up by scholars of my own discipline and disciplines surrounding it, especially given the anti-colonial bent in my positionality and intent statement, is that the framework is built upon ideas that are very much Western. It takes great inspiration, and is named after, ideas presented by anarchist activists, but these activists were by and large Western-European and US American. I do not believe that it is entirely possible to decouple colonialism from thinking that stems from colonial places, and the people that exist in the hegemonic spheres of those spaces, myself included. This project sees itself as a direct continuation and in conversation with the dominant Western rhetorical traditions, and does not, and indeed at my present level of understanding and expertise, cannot be in conversation with rhetorics stemming from traditions and peoples that have historically been oppressed by colonial powers wielding these same rhetorical traditions that I draw from. I can only attempt, honestly and earnestly, to use the theory towards decolonial ends. Much like the systems of anarchy that are closest to my personal morals and beliefs, I have attempted to create, and thus strive to use, the framework in ways that diminish hierarchy in a place, time, and within many systems that are built upon hierarchy; to fight and destroy hierarchy is revolution, but it is a constant battle, for to avoid it through denial is to germinate the specta-

chooses to align itself as something that is *using* Shakespeare, and not *about* Shakespeare, be successful enough with its audience in fostering revolutionary de-colonial sentiment and action? I wonder if there is a balancing act being performed within this milieu, or perhaps even forced upon it by the weight of social capital divested in Shakespeare and concepts of "legacy", that is holding back some larger goals from being met, where multiple angles of engagement might prove more fruitful than one that is total in scope. Particularly when Shakespeare is so important to hegemony, that even those that believe they are somehow performing a revolutionary act, that is nonetheless deeply recuperative in scope, such as the attempted insurrectionists on January 6th warned no one ahead of time of their actions in a formal manner, except for the Shakespeare Museum located in Washington DC (#Stopthesteal protest participants[1], 2020; Venkataramanan, 2024).

Limitations

I would like to speak now on the limitations that are existent, or that a reader might surmise to be existent, within Recuperative Rhetorics as I have presented it. The first and most glaring limitation of the framework, is that sometimes it just doesn't work. I don't feel particularly maligned at this fact, all frameworks have their place and use cases, and while I genuinely feel Recuperative Rhetorics is applicable quite broadly. Time will tell how well the framework, and the theories it means to inculcate at large, hold up or are adopted, but it would be dishonest not to at least admit that its focus of rhetorical inflection points makes it less applicable, or perhaps simply less insightful, when used to analyze texts that are not close to points of rhetorical cycling, whether that be

[1] This is the way the Folger Library lists the authors of this letter, and thus how it is cited. However, I personally prefer the more politically and legally accurate title of insurrectionists.

of a political nature, with some contending to its experimental nature (Crichlow, 2017; Greene, 2019; dos Santos Pinto et al., 2020; Rascaroli, 2020; Lopez-Littleton et al., 2021; Scott, 2021). Personally, I would not describe the film as an experimental work, but that may simply be due to my own subjective ideas on what constitutes experimentalism, and while having a biopic documentary told through the words and actions of the subject "exclusively" is not common, it is not totally novel; although the exact manner in which the film presents these words is of great interest to this analysis. In brief, *I Am Not Your Negro* is a biopic documentary on the subject of James Baldwin, about American race relations throughout time, and about racial injustice and inequality of the present, focusing mainly on ideas of police brutality. All of this is "told" to the audience "through" Baldwin.

Preamble

An important aspect of creative work is the choices authors make on what to include, and conversely, exclude in their texts; the balancing of importance and meaning between what is there and what isn't. This concept is often brought up, both critically and humorously, in reference to jazz music, most famously exemplified by the Miles Davis quote, "It's not the notes you play, it's the notes you don't play." This is especially true of film, as it is both an additive and subtractive artform, equally made up of all the possibilities collected within itself, and of those specific pieces chosen, their arrangement, and the ways in which they are made to interact with one another. Film is the carving of a marble statue, only the artist must first collect every molecule of stone that forms their slab before deciding what material is superfluous enough to chisel out. Due to its implied ontological nature, where the majority of its material is already "real" and existent, rather than filmed for purpose, documentary film exerts a unique rhetorical power to shape an audience's concept of truth, and in so doing, can drive

them to action or inaction via the choices made by the documentarian. Through a Recuperative Rhetorics framework analysis of Raoul Peck's 2016 film *I Am Not Your Negro*, I argue that the parts of James Baldwin that Peck chose to leave on the cutting room floor have skewed the film towards being a recuperative work, one that, beyond first glance, threatens to evoke attitudes of inaction and discourage revolutionary thought.

Identification of the Ready-Mades

The film is credited as having been "written" by James Baldwin, in that all the words spoken, other than those spoken by other people in historical footage interacting with Baldwin, were written by Baldwin, or are recordings of Baldwin speaking. This, however, is not entirely accurate (Corber, 2017; Greene, 2019), as there is text that is not written by Baldwin present in the film, as well as an excerpt written by the FBI about Baldwin, and with documentary film the "writer" is generally understood to be the director and editor of the stock objects they are using. The film does utilize stock footage and recordings of Baldwin and Baldwin's voice, but also intersperses these with narration of Baldwin's writings, performed in voice-over by Samuel L. Jackson. The film also includes a great deal of imagery: that of Baldwin, footage of present-day unrest and violence, footage of unrest and violence during the civil rights era, various clips of films, speeches, and commercials, of which Baldwin speaks about directly or are used as visual juxtaposition, and images of Black bodies.

The ready-mades of the film can be interpreted to be all of these filmic aspects, as well as the meta-filmic aspects of the legacy of Baldwin himself, the social weight of the main "actor" in Jackson, and the grander concepts and notions that an audience may have about the other figures and events discussed in the film through

coloniality. Paraphrasing a round-table discussion involving two members of my department, Dr. Santos and Dr. Gillen (ACMRS, 2021), Shakespeare is not de-colonial, but can be used de-colonially as a way to de-occlude hidden information and history through juxtaposition of works that are semi-universal in nature within the English-speaking consciousness. However, this is a disruption of colonialism, not a dissolution, which causes works like *Kino and Teresa* (Lujan, 2023) and *The Tragic Corrido of Romeo and Lupe* (Magaña, 2023), both adaptations of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, to enter into an odd grey area as a result of the ready-mades they are using, which "point[s] to the challenges inherent in using Shakespeare to tell Borderlands stories, as they expose the boundaries of Romeo and Juliet's purportedly universal applicability." (Gillen & Santos, 2020). Indeed, when done well the rhetorical goals of these projects stretch at the confines of their adaptive origin, and when done without enough consideration or thought they run the risk of "ultimately reinforc[ing] the colonial imaginaries of an Anglo-American nation state by associating whiteness with the United States and Latinidad with Mexico." (Gillen & Santos, 2020). This latter category of works are those I would label as recuperative, as, intentionally or not, they reinforce hegemony, both in structure and thought, while having the trappings of a revolutionary work, and thus are anti-revolutionary in function. The former, however, is more difficult for me to scrutinize, and would likely necessitate an entire formal analysis through a more intensive application of the framework.

I think the crux of friction here might be the idea of appropriation and recontextualization, as opposed to destructive transformation or transmutation; see axioms 207–211 in Debord (1967). I feel that the community aspect of some of these productions leads in the right direction, and a very powerful one at that, but the fundamental questions still present themselves. Can appropriation ever be détournement, if it only calls upon its ready-mades, but does not attempt to render the originals obsolete? Can a project that

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Now that we have reached the conclusion of the Recuperative Rhetorics tour, I hope to address any thoughts or questions that might yet linger, to some degree of satisfaction, and to send the work off into the wider discourse with a trajectory for future use, or at the very least a beacon of interest for those that choose to buoy it through their own efforts. As I have endeavored to address any questions that may have arisen during the course of this reading in situ, I will focus more on issues that arise to the level of grand interest, curiosity, or dilemma.

Discussion on Futures

Looking towards that future now, I would like to illustrate how Recuperative Rhetorics is prime to enter itself into conversation withing various fields, and perhaps catch on in interesting ways, using one particular field as a case study, inspired by the third example in chapter 4. Performance theory has caught my attention in relation to Recuperative Rhetorics, especially ideas surrounding decolonial appropriations of hegemonic ready-mades. This is in no small part thanks to members of my department being scholars at the forefront of Borderlands Shakespeare, holding a conference for the discipline at our institution, and proximity exposure is never to be underestimated when it comes to inspiration. Within that scholarship, there is a great deal of writing concerning appropriation and adaptation of Shakespeare, especially with regards to de-

Baldwin and Jackson[1]. This "double-voicing" (Crichlow, 2017) that Peck performs here is critical, both to the film and to this analysis, "It is the voiceover that, with its own "body," takes the fragmented image of Baldwin and gives it flesh. Such flesh is, of course, filmic; yet, not only does this not detract from its impact on the film's argument, but it is its force." (Rascaroli, 2020). Peck includes Baldwin, and Baldwin's voice, but also includes the additional voice, a ventriloquism of sorts, on top of Baldwin. It is of note that the voice chosen is that of Sam Jackson, who is, in the conceptualization of a cinema-going audience familiar with his work, and thus his voice, exemplarily masculine.

Analysis (With a Focus on What is Left Out)[2]

The thing that is most left out of Peck's telling of Baldwin's story is that of Baldwin's entirety of self, specifically his queer identity. Baldwin was an openly gay man, the first major published openly gay Black writer (Greene, 2019), who spoke very eloquently, sometimes in a veiled fashion and other times very directly about his own sexuality, and fervently about the sexuality inherent in the racist subconscious, whether that be of the individual or of the country as a whole. And yet Peck chooses to ignore this intrinsic aspect of Baldwin, one that Baldwin himself found inextricable from the concept of race, in favor of focusing near exclusively on race through Baldwin; a decision that borders on ironic tragedy.

[1] As opposed to the previous example, these observations and analysis/collection of the ready-mades are more my own than exclusively the result of a great deal of scholarly texts on the film, due mostly to it being far newer than a 19th century speech.

[2] I focus more on what is left out of the ready-mades here than in the previous example, mainly because it has greater weight to my arguments for this analysis. However, it should be noted that what is "left out" of the ready-mades can be analyzed as a key aspect of how an author is attempting to alter the epistemological understanding of said ready-mades; see chapter 3 for more detail on this concept.

In a similar way, the images of modern Black Americans shown near the end of the film, meant to juxtapose against images of violence as well as archival photos of Black Americans, are all rather well put together and visually middle class. This comes along with Baldwin's question of, "What is your role in this country?" (Greene, 2019). This choice of specific imagery, specifically the type of people the archival footage shows, which ranges across a great spectrum of experience, versus the rather neoliberal idyllic people of the film's present, all paired together with Baldwin's question, well, it certainly asks a question. The answer it gives is unfortunately built upon lack.

Baldwin, in his own words, speaks a great deal about the ties between the ideas of race and sexuality, especially in his non-fiction works like *No Name in the Street* (1972). Peck has, in many ways, created a filmic body for Baldwin, conjuring his image, his voice, his writings, simultaneously drawing attention to and eschewing the immediate disbelief at his absence (Rascaroli, 2020). However, in so doing, Peck's omission of such a huge aspect of Baldwin's identity is called into question, "Baldwin's lending of his body to the phantasmatic racial projection of the 'Nigger' figure cannot be separated from the homophobic projection of the 'faggot.'" (Rascaroli, 2020). The only time that this identity is acknowledged is through an on-screen presentation of text, notably without voice-over, of excerpts from an FBI report of Baldwin indicating he "may be a homosexual". The significance of presenting a singular aspect about a person, who has "voiced" the entire film up to that point, and will for the rest of the film after, and having that presentation be non-narrated text of an FBI report, rhetorically implies that it is slander and untrue. I do not know if this was Peck's intention, but it is the result, as an audience can only receive the film they are given, to paraphrase Baldwin himself.

example. There are times where, as in the first example, the determination of whether the text is détournement or recuperation is almost self-evident, but there are still knowledges to be examined and discussed, as well as further discourse inspired, which is why I chose to present that analysis first. For cases like the second and third examples, where the determination of where the text lies on the rhetorical cycle is not as clear, the analysis, and thus categorization, can be warranted enough, as it imparts a great deal of rhetorical understanding, both of the text itself and of how it interacts with the surrounding spheres.

At this juncture, readers have likely begun to consider the ways in which they might use and benefit from Recuperative Rhetorics. Simultaneously, they have probably already begun to examine possible flaws and shortcomings present in the framework as it stands, and how it may be used, or rather not be able to be used, in ways that warrant its deployment. In the next and final chapter, I plan on discussing these limitations, how they might be addressed, and the possible futures for the framework.

and transformed within the rhetorical understanding of the audience. It is difficult to imagine how a text as complicated and, well, intertextual as *The Hungry Woman* might fall neatly into the category of détournement or recuperation at all. I believe the Moraga's Queer Aztlán very well might be a work of détournement, and so *The Hungry Woman* being a manifestation of that text, or a continuation of the dialogue that text began, is just that, a continuation, and not an inflection.

The Hungry Woman: A Mexican Medea is complicated. It is complicated in its presentation, in its objectivity, and in its ability to be analyzed under the Recuperative Rhetorics framework. However, this complexity has proven itself to be generative and beneficial, both to myself and to the framework as a whole. It required effort and novel avenues of approach, and through these efforts new arteries of understanding have shown themselves within the musculature of Recuperative Rhetorics. Recuperative Rhetorics can in fact be used in Performance Studies, especially in the context of examining appropriations, how they function, and the rhetorical impacts they leave on the greater spheres of cultural consciousness and engagement.

Conclusion

Hopefully, these demonstrations of the framework in use have provided clarity and insight into how Recuperative Rhetorics functions on a generic level, and how it can be applied across different mediums and towards different sorts of outcome. While these examples were focused on the determination of whether the texts were a détournement or recuperation (or neither), per the standard steps laid out in chapter 3, I believe they contain enough nuance between them to showcase how, should one desire, the framework can be used by those researchers that may want to go beyond that initial determination, as briefly discussed in the first

Conclusions

Through the Recuperative Rhetorics analysis performed, I have come to the result that *I Am Not Your Negro* is an unfortunate work of recuperation; meaning that it is a work that takes revolutionary ready-mades and co-opts them back into the spectacle, hiding that which is threatening, and inculcating passivity where there should be radicalization. Peck has left out too much, too much of what makes Baldwin important, too much of what makes his work powerful, too much of what Baldwin himself felt were inseparable parts of himself and of the struggle Peck is illuminating in his film (Corber, 2017). Peck is tying Baldwin to the present, specifically to the violence and brutality of the state, of media, and of culture against Black bodies and Black identity.

These are true now as they were then, and Baldwin's writings resonate so clearly because of this fact; Peck knows this, he recognizes this intimately and clearly, it is why he made the film. But what Baldwin also knew and spoke about is that these are problems stemming from ideas of supremacy, hatred, and fear. In America, that means white supremacy and fascistic masculinity (Corber, 2017), which are racist, but also sexist (Baldwin, 1963) and homophobic (Baldwin, 1972). They hate all that is the other, and to address them only on one front is to doom oneself to failure.

The film is not totally ineffective, but I feel that, because of what it lacks, it may prove far too soothing rather than inflaming. A work can demonstrate the need for action, but its presentation, and often times this means what voices are present and which are left out, can work to pacify, rather than radicalize, an audience towards said action. I believe Scott (2021) emphasizes this idea poignantly, "If Peck… had taken on the work of exploring sexuality and gender… deciding that it wasn't too much but was instead necessary to the project of understanding the very masculinity Baldwin wrote about in *Remember This House* – the depth of the film's honesty and power would have been greater."

To accept one's past – one's history – is not the same thing as drowning in it; it is learning how to use it. An invented past can never be used; it cracks and crumbles under the pressures of life like clay in a season of drought. – James Baldwin

Analysis of the play *The Hungry Woman: A Mexican Medea* (2001) by Cherríe Moraga

Introduction

The play is an adaptation/appropriation of Medea (Euripides, 2019), set in a post-apocalyptic, or more accurately a post-revolutionary ethnically "balkanized" south-western United States. It follows Medea, her lesbian lover Luna, her son Chac-Mool, her estranged husband and father to Chac-Mool Jasón, and her grandmother Mama Sal. It is concerned with, and thus deploys, a great number of Chicana, Aztec, and Mexican imagery, theory, myth, and storytelling forms, all in an effort to reify in performance Moraga's conceptualization of "Queer Aztlán" (Arrizón, 2000; Eschen, 2006; Jacobs, 2008; Ybarra, 2008; Padilla, 2014; Ersöz Koç, 2018; Delikonstantinidou, 2019; Ramay, 2020; Bollig 2021; Foster, 2021).

Identification of the Ready-Mades[3]

Within the play, Moraga provides us with a great deal of the ready-made objects by name. There is of course Medea of Euripides' antiquity play. Then there are the gods (and other mythical

[3] Please note that the determinations, along with identifications of the ready-mades, were made by comparing, contrasting, and synthesizing a great many sources and their observations. In order to make this example remotely readable, I will cite them at once here for general concepts, and specifically note when they are quoted or paraphrased (Arrizón, 2000; Eschen, 2006; Jacobs, 2008; Ybarra, 2008; Padilla, 2014; Ersöz Koç, 2018; Delikonstantinidou, 2019; Ramay, 2020; Bollig 2021; Foster, 2021).

allows for a fast reading and brief analysis. Per Gillen (2019), "Inocencio's short play … draws on *Hamlet* to critique hegemonic cultural, academic, and medical institutions", which makes the play a pretty easy candidate for a revolutionary text, and arguably a détournement, especially with regards to the correlation between Ofelia of *Hamlet* with flowers, and the association of gay men with pansies being mixed up into a new and powerful third message via the rhetorics of performance (this third-ness is another aspect of Recuperative Rhetorics that I feel like could be greatly enhanced and expanded on through interaction with Borderlands texts). However, I'd like to focus on the extremely recuperative language wielded by one of the characters in the play, that of Ofélio's rapist and instructor. Again, from Gillen (2019), "He wields the postmodern discourses of the academy, as well as his white privilege and limited institutional authority, against Ofélio, sexually assaulting him in the name of finding 'a place where simple sex acts are revolutionary'" (p. 96). This is a fine encapsulation of how rhetorics can be inflected, used by actors of opposite spheres of power for their own ends. The instructor is recuperating the ideas of queer liberation and revolution in order to assert hegemonic power and control, twisting revolutionary ideas into tools of hierarchy, thus, in the moment of the play at least, transforming those same ideas into weapons against their previous rhetorical intent. With this in mind, Moraga's work on Queer Aztlán has led me to the operating conclusion that Aztlán, as proposed by El Movimiento, was a recuperative rhetoric, from the perspective of the spheres Moraga exists in and is speaking to, which has been a guiding force in my analytical process.

Moraga's play is neither a recuperation nor a détournement, it is a continued work of revolutionary thinking and exploration; one that I and many others find interesting and entertaining. It is not any sort of mark of character for a text to not meet these criteria, it only means that the ready-mades, the mythoplays, the infracontexts that the text in comprised of and evokes are not being mutated

ings of the play, such as Foster's (2021). Due to this ambiguity in the nature of the reception to the play and its themes, while I personally feel that the play is revolutionary in intent and scope, a statement it seems is universally held, I do not think the play is an inflective text under the framework, and can be seen as a continuation of Moraga's other revolutionary work, particularly that of Queer Aztlán, but neither as a détournement nor a recuperation.

Considerations[4]

Moraga, and other playwrights of appropriated texts, are often addressing and redressing systems of power and control that are hegemonic to them, such as the hegemony of *carnalismo* within El Movimiento, the relegation and dismissal of women and queers within the male-dominated Chicano movement of the civil rights era that Moraga seeks to admonish and correct. This is revolutionary, because Moraga is attacking hegemonic forces, even if those same hegemonic forces are ostensibly also fighting against "greater" hegemons. In this way, I believe it is possible to argue that Aztlán, as a concept, may be one of recuperation, and so Queer Aztlán, as presented by Moraga, is closer to a true détournement; even when both concepts are revolutionary in scope and ideals. However, that conclusion, should it actually exist, would require a great deal more research and a reflux analysis conducted.

Conclusions

Performing what might be an overly complex but illustrative maneuver, I'd like to illustrate what a possible recuperation of some of the ideas within Queer Aztlán might look like by examining another appropriation play, that of Josh Inocéncio's *Ofélio*. There's a lot going on in the short performance, which

[4] See the section on Nuance in chapter 3.

figures) of the Aztec pantheon, namely: the goddess of creation/destruction, Coatlicue; the rebel-daughter goddess of the moon Coyolxauhqui; the god of the sun and war, Huitzilopochtli; Aztec warrior mother spirits who died during childbirth, known as Cihuateteo (who serve as the play's chorus); the Aztec creation myth of The Hungry Woman; and of the Chac-Mool, a carved figure of a man with a bowl on his belly that is meant to represent a figure who can ferry the offerings of Aztec rituals to the gods they are meant for, after which the character of Medea name's her son after. Interestingly, according to Ybarra (2008):

Moraga frames the character Chac-Mool as a fallen warrior in a more muscular way than do academic treatments of the phenomenon… [her] decision to make Chac-Mool a singular hero recalls a different monumental personage instead, although he is never mentioned in the text: Cuauhtémoc, whose torture stands at the center of Mexican history and much of its drama.

This leads into other categories of ready-mades present in the text, which are more contemporaneous than those of antiquity. Of note, Moraga calls upon the myth of La Llorona, the historical figure of La Malinche (Malintzin Tenepal), and of several theories present in her own, and other Chicanx Feminists', work which speaks back towards what were the dominant and domineering ideas present in the earlier Chicano movement, such as Aztlán, and then Moraga's Queer Aztlán, as well as more broad ideas of patriarchy, heteronormativity, nationhood, and others.

To perform an exhaustive collection of the ready-mades is a project in and of itself, and I fully acknowledge that I am forced to leave a large number of them out of this counting, both consciously and from ignorance. But while they are not all listed here, know that considerations of actors, staging, various versions of the play and their performances, certain tropes unique to non-anglo storytelling, and others were analyzed, and do factor into the proceeding process.

Categorizing the Ready-Mades

The Hungry Woman is interesting from a Recuperative Rhetorics perspective as it contains ready-mades that are both revolutionary and hegemonic, thus requiring a reflux analysis (where one performs the analytical process on smaller portions of a text, or a simpler analysis that is repeated several times at increasing levels of complexity, or a synthesis of both or other cyclical analytical methods). Often, works that meet the inflective criteria of recuperation or détournement will skew one way or the other in their ready-mades, as shifting the spheres in which the ready-mades operate and are understood within is what defines rhetorical inflection under the framework. Moraga's play, however, contains a great deal of ready-mades that can be classified into either camp, and more vexing besides, a great number of them that are complicated, or problematized at their core.

These ready-mades are those like the stories of La Malinche and La Llorona, Chicanx concepts, concepts of nation, Aztlán, and even the character of Medea, who has been inflected enough times over millennia that to survey what sphere she falls under might be impossible, even if one were to have perfect telepathic understanding of the current and past human population. And all of that doesn't even get into the perplexing issue of how one is meant to consider all of the various versions of *The Hungry Woman*. In this instance, I will be divesting from that problem almost entirely, outside of the reception by various authors of other versions.

The above struggles having been traversed, I have developed some considerations both for the text and the framework that I will speak about in greater depth in a latter section. In brief, to better understand what Moraga was intending to do with the ready-mades she used, I shifted perspective as best I could to hers. This allowed me to better understand and categorize where each ready-made, for her and her purposes, sat within the spheres of hegemony and revolution.

Having engaged with the above steps, I came to the conclusion that Moraga uses ready-mades that are both hegemonic and revolutionary, but the hegemonic ready-mades are the ones most actively engaged with rhetorically.

Analysis

Revolution or Anti-Revolution?

This determination was equally, if not more difficult to determine than the ready-mades themselves. When drawing forth this conclusion from texts, the main thing to keep in mind is from where does power come and to where is it sent within a text. In this case, the power being invoked, from where it comes, are ready-mades of hegemony: ancient plays, powerful mythology, the Aztlán of the dominant voices in El Movimiento, the institution, the state, the nation, etc. The power in the play is in turn challenged by more revolutionary ready-mades and rhetorical moves: Queer Aztlán, lesbianism, fractured narrative construction, feminism, and others. Indeed, I feel it is not a terribly bold statement to see *The Hungry Woman* as a physical representation of Moraga's Queer Aztlán, or perhaps more accurately, a manifested engagement with the ideas that make Queer Aztlán necessary. However, it is not entirely clear or concise amongst my reading if this presentation was successful.

There are some that find hope in the text, a spark that motivates revolutionary thinking and drive, while others find the text to be somewhat pessimistic or suffer from some inherent sort of fatalism. I'm unsure if this is from various considerations of so many versions of the text, or the difficulty in translating a non-anglo storytelling form and its associated tropes for anglo audiences (and using anglo adopted source material, Euripides being mediterranean notwithstanding) as argued to various degrees by Ybarra (2008), Arrizón (2000), Jacobs (2008), and others, or even possible misread-