

Re-Writing “Pleasure and Necessity”:
The Female Reader of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| Abstract..... | iii |
| Acknowledgements..... | iv |
| Introduction: The Book, the Female Reader, and Re-writing..... | 1 |
| Part One: The Foundation | |
| The Book: the <i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i> | 7 |
| Chapter 1: Reading a <i>Bildungsroman</i> | 8 |
| Chapter 2: “Pleasure and Necessity”, Sex and Death..... | 31 |
| Part Two: The Problem | |
| The Female Reader Alienated..... | 55 |
| Chapter 3: Consciousness Is a Man in Hegel’s System..... | 56 |
| Chapter 4: Male Pleasure and Alienating the Female Reader..... | 71 |
| Part Three: The Solution | |
| Re-Writing “Pleasure and Necessity”..... | 88 |
| Chapter 5: So What of Antigone?..... | 89 |
| Chapter 6: The Underlying Logic of “Pleasure and Necessity”..... | 105 |
| Chapter 7: Re-writing “Pleasure and Necessity” as "Impulse and Ought"..... | 126 |
| Conclusion: Bringing the Female Reader Out of the Margins..... | 136 |
| Bibliography..... | 139 |

Abstract

This thesis demonstrates that “Pleasure and Necessity”, a section of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, both *should* and *can* be re-written, bringing the female reader out of the margins and into the texts of Hegel’s Absolute system. First, I demonstrate that the *Phenomenology* is a *Bildungsroman* that is both important for the reader’s philosophical education and Hegelian science itself. I provide an interpretation of “Pleasure and Necessity”, demonstrate that this section alienates the female reader, and discuss why Antigone is not a solution to this problem. Rather, I conclude that this stage should be re-written. Furthermore, I argue that “Pleasure and Necessity” *can* be re-written because the *Phenomenology* already contains the outline of its own re-writing insofar as it corresponds to the Logic. Finally, I re-write “Pleasure and Necessity” as “Impulse and Ought”, using new figures to re-stage the logical operation that occurs in the original text.

Cette thèse démontre que le chapitre “Plaisir et Nécessité” dans la *Phénoménologie de l’Esprit* de Hegel, *doit* et *peut* être réécrit, faisant resurgir la lectrice hors des marges et dans le corps du texte du système hégélien Absolu. Premièrement, je démontre que la *Phénoménologie* est un *Bildungsroman*, important à la fois pour l’éducation philosophique des lecteurs et la science hégélienne. J’apporte une interprétation de la section “Plaisir et Nécessité”, je démontre que cette section force l’aliénation de la lectrice et j’explique qu’Antigone n’est pas une solution à ce problème. Je conclus qu’il doit être réécrit. De plus, je maintiens que “Plaisir et Nécessité” *peut* être réécrit car la *Phénoménologie* contient déjà le squelette de sa propre rédaction antérieure dans la mesure qu’il correspond à la Logique. Finalement, je réécris “Plaisir et Nécessité” en tant que “Pulsion et Devoir”, (re)créant de nouvelles figures pour remettre en scène l’opération logique du texte original.

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Introduction: The Book, the Female Reader, and Re-writing

In this thesis, I argue that a section of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, "Pleasure and Necessity", both should and can be re-written when it alienates the female reader. The *Phenomenology* is a *Bildungsroman* that purports to be, "the path offered to everyone and equally available for all,"¹ towards Hegelian science and is, "the rightful demand of a consciousness which is approaching the status of science."² Thus, I argue that "Pleasure and Necessity" *should* be re-written to better accomplish this fundamental purpose of the *Phenomenology*. Furthermore, I argue that "Pleasure and Necessity" *can* be re-written because, since stages of the *Phenomenology* correspond to the Logic, it is possible to plan out a re-written section of "Pleasure and Necessity", accessible to female readers, by using new figures to re-stage the logical operation that occurs in the original text.

It may seem trite to state that this thesis approaches Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* from the perspective of a female reader. I am, after all, a female reader who reads all texts from such a perspective. However, a feminist reading of the *Phenomenology* is a radical thing—it is a new, "doubled" way of looking at the text. Seyla Benhabib explains:

Once the woman's question is raised, once we ask how a thinker conceptualizes the distinction between male and female, we experience a *Gestalt* shift: We begin to see the great thinkers of the past with a new eye... The vision of feminist theory is a 'doubled' one: one eye sees what the tradition has trained her to see, the other searches for what the tradition has told her is not even worth looking for.³

¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Terry Pinkard (self-published, 2013), §13, 11.

² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §13, 11.

³ Seyla Benhabib, "On Hegel, Women, and Irony," in *Feminist Interpretations of G.W.F. Hegel*, edited by Patricia Jagentowicz Mills (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 26.

That is, a feminist reading of the *Phenomenology* combines orthodox philosophical investigations with a new, female-focused, perspective. This is my approach here. This thesis weighs in on fundamental questions in Hegelian scholarship such as, ‘What is the purpose of the *Phenomenology*?’ and ‘How are stages in the *Phenomenology* to be interpreted?’, but also asks new questions, such as, ‘What does it mean to be a female reader of the *Phenomenology*?’ and ‘Can the *Phenomenology* be re-written?’ As such, the process of re-writing is the inscribing of this “doubled” way of looking at the text.

Three elements characterize the relationship between a female reader and Hegel’s *Phenomenology*: the status of reading in Hegel’s system, i.e. what it means to be a reader of Hegel and the importance for science of Hegel’s texts being read; the alienation of the female reader in a subsection of the *Phenomenology*, “Pleasure and Necessity”; and, the open-endedness of Hegel’s system in which its readers re-interpret and re-write Hegel’s works to incorporate new content. Thus, this thesis is divided into three parts: the book, the female reader, and re-writing.

The first part explores the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the book. In “Chapter 1: Reading a *Bildungsroman*”, I demonstrate the project of the *Phenomenology* and the role that reading plays in accomplishing that project. I argue that the *Phenomenology* is intimately linked to Hegelian science by demonstrating that the *Phenomenology* is a *Bildungsroman* that, all at once, educates its reader in Hegelian science, is the epistemological justification of science, facilitates the Absolute’s own self-knowing, and is the first part of science. Moreover, foreshadowing the alienation of the female reader, I emphasize the significance of speculative reading in Hegelian philosophy by

demonstrating both the significance for science of the *Phenomenology* being read and what it means to be a speculative reader of the *Phenomenology*.

In “Chapter 2: ‘Pleasure and Necessity’, Sex and Death”, I explain the events of “Pleasure and Necessity” and provide a foundation for further discussion of this section of the *Phenomenology* in the rest of the thesis. Here, I provide a close reading of “Pleasure and Necessity” inspired by Jeffrey Reid’s “Music and Monosyllables”, demonstrating that pleasure is consciousness’ attempt to actualize his individuality through sexual intercourse and necessity is the resulting abstract universality that consciousness experiences as death. Throughout this chapter, I compare and contrast this interpretation of “Pleasure and Necessity” with those of other Hegel scholars.

The second part of the thesis describes how the female reader becomes alienated from the *Phenomenology* in “Pleasure and Necessity”. In “Chapter 3: Consciousness Is a Man in Hegel’s System”, I argue that consciousness is a male person for Hegel. To do so, I first argue that, contrary to convention in Hegelian scholarship, consciousness is a gendered person and should be referred to as either “he” or “she”—not “it.” I then argue that, for Hegel, consciousness is a man based on evidence found in the *Philosophy of Right* and the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, specifically: Hegel’s discussion of female education and Hegel’s critique of Friedrich Schlegel in the *Philosophy of Right*; and Hegel’s reference to Faust and Gretchen’s sexual relationship and Hegel’s description of the husband-wife relationship in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

In “Chapter 4: Male Pleasure and Alienating the Female Reader”, I demonstrate that “Pleasure and Necessity” alienates the female reader and conclude that this stage should therefore be re-written. By ‘alienation’ I mean no more or less than the dictionary

definition, that is, “the state or experience of being isolated from a group or an activity to which one should belong or in which one should be involved.”⁴ I discuss three forms of this alienation: first, that, in “Pleasure and Necessity”, consciousness’ antagonist is a woman for the first time; second, that conclusions drawn from the previous chapter place the female reader in a paradoxical relationship to the text; and third, that men and women do experience sex differently, albeit not for the reasons that Hegel describes. Finally, I argue that, for the alienation of the female reader to be resolved, a primary text must be created—or (re)created—through a process of re-writing—a process which is not foreign to the *Phenomenology* both because it is not a fixed and dead text and because it already contains the outline of its own re-writing.

The third part of the thesis proposes re-writing “Pleasure and Necessity” as the solution to the alienation of the female reader. In “Chapter 5: So What of Antigone?”, I describe how various scholars examine the role that Antigone plays in “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman”, namely the possibility that Antigone represents a feminist heroine in an otherwise androcentric *Phenomenology*. However, I argue that Antigone is not a solution to the problem of the alienation experienced by the female reader of the *Phenomenology* in “Pleasure and Necessity”. I first discuss Antigone as a figure of the brother-sister relationship in “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman”. I then review interpretations of Hegel’s reference to *Antigone* that represent some of that diverse scholarship. Finally, I demonstrate why Antigone is not a solution to the problem

⁴ Archie Hobson, *The Oxford Dictionary of Difficult Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 16.

I am presenting: the alienation of the female reader and the open-endedness of Hegel's system for its readers.

In "Chapter 6: The Underlying Logic of 'Pleasure and Necessity' ", I demonstrate how the alienation of the female reader can be resolved by isolating the *Phenomenology's* underlying logic and using it to re-write "Pleasure and Necessity". I first discuss Hegel's statement that there is a one-to-one correspondence between the stages of the *Phenomenology* and the stages of the Logic. Because Hegel does not explicitly state which early version of the Logic he means, I then compare two early versions of the Logic, the *Jena System* (1804/05) and the "Philosophical Encyclopedia for the Higher Classes (1808/09)", to demonstrate that the latter most accurately presents the underlying logic of the *Phenomenology*. I then present the correspondence between "Pleasure and Necessity" and §80 of "The Should or the Good" in the 1808 ff. Logic, further contextualizing this underlying logic with reference to the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopedia Logic*. Finally, I isolate the underlying logic of "Pleasure and Necessity" and outline a basic plot of this section that can be used to re-stage it with new figures that do not alienate the female readers of the *Phenomenology*.

In "Chapter 7: Re-writing 'Pleasure and Necessity' as 'Impulse and Ought' ", I perform the re-writing of "Pleasure and Necessity", (re)creating a text that is both faithful to the underlying logic of "Pleasure and Necessity" and a stage in which all readers can sink. Finally, I reflect on this re-writing, discussing how "Impulse and Ought" could resolve the alienation of the female reader in "Pleasure and Necessity".

Reviewing feminist interpretations of Hegel, Antoinette M. Stafford writes that women are, "the ghost destined forever to haunt the margins of Hegel's supposedly

complete speculative system.”⁵ Thus, this thesis seeks to exorcise the ghost of the female reader in a characteristically Hegelian way: by making her the content of the work of Hegelian philosophy itself.

⁵ Antoinette M. Stafford, “The Feminist Critique of Hegel On Woman and the Family,” in *Animus*, 2 (1997): 71.

Part One: The Foundation

The Book: the *Phenomenology of Spirit*

Chapter 1: Reading a *Bildungsroman*

In this chapter, I argue that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a *Bildungsroman* that not only tasks itself with the education (*Bildung*) of its reader into Hegelian science, but also tasks itself with the epistemic and metaphysical justification of this science while at the same time being itself science. First, I unpack this paradoxical statement by explaining passages in the *Phenomenology*, the *Science of Logic*, and the *Encyclopedia Logic* where Hegel describes the pedagogical, epistemological, and metaphysical tasks of the *Phenomenology* along with its logical structure. By understanding how the *Phenomenology* operates as both the introduction to and the first appearance of Hegelian science, I demonstrate the importance of the *Phenomenology* for Hegelian science and scholarship. Next, I emphasize what it means to read this *Bildungsroman* speculatively through an investigation of what it means to sink into the speculative proposition with an equal emphasis on how reading transforms the text and how it transforms us. With this, I demonstrate the significance, for science, of the *Phenomenology* being read and what it means to be a reader of the *Phenomenology*.

At first glance, the *Phenomenology* has an ambiguous relationship with Hegelian science. Some scholars doubt the link between *Phenomenology* and Hegelian science; emphasizing the ‘fourth-wheel’ relationship the *Phenomenology* has with the tripartite—logic, nature, spirit—structure of the *Encyclopedia*.⁶ In contrast, I argue that the

⁶ For examples of this argument, see: Robert B. Pippin, “You Can’t Get There from Here: Transition problems in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 52-87. Similarly, Jon Stewart summarizes the ‘fourth wheel’ arguments of Rudolf Haym (*Hegel und seine Zeit*), T. Haering (“Die Entstehungsgeschichte der Phänomenologie des Geistes”), Otto Pöggeler (“Die Komposition der *Phänomenologie des Geistes*”), Walter Kaufmann (*Hegel: A Reinterpretation*), along with his own arguments in Jon Stewart, “Hegel’s *Phenomenology* as a Systematic Fragment,” in *The Cambridge*

Phenomenology is intimately connected to Hegelian science as its systematic introduction and the first appearance of spirit. In fact, Hegel anticipates arguments that diminish the link between the *Phenomenology* and science in the “Preface”, writing:

Now because the system of spirit’s experience embraces only the *appearance* of spirit, it seems to be the case that the advance from this system to the science of the *true* in the *shape* of the *true* is merely negative, and one might wish to be spared the negative (as the *false*) and demand instead to be taken without further ado straight to the truth. Why bother with the false at all?⁷

That is, why bother with the *Phenomenology* as the overcoming of consciousness’ mistaken forms of knowing? Why not begin straight away with the *Encyclopedia*? Hegel calls this position the “*dogmatism* of the way of thinking, in both the knowledge of philosophy and the study of it.”⁸ Hegelian science, in contrast, is alive in its whole movement, the false *and* the true. Hegel writes that science is:

... the *actual*, what is self-positing, what is alive within itself... This movement equally includes within itself the negative, or what would be called ‘the false’ if it were to be taken as something from which one might abstract. It is what disappears and which is to an even great degree to be taken as essential, but not as having the determination of something fixed, something cut off from the truth, which along the way is to be set aside (who knows where?) as something that lies outside of the truth, just as the truth also cannot be thought of as what is lifelessly positive and completely at rest.⁹

That is, the *Phenomenology*, as the movement of “the false” is an essential moment of Hegelian science that cannot be cut away. Severing the link between the *Phenomenology* and Hegelian science in order to remove “the false” from “the true” renders Hegelian science un-Absolute, closed, and lifeless.

Companion to Hegel and Nineteenth-Century Philosophy, ed. by Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 74-93.

⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §38, 32-3.

⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §40, 34.

⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §47, 40.

Yet, how can the *Phenomenology* both introduce and be a part of Hegelian science? This ambiguity is exemplified by Hegel when, having sent a copy of the *Phenomenology* to Schelling, he writes that:

I am curious as to what you will say to the idea of this first part, which really is the introduction—for I have not yet got beyond the introducing right into the heart of the matter.¹⁰

That is, Hegel tells Schelling that the manuscript of the *Phenomenology* sent to him is the “first part” of science, meaning that the *Phenomenology* is itself science. Yet, he goes on to say that the *Phenomenology* is really an introduction and not “the heart of the matter,” which seems to downgrade the *Phenomenology*’s status, especially when we consider the paradox suggested by the externality of an introduction to something that is supposed to be Absolute. To overcome this tension, I propose Hans Friedrich Fulda’s distinction between a propaedeutic and a systematic introduction. The *Phenomenology*, Fulda argues, is not a propaedeutic: a theoretical antechamber that exists outside of science to mentally prepare its reader to enter into the domain of philosophy proper. Instead, the *Phenomenology* is a systematic introduction to philosophy, that is, a text that is educational insofar as it demonstrates the truth and the necessity of science through the use of science’s own method.¹¹

The *Phenomenology*’s task, broadly speaking, is to move philosophy and philosophers nearer to science as, to use Fulda’s term, a systematic introduction to the *Encyclopedia*. This general task has been divided by scholars into pedagogical,

¹⁰ G.W.F. Hegel, *The Letters*, trans Clark Butler and Christiane Seiler (Indiana, USA: Indiana University Press, 1985), 80.

¹¹ Hans Friedrich Fulda, “Das Problem einer Einleitung in Hegels Wissenschaft der Logik,” in *Philosophische Abhandlungen* 27 (1975): 79-84.

epistemological, and metaphysical tasks in order to account for the complex relationship that the *Phenomenology* has with science. The pedagogical category includes the educational development—in the sense of *Bildung*—provided by the *Phenomenology* from the perspective of its reader. The epistemological category includes the role that the *Phenomenology* plays in justifying and demonstrating the truth and necessity of Hegelian science. The metaphysical category refers to the role that the *Phenomenology* plays in the Absolute's own self-knowing and the coming into existence of science itself.¹² To these three categories, I add a fourth, namely the way in which the *Phenomenology* is the “first part” of science and thus is science itself.

These four aspects of the *Phenomenology*'s relationship to Hegelian science, however, cannot be separated from each other. Any separation performed by this paper is meant to provide a perspective from which to understand the *Phenomenology*'s project, not a commitment to the distinctness of these aspects. Thus, this examination of the *Phenomenology* as a special kind of *Bildungsroman* seeks to reconcile two seemingly opposed views concerning the role of the *Phenomenology*. On one hand, commentators such as Michael Forster suggest that, “The *Phenomenology* in fact serves a multiplicity of distinct introductory tasks,”¹³ namely eleven distinct subtasks grouped under three overarching tasks. On the other hand, commentators such as Merold Westphal suggest that, “we can meaningfully speak of *the* task of the *Phenomenology*; that there is a single

¹² Metaphysical, here, does not mean something “behind” or “beyond,” which would be antithetical to an Absolute system. Rather, the term metaphysical denotes the elements of Hegel's philosophy that cannot be encompassed by a merely anthropocentric reading, namely the Absolute, world spirit, and the reality of a systematic science.

¹³ Michael N. Forster, *Hegel's Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit* (Chicago, USA: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 13.

coherent argument running through its entirety”¹⁴ yet speaking of “the task”, I would argue, amounts to emphasizing one task over the others, which Westphal does when she argues that the task of the *Phenomenology* is “declaring [Hegel’s] independence from the whole epistemological project as modern philosophy inherited it from Descartes.”¹⁵

In what follows, I examine passages from the *Phenomenology*, the *Science of Logic*, and the *Encyclopedia Logic* that discuss the *Phenomenology*’s project with respect to pedagogical, epistemological, and metaphysical tasks plus its status as the “first part” of science in order to demonstrate the overlapping importance of these four aspects. First, I examine passages where Hegel connects and overlaps these four aspects in the *Encyclopedia Logic*, the *Phenomenology*, and the *Science of Logic* to present them in their interconnected and overlapping sense. Then, I examine passages where Hegel treats each aspect independently to present a more in depth account of the relationship between the *Phenomenology* and Hegelian science and to demonstrate the importance for science of the *Phenomenology* being read.

Many quotes that reference the role of the *Phenomenology* combine and overlap concepts that have been separated into tasks by commentators. For example, in the “Preliminary Conception” of the *Encyclopedia Logic*, Hegel describes the *Phenomenology* with reference to its pedagogical role, its epistemological role, and its scientific procedure. He writes,

In my *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which was for this reason described, when it was published, as the first part of the system of science, the procedure adopted was to begin from the first and simplest appearance of spirit, from *immediate*

¹⁴ Merold Westphal, *History and Truth in Hegel’s Phenomenology* (Indiana, USA: Indiana University Press, 1998), 1.

¹⁵ Westphal, *History and Truth*, 2.

consciousness, and to develop its dialectic right up to the standpoint of philosophical science, the necessity of which is shown by progression.¹⁶

That is, Hegel describes the pedagogical task of the *Phenomenology* as its development towards the standpoint of science. Equally, Hegel describes the *Phenomenology* as the first part of science and a text that already contains the logical scientific procedure of the *Encyclopedia*. And this scientific procedure is bound up with the epistemological task because Hegel states that the *Phenomenology* demonstrates the necessity of this logic, meaning that no further demonstration is needed in this introduction to the *Encyclopedia Logic*.

Additionally, in the “Preface” to the *Phenomenology*, Hegel describes the pedagogical and metaphysical tasks of the *Phenomenology* in a way that portrays them as two sides of the same coin, not distinct tasks. He writes:

For its part, science requires that self-consciousness shall have elevated itself into this ether in order to be able to live with science and to live in science, and, for that matter, to be able to live at all. Conversely, the individual has the right to demand that science provide him at least with the ladder to reach this standpoint.¹⁷

That is, the *Phenomenology* equally mediates the self-knowledge of science and its reader. The text brings science and the individual together in an ether of knowledge, a reconciliation that, Hegel tells us, is equally required by science and the right of the reader.

Furthermore, in the *Science of Logic*, Hegel describes the *Phenomenology* in terms of its epistemological and pedagogical tasks in a way that unites them. He says,

¹⁶ G.W.F. Hegel, *The Encyclopedia Logic*, trans. T.F. Geraets, W.A. Suchting, and H.S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991), §25, 64.

¹⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §26, 22.

In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* I have presented consciousness as it progresses from the first immediate opposition of itself and the subject matter to absolute knowledge. This path traverses all the forms of the *relation of consciousness to the object* and its result is the *concept of science*. There is no need, therefore, to justify this concept here... It has already been justified in the other work, and would indeed not be capable of any other justification than is produced by consciousness as all its shapes dissolve into that concept as into their truth. –A discursive justification or explanation of the concept of science can yield at best a general notion of it and a historical acquaintance; but a definition of science—or more precisely of logic—has its *proof* only in the necessity of the manner it is produced by consciousness as just mentioned.¹⁸

That is, Hegel describes the epistemological task of the *Phenomenology* as the justification and proof of the concept of science, going as far as to say that nothing else would be capable of justifying science. And this is linked to the pedagogical task of the *Phenomenology* because Hegel believes that some other justification of science that does not traverse the path of the stages of consciousness would yield at best a general notion or acquaintance with the concept of science. In short, it would not be the contentful *Bildung* offered by the *Phenomenology*.

Thus, Hegel connects and overlaps these four aspects—pedagogical, epistemological, and metaphysical tasks along with the *Phenomenology*'s status as science—in passages found in the *Phenomenology*, the *Encyclopedia*, and the *Science of Logic*. Yet, there are also passages where Hegel describes a facet of the *Phenomenology*'s relation in isolation. In what follows, I discuss these passages in order to further illustrate the role that the *Phenomenology* plays in Hegelian science before I demonstrate the importance, for science, of the *Phenomenology* being read.

¹⁸ G.W.F. Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 21.33, 28.

First, Hegel describes the *Phenomenology* pedagogically as a *Bildungsroman*.¹⁹ In the “Introduction” to the *Phenomenology*, Hegel explains that it is a “*Bildung* of consciousness up to the standpoint of science.”²⁰ He describes it as the carrying out of the path towards science and contrasts this method of education with other introductions to philosophy, saying,

... this coming-to-be appears a bit differently from the way a set of instructions on how to take unscientific consciousness up to and into science would appear; it also appears somewhat differently from the way laying the foundations for science would appear...²¹

In other words, the *Phenomenology*, as the initiation of unscientific consciousness to Absolute knowing and the science of the *Encyclopedia*, does not provide the usual pedagogical experience. Instead, the coming-to-be of genuine knowledge requires that we “laboriously travel down a long path.”²² And, the path is the stages of consciousness in each subsection of the *Phenomenology* where we, the readers, follow the protagonist, consciousness, as he attempts to know his object, his antagonist, in increasingly mediated forms.²³ This *Bildung* towards Absolute knowing does not occur “like a shot from a pistol.”²⁴ Instead, the, “*length* of the path has to be endured” and “one must *linger* at every stage on the way.”²⁵ This is because, Hegel writes:

¹⁹ Ardis Collins describes the *Phenomenology* as historically conditioned pedagogy. See Ardis B. Collins, *Hegel's Phenomenology: The Dialectical Justification of Philosophy's First Principles* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 21-28.

²⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §78, 74.

²¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §27, 24.

²² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §27, 24.

²³ The word for object used by Hegel is *Gegenstand*, a compound of *gegen* (meaning ‘against’) and *stand*, which has the sense of something that stands against consciousness and is therefore well suited to be understood as an antagonist.

²⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §27, 24.

²⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §29, 25.

Both because the substance of the individual, the world spirit, has possessed the patience to pass through these forms over a long stretch of time and to take upon itself the prodigious labor of world history, and because it could not have reached consciousness about itself in any lesser way, the individual spirit itself cannot comprehend its own substance with anything less.²⁶

That is, because world spirit has reached the possibility of its own self-knowing by moving through these stages, the philosophical novice cannot expect anything less on her transformative journey.²⁷

Moreover, the *Phenomenology* is a *Bildungsroman* because Hegel maintains that this educational transformation occurs insofar as the text nurtures a potential for philosophical education that is already present in the reader. To understand Hegel's position, we can first compare it to a passage written by Schelling in 1802:

That [philosophy] is not something that can be taught is clear; all attempts to teach it are therefore quite useless in scientific philosophy and ways of leading to it... cannot be looked for in a strict science. Nor is it intelligible why philosophy is exactly bound to be especially considerate of incompetence, it is rather appropriate to cut off the approach to philosophy abruptly and to isolate it from common cognition in all directions in such a way that no path or pavement can lead from common cognition to philosophy. Here begins philosophy, and whoever is not already there or hesitates before this point, let him keep his distance or flee back.²⁸

That is, Schelling states that philosophy is not something that can be taught to students who are already incompetent; no path can connect the unphilosophical mind to philosophy. In contrast, Hegel writes in the "Preface" to the *Phenomenology* that,

Without this development, science has no general **intelligibility**, and it seems to be the esoteric possession of only a few individuals.... The intelligible form of

²⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §29, 25.

²⁷ Again, Hegel links the pedagogical task of the *Phenomenology* to the metaphysical task by overlapping the self-knowledge of world spirit and the self-knowledge of the individual reader.

²⁸ Schelling, *Schellings Werke*, I.4: 361-362 translated in Michael Forster, "Schelling and Skepticism" in *Interpreting Schelling: Critical Essays* ed. Lara Ostarić (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 33.

science is the path offered to everyone and equally available for all. To achieve rational knowledge through our own intellect is the rightful demand of a consciousness which is approaching the status of science.²⁹

That is, Hegelian science is not merely the possession of a select few; it is the generally intelligible path for everyone equally. It is the rightful demand of the student of philosophy that they should be taught. Moreover, a path for all from the unscientific into science is not only possible but necessary since, without it, science has no general intelligibility—one of the few bolded terms in the *Phenomenology* and, thus, significant.

Second, Hegel describes the *Phenomenology* epistemologically as the presupposition of science that both justifies science and demonstrates its necessity. In the “Introduction” to the *Science of Logic*, Hegel discusses the relationship between the end of the *Phenomenology*, Absolute Knowing, and the beginning of science. He writes,

The concept of pure science and its deduction is therefore presupposed in the present work in so far as the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is nothing other than that deduction. Absolute knowledge is the *truth* of all the modes of consciousness because, as the course of the *Phenomenology* brought out, it is only in absolute knowledge that the separation of the *subject matter* from the *certainty of itself* is completely resolved: truth has become equal to certainty and this certainty to truth. Pure science thus presupposes the liberation from the opposition of consciousness.³⁰

That is, the concept of science presupposes its demonstration and justification by the *Phenomenology*. Science presupposes the work that has been done to reconcile the subjectivity and objectivity, the opposition characterized by consciousness that is increasingly mediated at each stage of the *Phenomenology*.

Similarly, in “With What Must The Beginning of Science Be Made?” in the *Science of Logic*, Hegel writes:

²⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §13, 11-2.

³⁰ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 21.33, 29.

A beginning is *logical* in that it is to be made in the element of a free, self-contained thought, *in pure knowledge*; it is thereby *mediated*, for pure knowledge is the ultimate and absolute truth of *consciousness*. We said in the Introduction that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the science of consciousness, its exposition; that consciousness has the *concept* of science, that is, pure knowledge, for its result. To this extent, logic has for its presupposition the science of spirit in its appearance, a science which contains the necessity, and therefore demonstrates the truth, of the standpoint which is pure knowledge and of its mediation.³¹

That is, science must begin with pure knowledge or the concept of science, which is the result of the *Phenomenology*, the necessity of which is demonstrated by the *Phenomenology* itself. Thus, science requires the *Phenomenology* and has the result of the *Phenomenology* as its own grounding presupposition.

Third, Hegel describes the *Phenomenology* metaphysically with the claim that the *Phenomenology* facilitates the Absolute's own self-knowing and brings science into existence. The Absolute is not merely 'all the stuff'—"the absolute is subject"³² and: "Pure self-knowledge in absolute otherness, this ether *as such*, is the very ground and soil of science."³³ That is, the Absolute must move through the stages of consciousness because, Hegel writes:

... with regards to the *existence* of this concept, *science* does not appear in time and in actuality until spirit has come round to itself as being this consciousness about itself. As the spirit that knows what it is, it does not exist any earlier, nor does it even exist anywhere at all until after it has completed the labor of compelling its incomplete shapes to provide for its consciousness the shape of its essence...³⁴

That is, science does not exist until spirit has completed the journey of its own self-knowing. This is because, Hegel writes:

³¹ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 21.54-5, 46-7.

³² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §23, 20.

³³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §25, 21.

³⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §800, 710.

Lacking actuality, science is the *in-itself*, the *purpose*, which at the start is still something *inner*, at first not as spirit but only as spiritual substance. It has to express itself and become for itself, and this means nothing else than that it has to posit self-consciousness as being at one with itself.³⁵

That is, science is merely inner possibility must externalize itself because it lacks actuality. As such, the existence of science is facilitated by the *Phenomenology* because, Hegel explains:

This coming-to-be of *science itself*, that is, of *knowledge*, is what is presented in this *phenomenology* of spirit as the first part of the system of science.³⁶

That is, it performs the fundamental task of facilitating the coming-into-existence of science and the Absolute's own self-knowledge. Moreover, viewed from the perspective of science, the *Phenomenology* is a necessary element of science's freedom. Hegel writes:

Science contains within itself this necessity to empty itself of the form of the pure concept and to make the transition from the concept into *consciousness*... This release of itself from the form of its own self is the highest freedom and the highest assurance of its knowledge of itself.³⁷

That is, Hegelian science must express itself as the *Phenomenology* and, when it does, science moves from immediate selfsameness to the highest form of freedom and self-knowledge.

Finally, Hegel describes the *Phenomenology* as the first part of science insofar as it already operates with a scientific procedure or logic. In the "Introduction" to the *Phenomenology*, Hegel writes,

³⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §26, 23.

³⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §27, 23.

³⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §806, 718.

Through this necessity, this path to science is itself already *science*, and in terms of its content it is thereby the science of the *experience of consciousness*.³⁸

That is, the *Phenomenology* is not merely a propaedeutic to science; it is science itself as the science of the experience of consciousness. In the “Introduction” to the *Science of Logic*, Hegel explains that the *Phenomenology* shares science’s logical method. He writes:

But the exposition of that which alone can be the true method of philosophical science falls within the treatment of logic itself; for method is the consciousness of the form of the inner self-movement of the content of logic. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, I have presented an example of this method with respect to a concrete object, namely *consciousness*.³⁹

That is, the *Phenomenology* is an example of the logic that is outlined in the *Science of Logic*. In this sense, we can speak of the *Phenomenology* as the first part of science because other installments of science—the *Logic*, the *Philosophy of Nature*, the *Philosophy of Right*, etc.—have the same logical structure and scientific procedure.⁴⁰

This, therefore, is the importance of the *Phenomenology* for Hegelian science. It performs the pedagogical task of the *Bildung* of its reader, the philosophical novice, into science. It performs the epistemological task of justifying and demonstrating the necessity of science by acting as its presupposition. It performs the metaphysical task of facilitating the Absolute’s own self-knowledge by establishing the interpersonal relationship with us, the philosophical audience. And finally, the *Phenomenology* is science itself; the first part of science that portrays science’s logic through consciousness’

³⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §88, 83.

³⁹ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 21.37-8, 33.

⁴⁰ For more details on the scientific procedure and epistemological task of the *Phenomenology*, see Collin, “The Justification of Logic,” in *Hegel’s Phenomenology: The Dialectical Justification of Philosophy’s First Principles*, 135-56.

movement. Thus, the “connection of the science that I call *Phenomenology of Spirit* to the Logic is thereby stated”⁴¹—and this connection demonstrates that the *Phenomenology* is not an obsolete early work that is external to science, rather it is a systematic introduction that is fundamentally important for Hegelian science.⁴²

However, reading this *Bildungsroman* is not the usual reading experience because reading not only transforms the reader, it transforms the text itself through the speculative proposition. The speculative proposition is a sentence within Hegel’s text that, when read a certain way, moves both the reader and the text towards philosophical science in the Hegelian sense. In the “Preface” to the *Phenomenology*, Hegel writes:

Some examples will clarify what has been said. Take the proposition: “*God is being.*”⁴³

Then, Hegel proceeds to explain how this proposition defies the usual, unscientific way in which it is initially read because, having moved from the subject to the predicate in the usual way, the reader is thrown back into the subject. Yet, thinking through the subject moves the reader back into the predicate. This is because, within this proposition, *God is being* and *Being is god*—thinking through the subject or the predicate produces its other through the movement of speculative thinking.

Furthermore, when the speculative proposition is read speculatively, the reader experiences this as a sinking (*versenken*), where the reader becomes bogged down in the

⁴¹ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 21.9, 10-11.

⁴² My interpretation emphasizes and overlaps all four elements of the *Phenomenology*’s link to Hegelian science. For a remarkably comprehensive summary of alternative approaches to the *Phenomenology*’s project (reviewing scholars who maintain that the *Phenomenology* is: a failure, primarily pedagogical, primarily epistemological, primarily a response to Kant, a merely negative proof, etc.), see Collins, “Interpretation Paradigms” and “Interpretation Paradigms Revisited,” in *Hegel’s Phenomenology: The Dialectical Justification of Philosophy’s First Principles*, 16-49 and 214-40.

⁴³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §62, 57.

movement from the proposition's subject to its predicate in a way that makes her grasp the proposition speculatively. In his explanation of the proposition, "*God is being*," Hegel writes:

Now, instead of having taken an inward turn into the predicate... it [speculative thinking] is still absorbed in the content, or at least the demand for it to be so absorbed is present.⁴⁴

That is, speculative reading is experienced by the reader as a sinking and being absorbed in the content of the speculative proposition.

The *Phenomenology* needs to be read because this act of speculative reading provides the movement of science's coming-to-be. That is, the act of reading both provides the objectivity of Hegelian science and breathes life and subjectivity into the text. First, the *Phenomenology* needs to be read because the reader provides its movement and its objectivity. Reading transforms the text insofar as the transition between stages of consciousness happens behind the back of consciousness but not behind the reader, who provides this movement. Each section of the *Phenomenology* transforms consciousness into a new shape because consciousness, as a form of knowing, is always consciousness *of* an object and that object's status reflexively constitutes consciousness himself. Consciousness adopts new forms because when he "descends into a knowledge of the object,"⁴⁵ the status of the object changes from in-itself to "*a being-for-consciousness of the in-itself*,"⁴⁶ and since "this latter is the new object,"⁴⁷ consciousness also changes.

⁴⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §62, 57.

⁴⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §87, 82.

⁴⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §87, 82.

⁴⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §87, 82.

Thus, as consciousness thinks through his object, this process changes the object and therefore himself.

However, this transition appears differently to the *Phenomenology*'s protagonist, consciousness, than it does for the text's readers. Hegel explains:

... the *emergence* of the new object, which presents itself to consciousness without consciousness knowing how that happens to it; it takes place for us, as it were, behind the back of consciousness.⁴⁸

That is, consciousness, who only descends into knowledge of his object, is not self-aware of the development from one form of knowing to another—it happens behind his back. In contrast, the reader is aware of the *Phenomenology*'s development such that, “a moment of...*being for us*, thereby enters into its movement, which does not exhibit itself for the consciousness.”⁴⁹ Thus, the difference between the *Phenomenology* for consciousness and the *Phenomenology* for the reader is that, for the latter, “what has emerged exists at the same time as a movement and a coming-to-be”⁵⁰ This means that the reader reads the *Phenomenology* in a doubled way: from both the perspective of consciousness and from the perspective of speculative philosophy. Thus, without the reader, the *Phenomenology* loses its dynamic dialectical movement—its life—and becomes instead a bad infinity of shapes of consciousness.

And it is this movement provided by the reader that gives life and objectivity to Hegelian science through the speculative proposition. Jeffrey Reid explains that the objectivity of Hegelian science or, “the adequation of thought and being is *realized* in

⁴⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §87, 83.

⁴⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §87, 83.

⁵⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §87, 83.

language.”⁵¹ This is because language, grasped dialectically as the speculative proposition, is “the objective middle term embodying the two extremes”⁵² of thought and being. But, this objectivity cannot be achieved without the life breathed into the text by its reader. Catherine Malabou explains in *The Future of Hegel*, that transforming the text’s propositions into speculative propositions,

... explicitly requires the proposition’s *reading subject*. For Hegel pursues his analysis of the speculative proposition by placing himself in the perspective of its addressee, namely the reader. Indeed it is the latter who experiences the conflict between the form and the content of the proposition. It is the reader who has the responsibility of ‘setting forth (*darstellen*)’ the ‘return of the concept into itself (*das Zurückgehen des Begriffs in sich*).’⁵³

That is, it is the reader who experiences and acts on the tension of the speculative propositions of science. Thus, the importance of the *Phenomenology*’s being read lies in the difference between the *Phenomenology* for consciousness and the *Phenomenology* for the reader. The *Phenomenology* for the reader is alive with the tension of thought and being and it is by reading the language that mediates this tension that Hegelian science is objective.

Second, the reader experiences reading as being bogged down in a path of despair. Like any *Bildungsroman*, reading the text transforms the reader—in this case, performing the philosophical novice’s *Bildung* into Hegelian science. Hegel tells us that the reader, “has the right to demand that science provide him at least with the ladder to

⁵¹ Jeffrey Reid, *The Anti-Romantic: Hegel Against Romanticism* (London, U.K.: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2014), 54.

⁵² Reid, *The Anti-Romantic: Hegel Against Romanticism*, 57.

⁵³ Catherine Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic*, trans Lisabeth During (London, UK: Routledge, 2005), 167-8

reach this [i.e. scientific] standpoint,”⁵⁴ and the *Phenomenology* is meant to provide the reader with such a ladder. In the text, stages of consciousness act as the ladder’s rungs; each step an overcoming or *Aufhebung*. For the *Phenomenology*’s protagonist, consciousness, each step represents an increasingly mediated relationship between him and his world. For the *Phenomenology*’s readers, each step represents a movement towards the standpoint of Absolute Knowing and Hegelian science. The reader experiences reading as equally active and despairing as she sinks into each stage and experiences a transformation of her common, unscientific opinions.

However, unlike other *Bildungromans*, the reader plays an active role in constructing this ladder. That is, if the *Phenomenology* is a ladder to science, then the reader is not merely a passive climber—reading is active. Or, to quote Malabou, “the ‘backward look’ which philosophy ‘directs’ onto ‘its own knowledge’ could not be a look of passive contemplation, but rather an *act of reading*.”⁵⁵ The reader sinks into the text and, from this “bogged down” perspective, perceives the propositions, not merely as judgements—the simple connection of subjects and predicates—but as speculative propositions.

This act of reading is transformative insofar as reading is the “path of despair,”⁵⁶ where the reader continually, “suffers... from a counter-punch [*Gegenstoß*],”⁵⁷ as confidence in each form of knowing transitions into mistakes and back again. In his

⁵⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §26, 22.

⁵⁵ Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic*, 167.

⁵⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §78, 73.

⁵⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §60, 55.

article, “Secondness”, John Burbidge explains the mental activity of working through consciousness’ form of knowing and our persistent disappointment, saying:

At each stage consciousness makes an absolute claim to knowledge: “This is the way we get to know things as they really are.” At each stage Hegel describes what happens as that knowledge claim is acted out in practice, when we actually try to know according to its prescriptions. And in each case Hegel shows that what actually happens confounds our original confidence: immediacy is subverted by the mediation of time and space; the distinctions between the universals we introduce and the universals of the thing to be known, rather than producing certainty, flicker back and forth like the images of a hologram...⁵⁸

That is, the reader mentally acts out consciousness’ claims to knowledge. When this mental practice occurs, the reader finds that each form of consciousness does not achieve what it set out to and, as such, the reader’s original confidence flickers and she is forced to look back at the original claim in a new, speculative light.⁵⁹

Yet, significantly, reading is despairing because we cannot peruse the stages of the *Phenomenology* disinterestedly. Instead, we sink into each mistaken stage of consciousness, engaging in consciousness’ form of knowing as if it were our own.

Malabou writes:

Sinking into the content, the reader experiences a loss of ground and foundation. Thinking cannot get away from the proposition which it intended to do no more than pass through. Thinking remains sunk (*versenkt*) in its content. Now this state of being bogged down in the matter and this weight which holds the subject fast and impedes it are, paradoxically, the conditions of a genuine fall of predication.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ John Burbidge, “Secondness” in *The Owl of Minerva* 33, no. 1 (2001-02): 33.

⁵⁹ Burbidge’s description grows out of his response to H.S. Harris’ work, *Hegel’s Ladder*. In summary, Burbidge critiques Harris’ approach to the *Phenomenology* because, by overemphasizing historical or literary details and going through the *Phenomenology* line by line, Harris disrupts the reader’s relationship with the *Phenomenology* itself, blocking the reader’s immediate connection with consciousness’ journey. Kenneth Westphal makes a similar point, Kenneth Westphal, “Harris and the *Phenomenology*: Hegel, Harris, and the Spirit of the *Phenomenology*.” *Clio* 27 (1998): 558.

⁶⁰ Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic*, 178-9.

That is, the reader cannot merely skim the top of Hegel's text; she sinks into it. This sinking creates the possibility for the reader to mentally perform consciousness' form of knowing, described by Burbidge above, where the reader "learns from experience that [the proposition] means something other than what it took itself to have meant."⁶¹ And this mistake, which consciousness makes and the reader mentally performs, propels the reader "to come back to the proposition and now grasp it in some other way"⁶²—namely, speculatively. Thus, the text pulls the reader in, she sinks, and it is from this internal position that the reader provides the *Phenomenology's* life and movement.

As such, the movement towards Absolute knowing cannot occur "like a shot from a pistol"⁶³ but, rather, the, "*length* of the path has to be endured" and "one must *linger* at every stage on the way."⁶⁴ What Hegel means by "lingering" is that the reader must sink into each and every stage of consciousness. For example, comparing the speculative reading to the abstract reading done by the understanding [*Verstand*], Hegel writes:

Instead of entering into the immanent content of the subject-matter, the understanding always surveys the whole and stands above the individual existence of which it speaks, or, what amounts to the same thing, it does not see it at all. However, to an even greater degree scientific cognition requires that it give itself over to the life of the object... Absorbing itself in its object, it forgets the former overview... sunken into the material and advancing in that material's movement, knowledge returns back into itself, but not before the culmination, that is, the content, takes itself back into itself... and passes over into its higher truth.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §63, 58.

⁶² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §63, 58.

⁶³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §27, 24.

⁶⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §29, 25.

⁶⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §53, 48.

That is, Hegel wants the readers of the *Phenomenology* to approach the text “scientifically” or speculatively, sink into the text in a contentful way rather than relating to the text in a formal or theoretical way. Because, as I discussed above, the movement of the *Phenomenology* happens behind the back of consciousness, the *Phenomenology*’s movement—passing over into higher truth—comes from the reader. As such, if the reader does not sink into the text and read its propositions speculatively, then the *Phenomenology* is not speculative philosophy.

As readers, we sink into each stage with consciousness and mentally perform the mistake inherent in each form of knowing. Yet, this sinking occurs, not because Hegel creates an enticing setting or captivating characters, but because Hegel bridges the gap between reader and text by establishing a connection between consciousness’ experiences and the reader’s experience and unscientific opinions. Hegel writes,

The philosophical proposition, because it is a proposition, evokes the common opinion about both the usual relationship between subject and predicate and the customary procedure of knowledge. This procedure and common opinion about such a procedure destroys its philosophical content. Common opinion then learns from experience that it means something other than what it took itself to have meant, and this correction of its opinion compels knowledge to come back to the proposition and now to grasp it in some other way.⁶⁶

That is, the speculative proposition first evokes a common idea, experience or opinion that the reader already has prior to reading the *Phenomenology*. This common opinion—already present in the reader at the same time as it is being played out as a stage of consciousness in the text—provides the basis on which the reader sinks into consciousness’ experience. Then, by sinking into consciousness’ experience, each stage of consciousness transforms the reader’s unscientific opinions into increasingly

⁶⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §63, 58.

philosophical reflections. As such, although the reader and consciousness are not identical, they share some common experiences, opinions and ideas, which act as the foundation for the reader's sinking into the text—a requirement for both the transformation of the text and the reader. Similarly, Burbidge draws on this passage to argue that the stages of consciousness:

... do not work because they are Hegel's artful literary constructions, drawing on his acquaintance with the whole Western tradition. They work because they capture what sensitive people have discovered within their own experience.⁶⁷

Burbidge continues, explaining that Hegel is able to accurately capture what people have discovered within their experience because:

Hegel is deciphering those elementary encounters with reality... that are embedded within our common experience and are the source of so much of what we call knowledge.⁶⁸

That is, stages of consciousness are either a part of our intellectual heritage as common opinion or ways that we ourselves have sought to know the world. In other words, the *Phenomenology* is written such that it evokes our common opinions; it creates a connection between the reader and consciousness that facilitates the reader's sinking into the text in order for these unscientific, common opinions to be transformed.

Therefore, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a *Bildungsroman* that not only tasks itself with the *Bildung* of its reader into Hegelian science, but also tasks itself with the epistemic and metaphysical justification of this science while at the same time being itself science. The act of reading this *Bildungsroman* is important for Hegelian science because reading provides the *Phenomenology's* dialectical life by transforming the bad

⁶⁷ Burbidge, "Secondness," 33.

⁶⁸ Burbidge, "Secondness," 31.

infinity of its shapes of consciousness into speculative philosophy. Moreover, for the reader, this act of reading is experienced as simultaneously despairing and engrossing, where each step from common opinion to science both sunders and unites the reader with the text and, as such, with Hegelian science.

Chapter 2: “Pleasure and Necessity”, Sex and Death

In the last chapter, I discussed the project of the *Phenomenology* and the role that reading plays in accomplishing that project. In this chapter, I provide a close reading of “Pleasure and Necessity” inspired in large part by Jeffrey Reid’s interpretation in “Music and Monosyllables: The Language of Pleasure and Necessity”. In what follows, I explain that pleasure is consciousness’ attempt to actualize himself through sexual intercourse and necessity is the empty universality that consciousness experiences as death. First, I discuss the transition between “Observing Reason” and “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself” to explain the type of consciousness that “Pleasure and Necessity” begins with—a rational self-consciousness that seeks to actualize Reason’s certainty that consciousness is all reality in an individualistic and pre-communal way. Second, I discuss the events of “Pleasure and Necessity” with reference to Reid’s interpretation, emphasizing how pleasure, consciousness’ desire to know himself in an other, becomes necessity, the unmediated unity of an abstract universality. Where relevant, I compare this interpretation with those of H.S. Harris, Robert C. Solomon, Peter Kalkavage, Jean Hyppolite, John Russon, Philip J. Kain, Stephen Houlgate, Terry Pinkard, and Ludwig Siep.

“Pleasure and Necessity” is the first of three stages in “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself”, the second moment of “Reason”.⁶⁹ Generally speaking, the long title of this moment—“The Actualization of Rational Self-

⁶⁹ The *Phenomenology* has six main sections: “Consciousness”, “Self-Consciousness”, “Reason”, “Spirit”, “Religion”, and “Absolute Knowing”. “Reason” has three subsections: “Observing Reason”, “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself”, and “Individuality Which In Its Own Eyes Is Real In and For Itself”.

Consciousness By Way of Itself”—already provides a clue about what is happening in “Pleasure and Necessity”: a rational self-consciousness seeks to actualize himself (to make himself real or objective) in the world in an individualistic, pre-communal way.⁷⁰ However, to provide a solid foundation for our discussion of “Pleasure and Necessity”, I first investigate how consciousness defines himself and his world as he moves from the must first moment of “Reason”, “Observing Reason”, to the second. This involves explaining the meaning of “rational self-consciousness,” “actualization,” and “individualistic” by discussing passages in “Self-Consciousness” and “Reason”.

To the reader, it can seem strange that Hegel revisits “Self-Consciousness” in the middle of “Reason”, especially since the two types of consciousness appear to be opposites. In “Self-Consciousness”, our protagonist,

... had occupied itself only with its self-sufficiency and its freedom in order to save and preserve itself for itself at the cost of the *world* or its own actuality.⁷¹

That is, self-consciousness views the world as something alien and “negative to his essence,”⁷² that takes away from himself in the sense that it takes away his freedom. Yet, consciousness moves through the stages of “Self-Consciousness” and discovers that this view of the world and himself is an error. When consciousness comes on the scene in “Reason”, Hegel tells us that, “Reason is the certainty which consciousness has of being all reality.”⁷³ That is, consciousness in “Reason” sees the world as himself since he is everything, all reality; consciousness does not view the world as negative and alien to

⁷⁰ For a discussion of why I deliberately refer to consciousness as a gendered person, (he/she), and not a thing (it), see Chapter 3: Consciousness Is a Man in Hegel’s System, 56-8.

⁷¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §232, 203.

⁷² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §232, 203.

⁷³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §233, 203-4.

himself, he views the world as identical with himself. As such, the first moment of “Reason”, “Observing Reason” takes the form of the theoretical natural sciences and psychology. Hegel explains:

After [consciousness] has lost the grave [*Grab*] of its truth, after it has abolished the act of abolishing its actuality itself... it discovers here for the first time the world as *its* newly actual world. In its continuing existence, this world interests [consciousness] in the way it previously was only interested in the world’s disappearance, for that world’s *durable existence* comes to be in its eyes its own *truth* and *present moment*, and it is certain that it experiences only itself within it.⁷⁴

That is, consciousness returns from the dead—his grave—no longer interested in abolishing the world—and therefore himself—in “Self-Consciousness”. Instead, to the extent that consciousness is the world and the world exists, consciousness is interested in finding himself in that world to experience his own reality. In this sense, “Reason” and “Self-Consciousness” appear to be opposites.

Nonetheless, “Reason” revisits “Self-Consciousness” when rational self-consciousness emerges from within the logic of “Reason” itself. Reason’s certainty that consciousness is all reality “sanctions the truth of that other certainty, namely, that there is an *other* for me”⁷⁵ and in that other “*I* am object and essence to myself.”⁷⁶ That is, consciousness’ attempt to find himself in the world posits a world where the “thing is thus the unity of the I and of being,”⁷⁷ namely where consciousness’ relation to the world is a self-conscious relationship between the I-as-consciousness and things-as-I. Thus, the outcome of “Observing Reason”, which moves from biology to psychology and ends in

⁷⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §232, 203.

⁷⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §234, 205.

⁷⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §234, 205.

⁷⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §344, 303.

phenology and the identification of the subject and the skull bone, is that: “Self-consciousness found the thing as itself and itself as a thing.”⁷⁸

This then becomes the actualization of rational self-consciousness. Reason moves from its theoretical aspect where consciousness attempts to find himself in the world to its practical aspect where consciousness must actualize himself in the world because:

This [theoretical] reason remains an act of restless seeking, which in its very seeking itself declares that the satisfaction of finding anything is utterly impossible. –However, actual reason itself is not so inconsistent. Rather, as merely the *certainty* of being all reality, it is aware [that] it is not yet reality in truth, and it is thus driven to elevate its certainty into truth, and to bring to fruition that empty “mine.”⁷⁹

That is, the very attempt by consciousness to find himself in the world is undermined because it posits a world, disconnected from himself, in which he is lost. As such,

... the reality that immediately emerges is to an even greater degree not the reality of reason, while at the same time reason is supposed to be all reality.⁸⁰

This is the counter-punch of theoretical reason in “Observing Reason”: the more consciousness tries to find himself, the more disconnected he feels from the world. Active reason, on the other hand, realizes that the issue is the very concept of “certainty” itself. As the actualization of rational-self consciousness, consciousness understands that he needs to elevate the certainty that he is all reality to an actual truth. Thus, as Reid notes, “the strivings of theoretical reason become moral in their endless efforts for accomplishment,”⁸¹ such that practical reason is the logical outcome of theoretical reason.

⁷⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §347, 306-7.

⁷⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §239, 211

⁸⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §239, 211.

⁸¹ Jeffrey Reid, “Music and Monosyllables: The Language of “Pleasure and Necessity,”” in *Real Words: Language and System in Hegel*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 85.

At the beginning of “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself”, consciousness is optimistic about his ability to actualize himself in the world.

First, Hegel explains that this actualization occurs in “an other,” writing:

... active reason is conscious of itself merely as an individual, and as such an individual, it must demand and engender its actuality in an other.⁸²

Yet, this other is not alien to consciousness here because “Observing Reason” has already demonstrated that the “thing is thus the unity of the I and of being”⁸³ Thus, consciousness relates to a self-consciousness in the form of thinghood, that he nonetheless feels identified with. Hegel explains:

... the object to which self-consciousness positively relates itself is a self-consciousness. The object is in the form of thinghood, i.e., it is *self-sufficient*. However, self-consciousness has the certainty that for it this self-sufficient object is nothing alien. It thereby knows that it is *in itself* recognized by the object.⁸⁴

That is, consciousness is confident that he can actualize himself in an other because he feels himself to be already recognized by that object. The recognition is presented as an in itself that needs merely to be elevated to an actuality.

Consciousness attempts this actualization “by way of” himself, namely individualistically, because he “has *not yet attained this happy fortune* of being the ethical substance, the spirit of a people,”⁸⁵ which will not take place until “Reason” transitions into “Spirit”. Hegel explains that, in “Reason”:

... spirit initially *exists immediately*. However, as immediately existing, it is *individual*; it is the practical consciousness that intervenes in its world, a world which it simply finds before itself, and it makes this intervention with the purpose of doubling itself in the determinateness it has in being an individual. It aims to

⁸² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §348, 307-8.

⁸³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §344, 303.

⁸⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §347, 307.

⁸⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §356, 312.

engender itself as a “this” as its existent mirror image, and to become conscious of this unity of its own actuality with the objective essence.⁸⁶

That is, “Reason”, as immediate spirit, is pre-communal and individualistic. Rather than a consciousness who mediates his relation to the world through the ethical community, the world is something that consciousness merely finds before himself in “Reason”. Here, consciousness is vainly interested in himself, and is interested in the world only insofar as it is a mirror to himself.⁸⁷ Furthermore, consciousness thinks that he does not need the ethical realm to mediate his relation. Hegel writes:

What counts for it is that the unity is *in itself* already on hand, that is, that this correspondence between itself and thinghood is already on hand, and that in *its eyes* it merely has to come to be this by way of itself...⁸⁸

That is, consciousness also views any unity between himself and the world as something that can be achieved by and through himself.

In contrast to this interpretation of consciousness as individualistic in “Reason”, H.S. Harris, in *Hegel’s Ladder*, argues that the second moment of “Reason” marks a transition into the ethical world.⁸⁹ He writes:

The “result” of Rational Observation, was the embodied mortal self that knows it is *free*. As “subject” this living self exists in an ethical world (rather than a natural one).⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §356, 312-3.

⁸⁷ For more on the significance of vanity and mirroring in Hegel, see Jeffrey Reid’s *The Anti-Romantic*: “Such ‘vanitization’ represents the reflexive interplay between the vanity... of the ironic subject and the objectivity that he renders vain or empty through the operation of judgements, and which, as empty subjective content, reconstitutes and reflects the vanity of the ironic subject. Through this interplay appears a final meaning of the term—that of radical negativity; a kind of annihilation of both subject and object, the sort of *mis-en-abîme* one might experience when caught between two mirrors facing one another (48-9).”

⁸⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §356, 313.

⁸⁹ Notably, Harris places his commentary of “Pleasure and Necessity” in the second volume of *Hegel’s Ladder*, entitled *The Odyssey of Spirit*, rather than in the first volume, *The Pilgrimage of Reason*.

⁹⁰ H.S. Harris, *The Odyssey of Spirit*, vol. 2 of *Hegel’s Ladder* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), 7.

That is, the result of the first moment of “Reason” is that consciousness exists in an ethical world. This is because, for Harris, “Observing Reason” provides “the circularity of self-recognition”⁹¹ required for ethical society. As such,

The effort of [“Observing Reason”] to find a “soul” inside their living bodies was misdirected. The devoted sacrifice of their embodied lives in labor and service creates the body of the community that is their real “soul and essence.”⁹²

That is, Harris suggests that consciousness, in “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself”, is situated in a communal and ethical world.

However, by emphasizing the vain and individualistic way that consciousness relates to his world in “Reason”, I argue that an ethical community is not established. While Harris suggests that, “living self exists in an ethical world (rather than a natural one),”⁹³ Hegel explains the individual, in a naturalistic language—rather than an ethical one—saying:

Reason is present as the fluid universal *substance*, as the unchangeable simple *thinghood* which shatters into many completely self-sufficient beings in the way that light likewise shatters into stars as innumerable luminous points, each shining by its own light, and which in their absolute being-for-itself have not only *in themselves* been dissolved in the simple self-sufficient substance but have also been dissolved *for-themselves* in it.⁹⁴

That is, individuals are like stars, points that shine forth independently from themselves rather than relate to each other or have for their substance the ethical community. Looking ahead, Harris’ argument that “Reason” is ethical is important because he maintains that, “Faust will find the structure of ethical life to be a harsh impersonal

⁹¹ Harris, *The Odyssey of Spirit*, vol. 2 of *Hegel’s Ladder*, 7.

⁹² Harris, *The Odyssey of Spirit*, vol. 2 of *Hegel’s Ladder*, 13.

⁹³ Harris, *The Odyssey of Spirit*, vol. 2 of *Hegel’s Ladder*, 7.

⁹⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §350, 309.

‘Necessity.’ ”⁹⁵ That is, consciousness, represented by Faust, will experience the necessity of “Pleasure and Necessity” as the “necessary shape of universal custom or law”⁹⁶ that condemns Faust’s pre-marital sexual relationship with Gretchen. However, since Hegel tells us that, in “Reason”:

Self-consciousness has *not yet attained this happy fortune* of being the ethical substance, the spirit of a people. For, having returned from out of observation, spirit is initially not yet actualized as such by way of itself.⁹⁷

I maintain that interpreting “Pleasure and Necessity” as individualistic and pre-communal is a more faithful reading of the text.⁹⁸ But perhaps Harris would agree. Harris grounds this ethical reading of rational self-consciousness in his interpretation of “Self-Consciousness”, where he argues that “Spirit as the ‘ethical substance’ arises logically from (and for) natural desire,”⁹⁹ such that “Self-Consciousness” takes place on the background of the *polis*. However, Harris allows that, “it might plausibly be claimed that my commentary was going beyond what was unambiguously required and justified.”¹⁰⁰

“Pleasure and Necessity” begins with a rational self-consciousness who seeks to actualize the certainty that he is all reality. In what follows, I discuss Reid’s interpretation of “Pleasure and Necessity”, emphasizing that pleasure is consciousness’ attempt to

⁹⁵ Harris, *The Odyssey of Spirit*, vol. 2 of *Hegel’s Ladder*, 6.

⁹⁶ Harris, *The Odyssey of Spirit*, vol. 2 of *Hegel’s Ladder*, 9.

⁹⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §356, 312-3.

⁹⁸ It is tempting to conclude that this stage is ethical, complete with a substantial social element, because Hegel discusses the ethical realm in some passages in “Reason”. However, in the conclusion to each of these passages, Hegel clearly states that his discussion is only in anticipation of Spirit and that “Reason” is not the ethical realm. In addition to the quoted passage above, Hegel writes: “It has not yet reached that point of achieving its calling (§353),” defined as, “living in conformity with the ethos of one’s people (§352).” Hegel also writes: “Reason *must depart from this happy fortune* (§354),” because “this universal spirit is also itself an individual spirit (§354),” namely “Reason” is too individual.

⁹⁹ Harris, *The Odyssey of Spirit*, vol. 2 of *Hegel’s Ladder*, 12.

¹⁰⁰ Harris, *The Odyssey of Spirit*, vol. 2 of *Hegel’s Ladder*, 11.

actualize the certainty that he is all reality through sexual intercourse and that necessity is what pleasure becomes when consciousness only experiences himself as the unmediated unity between the two self-consciousnesses: an empty universality. As I discuss passages in “Pleasure and Necessity”, I compare this interpretation with those of H.S. Harris, Robert C. Solomon, Peter Kalkavage, Jean Hyppolite, John Russon, Philip J. Kain, Stephen Houlgate, Terry Pinkard, and Ludwig Siep where relevant.

To begin, “Pleasure and Necessity” is the ‘bad boy’ phase of the *Phenomenology*. For consciousness, “observation and theory, only lay behind it as a gray and gradually vanishing shadow,”¹⁰¹ and the “seemingly heavenly spirit”¹⁰² of theory transforms into, “shadows cast by science, laws, and principles [that] vanish like a lifeless fog.”¹⁰³ In contrast to this heavenly science “in which the feeling and gratification of the individual fall silent,”¹⁰⁴ consciousness “plunges into life.”¹⁰⁵ This is the significance of Hegel’s reference to an early version of Goethe’s *Faust*. Hegel quotes the beginning and ending lines from Mephisto about Faust:¹⁰⁶

It despises intellect and science
Man’s highest gifts—
It has given itself over to the devil,
And must perish.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

¹⁰² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

¹⁰³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §361, 317.

¹⁰⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 317.

¹⁰⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §361, 317.

¹⁰⁶ Characteristically, Hegel misquotes *Faust*, altering the original quote by removing its conditional language; perishing is the necessary result of consciousness’ actions.

¹⁰⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 317.

That is, consciousness, like Faust, turns away from the academic sciences, God's gift to man, and gives himself over to the devil. That he must perish foreshadows the death that consciousness experiences as necessity.

"Pleasure and Necessity" is consciousness' first and most immediate attempt to actualize Reason's certainty that he is all reality through sexual intercourse. Reid writes that:

In 'Pleasure and Necessity,' Hegel is claiming that the first level of moral self-reflection is through feeling... However, the feeling that Hegel is referring to is sexual. The first stage of morality... involves the attempt to immediately find oneself at home in the world through erotic agency and the feelings of sexual satisfaction.¹⁰⁸

That is, consciousness' certainty begins as "in itself... which it has merely *for itself* and which does not yet exist,"¹⁰⁹ as an inner certainty that is not yet actual. Whereas, "*Being* stands over and against it as an actuality other than its own."¹¹⁰ Thus, consciousness wants to bridge the gap between his inner certainty and being's actuality by "putting its being-for-itself into practice."¹¹¹ More precisely, consciousness' "*first purpose* [Zweck] is to become conscious of itself as an individual essence within that other self-consciousness."¹¹² That is, consciousness seeks to know himself *literally within* the other self-consciousness by engaging them in sex. Or, as Reid writes, "the erotic pleasure-

¹⁰⁸ Reid, "Music and Monosyllables," 85-6.

¹⁰⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

¹¹⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

¹¹¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

¹¹² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

seeking individual is really after: the immediate feeling of union in otherness through which he recognizes himself as all reality.”¹¹³

This sexual interpretation of pleasure put forward by Reid may seem daring. However, like Reid, I agree with Robert C. Solomon who writes that, “it is not far-fetched or a matter of scholarly licentiousness to suggest that [Hegel] is talking about sex,”¹¹⁴ in “Pleasure and Necessity”. Or, as Peter Kalkavage says,

Only Hegel could make illicit sex this hard to understand, so hard in fact that it is difficult to tell that the account is about sex. But it is.¹¹⁵

As such, “Pleasure and Necessity” must be understood in terms of sexual intercourse. Scholars who present the sexual element of pleasure euphemistically—such as Jean Hyppolite, who writes, “Individuality knows itself, in the Biblical sense, in an other,”¹¹⁶ or scholars such as John Russon, Philip J. Kain, and Stephen Houlgate, who ambiguously define consciousness’ attitude towards the other as love¹¹⁷—obscure the meaning and logic of the text. In contrast, we shall see that Reid, because he uniquely emphasizes even the most licentious elements of sexual intercourse, clearly explains the logic of pleasure and its failure.

¹¹³ Reid, “Music and Monosyllables,” 86.

¹¹⁴ Robert C. Solomon, “Morality and the Good Life,” in *In the Spirit of Hegel: a Study of G.W.F. Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1983), 503.

¹¹⁵ Peter Kalkavage, *The Logic of Desire* (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2007), 190.

¹¹⁶ Jean Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel’s “Phenomenology of Spirit,”* trans. Samuel Cherniak and John Heckman (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 283.

¹¹⁷ John Russon, *The Self and Its Body in Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 41. Philip J. Kain, *Hegel and the Other: A Study of the Phenomenology of Spirit* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005), 94. Stephen Houlgate, *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit: A Reader’s Guide* (London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 135.

Consciousness “plunges into life”¹¹⁸ in “Pleasure and Necessity”. When phrenology reduced man, in all his freedom and life, to a mere dead thing—the skull bone—in “Observing Reason”, Hegel anticipated that “without hesitation, the raw instinct of self-conscious reason will reject such a science of phrenology.”¹¹⁹ Thus, in “Pleasure and Necessity”, consciousness turns his back on the life sciences and plunges into a new sense of life. Life, for consciousness in “Pleasure and Necessity”, is sensuousness in the here and now where consciousness, “immediately takes [life] and takes pleasure in it.”¹²⁰ Hegel compares this life to the forbidden fruit, telling us that consciousness, “helps itself to life in the way that a ripe fruit is plucked which willingly concedes itself as it is being so taken.”¹²¹ That is, consciousness helps himself to life by plunging into the vitality of sexual intercourse.

Pleasure [*Lust*] provides consciousness with this sexual life by unifying consciousness with an other. Hegel explains that, “in terms of one of [pleasure’s] moments is its activity that of *desire* [Begierde],” since the element in which desire stands in relation to its object, “is that of *living existence* [lebendige Dasein].”¹²² However, unlike desire, pleasure:

... has not set itself on eliminating the entire objective essence; rather, it sets itself on eliminating the form of its otherness, that is, its self-sufficiency, which is an essenceless façade.¹²³

¹¹⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §361, 317.

¹¹⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §340, 299.

¹²⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §361, 317.

¹²¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §361, 317.

¹²² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §362, 317.

¹²³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §362, 317.

That is, pleasure does not consume its object and destroy it like desire does because, as Reid notes: “Sexual pleasure involves finding oneself in the other, being at home in the other, and this requires maintaining the otherness of the other.”¹²⁴ Yet, consciousness is optimistic about “being at home” in his sexual partner because he, “knows the other as *its own* selfhood.”¹²⁵ Thus, consciousness, “arrives at the enjoyment of *pleasure*,”¹²⁶ in so far as he, “arrives at the intuition of the unity of both self-sufficient self-consciousnesses.”¹²⁷ That is, the unity of sexual intercourse provides the relation required for consciousness to see himself in the other person. And thus, consciousness “achieves its purpose”¹²⁸ to “become conscious of itself as an individual essence within that other self-consciousness.”¹²⁹

Reid contrasts this interpretation of pleasure with Solomon and Terry Pinkard’s interpretation of pleasure as hedonism, noting that Solomon does not accurately distinguish pleasure’s syllogistic moments¹³⁰ and that Pinkard uses hedonism to define necessity as compulsion or addiction.¹³¹ Additionally, I emphasize that, although consciousness’ disenchantment with theory makes him focus on “the feeling and the gratification of individuality”¹³² like a hedonist, consciousness’ “*first purpose* is to become conscious of itself as an individual essence within that other self-

¹²⁴ Reid, “Music and Monosyllables,” 88.

¹²⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §362, 318.

¹²⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §362, 318.

¹²⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §362, 318.

¹²⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §362, 318.

¹²⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

¹³⁰ Reid, fn. 15, *Real Words: Language and System in Hegel*, 152.

¹³¹ Reid, fn. 3, *Real Words: Language and System in Hegel*, 151.

¹³² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 317.

consciousness.”¹³³ As such, interpretations that define pleasure as hedonism obscure consciousness’ goal. For example, Solomon is forced to conclude that:

In the *Phenomenology*, hedonism appears virtually out of nowhere—that is—right after Hegel’s discussion of phrenology and the mind-body (spirit-skull) problem.¹³⁴

That is, Solomon loses sight of consciousness’ goal in “Reason” and cannot account for the transition from “Observing Reason” to “Pleasure and Necessity” when he interprets pleasure as hedonism instead of consciousness’ attempt to know himself within another. Instead, pleasure as hedonism is presented as the:

... quite “natural” reaction—of the dedicated scientist or scholar, wholly absorbed in his or her work and rigors, breaking away for an evening or a week of sheer hedonism. John Stuart Mill again comes to mind...¹³⁵

Yet, this is too arbitrary to act as the transition between stages. Similarly, Kain explains that “Pleasure and Necessity” introduces a “hedonistic consciousness”¹³⁶ that he suggests is operating as Hegel’s defence of love against Kant’s moral duty exemplified in the stage succeeding “Pleasure and Necessity”.¹³⁷ Kain writes that:

Hegel is taking on Kant’s subtlest and most considered views and attempting to show that, even so, duty involves an abstract and alien distance that falls short of the ethical union achievable by love¹³⁸

However, this obscures the logic of the transition to and from “Pleasure and Necessity”. First, by presenting “Pleasure and Necessity” as an opportunity for Hegel to critique

¹³³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

¹³⁴ Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel*, 499.

¹³⁵ Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel*, 499-500.

¹³⁶ Kain, *Hegel and the Other*, 94.

¹³⁷ Kain writes that “Love’s unity with the other self-consciousness is certainly a movement away from individual isolation towards the universal, and if love expands to an even larger unity with others in a kingdom of ends (as we shortly shall see that it does in ‘The Law of the Heart’), it will move further towards the universal.” Kain, *Hegel and the Other*, 96.

¹³⁸ Kain, *Hegel and the Other*, 97.

Kant, rather than the logical outcome of “Observing Reason”, Kain fails to account for pleasure’s role in Reason’s certainty that consciousness is all reality. Second, Kain confuses the transition into “The Law of the Heart” by suggesting that “Pleasure and Necessity” presents an argument against the stage that *succeeds* it, rather than the reverse. Also, Pinkard interprets consciousness’ hedonistic goal as independence, writing:

For Faust, independence is thus simply unimpeded freedom to do ‘as he pleases’ unconstrained by past convention or mores.¹³⁹

But, again, this obscures the logic of the text. Consciousness is already unconstrained by convention insofar as he is individualistic and pre-communal and, far from seeking independence, consciousness’ goal is to *unify* himself with his world. As such, it is important to understand that, for Hegel, sexual pleasure is not hedonism; it is the unity between consciousness and an other that attempts to actualize Reason’s certainty that he is all reality.

Significantly, Reid emphasizes that, “according to the dialectical logic that we find in the *Phenomenology*, self-knowledge through sexual pleasure will not fail because of some external idea.”¹⁴⁰ Rather, the transition from pleasure to necessity must come from within the logic of pleasure itself. Pleasure becomes necessity because consciousness’ unity with an other is nothing more than an unmediated leap into universality that, without mediating content, consciousness is forced to ceaselessly reenact in an effort to sustain his actuality. First, consciousness experiences, not his own individuality, but his unity with an other in the sexual relation. Hegel writes:

¹³⁹ Terry Pinkard, *Hegel’s Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 93.

¹⁴⁰ Reid, “Music and Monosyllables,” 86.

... the actualization of this purpose is itself the sublation of the purpose, since self-consciousness becomes not an object to itself as *this individual self-consciousness* but to a greater degree as the *unity* of itself and the other self-consciousness, and thereby as a sublated individual, that is, as *universal*.¹⁴¹

That is, when consciousness achieves his purpose—“to become conscious of itself as an individual essence within that other self-consciousness”¹⁴²—what consciousness really experiences is the *unity* between himself and his sexual partner, *not his individuality*. Reid describes this, writing that pleasure’s “problem is that rather than feeling itself (the ‘I am I’), what the individual feels is the absolute unity of the two self-consciousnesses.”¹⁴³

Moreover, consciousness attempts to actualize himself “by way of himself” meaning there is no social content, such as marriage, to mediate this relation to his sexual partner beyond “the *simple individual* feeling”¹⁴⁴ of pleasure. As such, the sexual relation is “a pure leap”¹⁴⁵ where the “transition here is from out the form of the ‘*one*’ to that of *universality*,”¹⁴⁶ and,

This *transition* of its living being into lifeless necessity thus appears to it to be a topsy-turvy inversion which has been mediated by nothing at all.¹⁴⁷

That is, without social content to mediate his relationship with his sexual partner, consciousness experiences this unity as an abstract and lifeless universality, what Reid calls “the unmediated encounter between the singular and the universal.”¹⁴⁸

¹⁴¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §362, 318.

¹⁴² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

¹⁴³ Reid, “Music and Monosyllables,” 88-9.

¹⁴⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §365, 321.

¹⁴⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §365, 321.

¹⁴⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §364, 320.

¹⁴⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §365, 320.

Consciousness experiences this abstract and lifeless universality as necessity.

Hegel writes:

... the simple and empty but nonetheless inexorable and impassive *relation* whose work is merely the nothingness of individuality. Necessity is this *firm connection* because what is connected are the pure essentialities, that is, the empty abstractions [where each] exists merely in relation to its opposite. Thus, they cannot be decoupled from each other.¹⁴⁹

That is, consciousness experiences necessity as the requirement of this coupling, without which consciousness ceases to exist. Yet, since the sexual union is temporary insofar as it ends in orgasm, this entails that consciousness' actualization takes place but for a moment. Thus, pleasure, which consciousness experiences as a contradiction, becomes necessity. Hegel writes:

The pleasure enjoyed, to be sure, positively signifies that [consciousness] has come to be objective self-consciousness *in its own eyes*, but it equally negatively signifies that it has sublated *itself*... its experience enters its consciousness as a contradiction in which the attained actuality of its individuality sees itself destroyed by the negative *essence*, which confronts it as empty and devoid of actuality, but which nonetheless is its all-consuming power.¹⁵⁰

That is, the sexual union is a contradiction insofar as the very attempt by consciousness to actualize himself in another self-consciousness leads to his own destruction in the momentariness of sexual ecstasy. Reid writes:

On the one hand... in the feeling of union and wholeness, the individual consciousness feels its loss in the universal. On the one hand, this self-loss may be understood as the dissolution of the individual into an endless series of similar, singular acts, in the incessant oscillation between desire and satisfaction. It is crucial to realize that both cases are ultimately the same. For Hegel, a bad infinity of singular instances is just another expression of the unmediated universal...¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ Reid, "Music and Monosyllables," 87.

¹⁴⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §363, 319.

¹⁵⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §363, 318.

¹⁵¹ Reid, "Music and Monosyllables," 91.

That is, the momentariness of the sexual union requires its ceaseless repetition and it is the indifferent sameness of each orgasm that generates a bad infinity that, because it lacks meaningful mediation, is an abstract universal.¹⁵² As such, consciousness experiences the bad infinity of his sexual encounters as “an empty and alien necessity, a *dead* actuality.”¹⁵³ Therefore,

Abstract necessity therefore counts as the merely negative and uncomprehend *power of universality* in which individuality is shattered.¹⁵⁴

That is, consciousness, who sought to experience his own individuality in the sexual union, is “pulverized”¹⁵⁵ by the universality of the union. Consciousness, “*helped itself to life*, but in doing so, it to an even greater degree laid hold of death.”¹⁵⁶

Necessity as the abstract universality of the unmediated sexual union is not found in Goethe’s early version of *Faust*. Thus, as Reid notes below, scholars who use Hegel’s reference to *Faust* to interpret how pleasure becomes necessity obscure necessity’s meaning. Harris writes that, “Necessity appears in the shape of *Gretchen’s* fate,”¹⁵⁷ i.e. the birth of a child and the social condemnation that contributes to the death of that child, *Gretchen’s* mother, and *Gretchen* herself—all of which is “*Faust’s* fault.”¹⁵⁸ Similarly,

¹⁵² Reid writes: “We may say that the feeling of *petite mort* that arises in sexual satisfaction is actually this very intuition [i.e. of death], the inevitability of death as a biological necessity, natural death as an imposed fate.” Reid, “Music and Monosyllables,” 89.

¹⁵³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §363, 320.

¹⁵⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §365, 321.

¹⁵⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §364, 321. Notably, Reid emphasizes Hegel’s use of the term “pulverized” to describe the individual’s relation to universality and compares consciousness’ experience to the way that Don Giovanni is literally crushed by the dead actuality of the statue of the Commendatore in Mozart’s opera. Reid, “Music and Monosyllables,” 92.

¹⁵⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §364, 321.

¹⁵⁷ Harris, *The Odyssey of Spirit*, vol. 2 of *Hegel’s Ladder*, 27.

¹⁵⁸ Harris, *The Odyssey of Spirit*, vol. 2 of *Hegel’s Ladder*, 28.

Kalkavage writes that necessity is both the child and the social condemnation of pre-marital sex, writing:

Pleasure or immediate gratification passes immediately into its opposite, universality in the form of a *family*. Sex has unintended consequences.... Faust's union with Gretchen sets off a whole chain of events within the ethical realm, events that lead to Gretchen's tragic destruction, which is Faust's *work*.¹⁵⁹

That is, necessity is the family, the social world, and consciousness' guilt. Interestingly, for Ludwig Siep, necessity arises from two things: the logic of pleasure itself and, entirely separately, the social world. Siep first describes necessity as pleasure's failure, writing:

Yet this success, this attainment of its goal, produces an experience that contradicts the 'thesis' that was supposed to be confirmed. In the realization of its end, in this individual self-realization through pleasurable unification with the other, consciousness experiences itself not as an individual "but rather as the unity of itself and the other self-consciousness, hence as an individual that is only a moment, or a universal."¹⁶⁰

That is, the logic of pleasure itself transforms into necessity in a way similar to Reid's interpretation above. However, Siep continues, arguing that:

This reversal of the intended self-realization arises not only from pleasurable unification, but also from the opposition of the social world to the "lawless" lovers—an opposition which Faust and Gretchen, as representatives of all couples who are dismissive of norms, must experience in the course of their "tragedy."¹⁶¹

That is, necessity also arises from the social condemnation of Faust and Gretchen's pre-marital sexual relationship and thus, confusingly, arises from two separate things. As such, interpreting necessity through Goethe's *Faust* results in a definition of necessity as

¹⁵⁹ Kalkavage, *The Logic of Desire*, 193.

¹⁶⁰ Ludwig Siep, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Daniel Smyth (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 138. The material that Siep references within this quote is Smyth's translation of a passage from §362 in Hegel's *Phenomenology*.

¹⁶¹ Siep, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, 139.

the social condemnation of Faust's pre-marital sexual relation with Gretchen, the birth of a child, and Gretchen's death, all of which consciousness experiences as his the product of his own actions. However, although this may be an accurate description of Goethe's text, this interpretation either ignores the way in which necessity is internal to the logic of pleasure or arbitrarily adds a second concept of necessity, generating an inaccurate description of Hegel's text.

As such, Reid argues that, "exclusive reference to [*Faust*], as an exegetical tool, is neither justified by the Hegel text, nor completely helpful,"¹⁶² and emphasizes the problem this interpretive approach creates for Harris, writing:

Harris encounters this difficulty when he seeks to use the early *Faust* to explain necessity, which he ambiguously portrays as representing the social world, the natural world, abstract reason, and blind fate. Thus, Gretchen's pregnancy is significant in that it can be said to represent both natural necessity and the inevitability of social reprobation. However, relying on Gretchen's fate as a key to understanding Hegel's idea of necessity is unsatisfying from a philosophical point of view... There must be a deeper, less external reason for sexual pleasure's necessary culmination and failure... [namely,] the unmediated encounter between the singular individual and the universal.¹⁶³

That is, the use of *Faust* to interpret necessity defines the concept ambiguously as family, social condemnation, Gretchen's tragedy and Faust's guilt—all of which are too external and unrelated to pleasure as consciousness' attempt to know himself in an other as outlined above. Moreover, interpreting necessity in this way is generally inconsistent with the text. First, as we have seen, consciousness is too individualistic in "Reason" for necessity to be social. Second, defining necessity as the family is problematic both because a child would mediate consciousness' sexual relation to his other and because, as

¹⁶² Reid, "Music and Monosyllables," 87.

¹⁶³ Reid, "Music and Monosyllables," 87.

we shall see in the parent-child relationship of “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman”, the child is experienced by the parents as a type of actualization. Finally, the immediate transition from individuality to universality, as a “topsy-turvy inversion which has been mediated by nothing at all,”¹⁶⁴ is not tragic. Reid writes:

... the unmediated relationship between the individual and the universal and the state of general indifference into which the relationship dissolves are just as easily the stuff of comedy as terror, but they are *not* tragedy.¹⁶⁵

That is, this unmediated relationship contributes to Reid’s suggestion of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* as a comedic reference for pleasure’s transformation into necessity in this stage.¹⁶⁶

Alternatively, some scholars, such as Houlgate, neither use *Faust* to interpret necessity nor define necessity as the bad infinity of sexual orgasm. Houlgate defines pleasure in terms of love—with consciousness’ other interpreted as “a friend or lover”¹⁶⁷—and defines necessity as the way that loving a person can make someone “los[e] all that he is.”¹⁶⁸ Consciousness’ self-loss is abstract universality, for Houlgate, because consciousness is crushed “not merely by *another self*, but by something that is the sheer *negation* of himself.” That is, because consciousness is selfishly concerned with finding himself, he is not mature enough to “allow the other... to be a part of [himself]”

¹⁶⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §365, 320.

¹⁶⁵ Reid, “Music and Monosyllables,” 94-5.

¹⁶⁶ In contrast, Kalkavage writes: “Nor is [consciousness] Don Juan: he does not seek the conquest of one woman after another. He falls in love with Gretchen and wants the pleasure of union with her, and her alone.” Kalkavage, *The Logic of Desire*, 191. Yet, there is no evidence in the text that consciousness *loves* the other or that, in this selfish and self-gratifying state, he would restrict himself to monogamy in “Pleasure and Necessity”.

¹⁶⁷ Stephen Houlgate, *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit: A Reader’s Guide* (London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 135.

¹⁶⁸ Stephen Houlgate, *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit: A Reader’s Guide* (London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 135.

and he fails to recognize the other as a self. But, although it is true that consciousness in “Pleasure and Necessity” is not mature enough for genuine recognition, Houlgate identifies universality with consciousness’ other, entirely evacuating her individuality. In contrast, Hegel emphasizes that the two self-consciousnesses “self-sufficiently and indifferently durably exist in the face of each other”¹⁶⁹ and, rather than evacuating consciousness’ other, Hegel reinforces their unity such that: “Necessity is this *firm connection*... they cannot be decoupled from each other.”¹⁷⁰ Thus, Reid’s interpretation, which emphasizes the sexual element of pleasure and its failure, more accurately capture the meaning of Hegel’s text. Reid argues that consciousness loses himself in the bad infinity of sexual orgasm, not in the other, writing:

The erotic form of consciousness, attempting to find himself immediately in the other, loses itself in an endless series, in a mechanistic, bad infinity that appears to it as a foreign, inevitable destiny, as a form of lifeless necessity.¹⁷¹

That is, consciousness tries to find himself in the other but what actually happens in that consciousness loses himself in necessity as the ceaseless repetition of the sexual union, a bad infinity that is equally a universal and series of indifferent moments.¹⁷²

Finally, consciousness transitions out of “Pleasure and Necessity” into the next stage, “The Law of The Heart And The Insanity of Self-Conceit”, when consciousness takes this abstract universality as himself. Hegel writes:

¹⁶⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §362, 317.

¹⁷⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §363, 319.

¹⁷¹ Reid, “Music and Monosyllables,” 91.

¹⁷² Similarly, Hyppolite alludes to the ceaseless repetition of orgasm in defining necessity, writing: “At this stage the universal, to which life ever refers but which it never actualizes, is for man, but in its poorest, barest form—as death, perhaps, but a death at every instant.” Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure*, trans. Samuel Cherniak and John Heckman, 283.

However, *in itself* self-consciousness has survived this loss, for this necessity, that is, this pure universality, is its own essence. This reflection of consciousness into itself, which consists in knowing necessity as *itself*, is a new shape of consciousness.¹⁷³

That is, consciousness, who is still seeking to actualize the certainty that he is all reality, takes the abstract universality of necessity as his own essence. As such, Hegel writes:

This individuality is thereby no longer the frivolity of the previous shape, which merely wanted individual pleasure. Rather, it is the seriousness of a high purpose, which seeks its pleasure in the exhibition of its own *admirably excellent* essence and in bringing about the *welfare of mankind*.¹⁷⁴

That is, this new shape of consciousness no longer acts out of his own selfish self-gratification. Instead, consciousness sees himself as acting for the greater good of mankind. Thus, Reid notes,

Hegel's dialectic of sexual pleasure carries within it the intuition of its own natural death, which is then internalized as the intuition of a pure, universal essence.¹⁷⁵

That is, Hegel logically connects two practical attitudes that seem to be complete opposites: the selfish pleasure-seeker and the moralist.¹⁷⁶

In conclusion, in "Pleasure and Necessity", consciousness attempts, and fails, to elevate the certainty that he is all reality to an actual truth. Pleasure is consciousness' attempt to know himself as an individual within an other via sexual intercourse, and is not merely hedonism. Pleasure becomes necessity when consciousness experiences the unmediated unity of the sexual relation, not his individuality, as an abstract universality, a dead actuality, whose ceaseless repetition pulverizes him. The meaning of necessity

¹⁷³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §366, 321.

¹⁷⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §370, 323.

¹⁷⁵ Reid, "Music and Monosyllables," 89-90.

¹⁷⁶ Reid compares this to Kierkegaard's transition from the esthetic stage to the moral stage in "Music and Monosyllables," 90.

cannot be deduced from Goethe's *Faust*. Consciousness moves beyond "Pleasure and Necessity" by taking this necessity as his own essence, transitioning into the next stage: "The Law of The Heart And The Insanity of Self-Conceit".

Part Two: The Problem

The Female Reader Alienated

Chapter 3: Consciousness Is a Man in Hegel's System

In the first part of my thesis, I presented the *Phenomenology* as a *Bildungsroman* that is important for Hegelian science and I summarized “Pleasure and Necessity”. In this second part, I discuss two concepts: male consciousness and the female reader. Consciousness, the protagonist of the *Phenomenology*, is usually thought of as a gender-neutral disembodied thing, detached from questions of masculinity and femininity generally. However, in this chapter, I argue that consciousness is a male person for Hegel. I make this argument, *not* to suggest in the succeeding chapter that the female reader is alienated from the *Phenomenology* simply because she does not share consciousness’ sex, but in order to demonstrate that masculinity and femininity are germane to a discussion of the *Phenomenology*. To begin, I argue that consciousness is a person and that, contrary to convention, consciousness’ pronouns should be translated as “he” or “she”—not “it”—in English. Furthermore, I argue that consciousness is a male person based on evidence found in the *Philosophy of Right* and the *Phenomenology*. Specifically, this evidence is found in: first, Hegel’s discussion of the possibility of female education in the *Philosophy of Right* and Hegel’s reference to Faust in “Pleasure and Necessity”; second, Faust and Gretchen’s sexual relationship in “Pleasure and Necessity” and Hegel’s critique of Friedrich Schlegel in the *Philosophy of Right*; and third, the husband-wife relationship in “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” in the *Phenomenology*.

The first barrier to considering consciousness as a man is that English translations of the *Phenomenology* refer to consciousness as “it.” In German, consciousness, *das Bewußtsein*, is a neuter noun and, since German pronouns reflect their noun’s gender

instead the person's gender, consciousness is referred to as "es" or "ihm," meaning "it." It is grammatically correct, in German, to speak of the fork (*die Gabel*) as "she" (*sie*), the spoon (*der Löffel*) as "he" (*er*), and the girl (*das Mädchen*) as "it" (*es*). However, in English, it is grammatically correct to speak of all cutlery as "it" and the girl as "she" because, by contrast, nouns in English are not intrinsically gendered, and instead we use the pronoun "it" for things and "he"/"she" for persons based on his or her sex or gender.

Consciousness, I argue, is a person and yet consciousness' pronouns are translated in English as "it." For example, in the following passage, two neuter nouns, self-consciousness (*das Selbstbewußtsein*) and individual (*das Individuum*), both referred to as "it" in the German, are assigned different pronouns in translation despite having equal levels of personhood in the text:

Die Wissenschaft von ihrer Seite verlangt vom Selbstbewußtsein, daß *es* in diesen Äther sich erhoben habe, um mit ihr und in ihr leben zu können und zu leben. Umgekehrt hat das Individuum das Recht zu fodern, daß die Wissenschaft *ihm* die Leiter wenigstens zu diesem Standpunkte reiche.¹⁷⁷

For its part, science requires that self-consciousness shall have elevated *itself* into this ether in order to be able to live with science and to live in science, and, for that matter, to be able to live at all. Conversely, the individual has the right to demand that science provide *him* at least with the ladder to reach this standpoint¹⁷⁸

That is, in the German text, self-consciousness and the individual are both referred to as "it."¹⁷⁹ As such, it is strange that, upon translation, the individual is designated as a person with the pronoun "him" while self-consciousness remains as "it"—especially since self-consciousness elevates himself (*er-hoben*) and *lives* in science, namely, since

¹⁷⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §26, 22. My italics.

¹⁷⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §26, 22. My italics.

¹⁷⁹ The German dative pronoun "ihm" is used for both "him" and "it" but, in the case of a neuter noun like *das Individuum*, would have the neuter sense of "it."

self-consciousness is acting like a person in this passage.¹⁸⁰ Despite this, English translations of the *Phenomenology* routinely assign consciousness the pronoun “it”, an arbitrary convention that spills over into most commentaries and obstructs discussions of masculinity and femininity in Hegelian science.

One scholar who breaks with this convention is Judith Butler in *Subjects of Desire*. There, Butler assigns consciousness the pronoun “he” and writes in a footnote:

Although Hegel's subject is a fictive personage, and clearly without recognizable gender, I will refer to this fiction as “he.” This procedure ought not to be taken as an identification of the universal with the masculine, but is intended to avoid an unwieldy grammatical situation.¹⁸¹

That is, Butler refers to consciousness as “he” because referring to consciousness as something other than “it” is required by English grammar. However, she writes that consciousness is “clearly without recognizable gender” and cautions against reading too much into her choice of “he” over “she.” Although Butler is correct to refer to consciousness as a person, in what follows, I argue that consciousness does have a recognizably male gender.

Within the Hegelian system, consciousness is male.¹⁸² In what follows, I discuss some of the instances where this is explicit. First, I compare Hegel’s discussion of the education of women in the *Philosophy of Right* to Faust in “Pleasure and Necessity” to

¹⁸⁰ A.V. Miller’s translation of the *Phenomenology* makes a similar translation choice, he translates the section under discussion as: “Science on its part requires that self-consciousness should have raised *itself* into this Aether in order to be able to live—and [actually] to live—with Science and in Science. Conversely, the individual has the right to demand that Science should at least provide *him* with the ladder to this standpoint, should show *him* this standpoint within himself.” G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller, § 26, 14-5. My italics.

¹⁸¹ Judith P. Butler, *Subject of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-century France*, (New York, USA: Columbia University Press, 1987), 20.

¹⁸² That consciousness is male does not mean that the female reader is automatically alienated from the text. Alienation requires a stronger exclusion of the female reader, namely that she is somehow prevented from sinking into the text to (re)think it speculatively, to be outlined in the succeeding chapter.

conclude that consciousness is male. Second, I compare Hegel's critique of Friedrich Schlegel in the *Philosophy of Right* to Faust and Gretchen's sexual relationship to demonstrate that Hegel does not believe that men and women enter the sexual relation on equal terms. Finally, I examine the husband-wife relationship in "Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman", to show that Hegel does not believe that women experience sexual desire as a form of consciousness and, as such, consciousness must be male.

First, I discuss Hegel's comments on the education of women in the *Philosophy of Right* to demonstrate that Hegel thinks that women cannot study science and, therefore, cannot be Faust in "Pleasure and Necessity". In the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel discusses the ability of women to be educated, saying:

Women are capable of education, but they are not made for activities which demand a universal faculty such as the more advanced sciences, philosophy, and certain forms of artistic production. Women may have happy ideas [*Einfälle*], taste, and elegance, but they cannot attain to the ideal [*das Ideale*]... Women are educated—one knows not how—by, as it were, breathing in ideas, by living rather than by acquiring knowledge. The status of manhood, on the other hand, is attained only through the achievement of thought and much technical exertion.¹⁸³

Here, Hegel tells us that women are incapable of being educated in advanced sciences and philosophy. He describes their education as passive, absorbing ideas like breathing instead of actively acquiring knowledge like a man. On the one hand, this means that women are incapable of reading the *Phenomenology* as a *Bildungsroman* because, according to Hegel, this text is not a "royal road to science,"¹⁸⁴ and requires active reading since "true thoughts and scientific insight can only be won by the labor of the

¹⁸³ G.W.F. Hegel, *Outlines of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. Stephen Houlgate, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2008), addition to §166, 169.

¹⁸⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §70, 64.

concept,”¹⁸⁵ i.e. the education that Hegel ascribes to manhood. Yet, although this tells us that Hegel believes women are not capable of being educated in philosophy and Hegelian science, this does not necessarily bar consciousness from being a woman since consciousness is not a philosopher; rather, we the readers are the philosophers. That said, consciousness cannot be a woman because in “Pleasure and Necessity”, consciousness—as Faust—is a scientist and, for Hegel, women are incapable of being educated in science.¹⁸⁶ Still, it could be possible that the sexual union in “Pleasure and Necessity” is equal and reciprocal such that Faust and Gretchen could exchange roles. That is, Faust is a scientist but Gretchen becomes the protagonist of the stage.

As such, second, I argue that this is not possible. By comparing “Pleasure and Necessity” to Hegel’s critique of Schlegel in the *Philosophy of Right*, I first demonstrate that Hegel believes that men and women are naturally different in a way that requires consciousness to be a man in “Pleasure and Necessity”. Next, by comparing Hegel’s discussion of men and women in the *System of Ethical Life* with Schlegel’s description of the “loveliest situation,” I demonstrate that Hegel believes men and women are not equal in the sexual relation such that Faust and Gretchen cannot exchange roles.

Although, as I demonstrated in the previous chapter, Hegel’s reference to an early version of Goethe’s *Faust* cannot be used as the sole interpretive guide to the entire

¹⁸⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §70, 64.

¹⁸⁶ The first paragraph of “Pleasure and Necessity” ends with a quote from an early version of Goethe’s *Faust*, which summarizes the transition from “Observing Reason”, where consciousness is a natural scientist and psychologist, to “Pleasure and Necessity”.

It despises intellect and science
Man’s highest gifts –
It has given itself over to the devil,
And must perish.

section of “Pleasure and Necessity”, Hegel does invite the reader to represent consciousness’ sexual relationship as Faust’s relationship with Gretchen. Like Faust, consciousness becomes weary of a lifeless science and seeks to actualize himself by seducing the beautiful and naïve Gretchen, who presents herself “in the way that a ripe fruit is plucked which willingly concedes itself as it is being so taken.”¹⁸⁷ Thus, Gretchen is the first figure within the *Phenomenology* who is explicitly a woman. However, she is not a figure of consciousness but a figure of consciousness’ object. Hegel’s reference to *Faust* in “Pleasure and Necessity” represents consciousness as a man and his object as a woman—but can we simply switch them? Hegel’s critique of Friedrich Schlegel in the *Philosophy of Right* demonstrates that Hegel thinks this reversal of roles is impossible.

Hegel’s critique of Schlegel demonstrates that consciousness must be a man in “Pleasure and Necessity” because men are active while women are passive. In the Addition to his discussion of marriage in the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel discusses Schlegel’s “argument not unknown to seducers”¹⁸⁸ that the “surrender to sensual impulse”¹⁸⁹ is a superior proof of love to the wedding ceremony.¹⁹⁰ Against this, Hegel defends marriage by arguing that, in marriage, the, “difference in the natural

¹⁸⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §361, 317.

¹⁸⁸ Hegel, *Outlines of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. Houlgate, §164, 168.

¹⁸⁹ Hegel, *Outlines of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. Houlgate, §164, 168.

¹⁹⁰ Schlegel makes himself the target of philosophy when he (like consciousness in “Pleasure and Necessity”) elevates sex above physical sensation to an act that allows the lovers to look “deeply into the secrets of nature” and feel, “that everything lived eternally and that even death was only an amiable deception” (Schlegel, *Lucinde*, trans. Firchow, 43). Schlegel presents this sexual enlightenment as an alternative to philosophical methods [“...I wasn’t particularly disposed to classify and analyze abstract concepts. Instead I lost myself gladly and deeply... (44)”]. The lovers experience an insatiable desire for one another and it is this desire that opens them up to each other, transforming them from two individuals into one united life, a harmony without gap [“... the common pulse of our united life and we embraced each other with as much wantonness as religion. I begged you that for once you might give yourself completely over to frenzy, and I implored you to be insatiable. Still, I listened with cool composure for every faint sign of bliss, so that not a single trace might escape me and leave a gap in our harmony (44).”].

characteristics of the two sexes has a rational basis and consequently acquires an intellectual and ethical significance.”¹⁹¹ That is, for Hegel, the natural difference between men and women is that “the former is powerful and active, the latter passive.”¹⁹² At the ethical level, this translates into the following:

It must be noticed in connection with relations between men and women that a girl in surrendering her body loses her honour. With a man, however, this is not so much the case, because he has a field for ethical activity outside the family. A girl is destined in essence only for the marriage relationship; it is therefore demanded of her that her love shall take the form of marriage and that the different moments in love shall attain their true rational relation to each other.¹⁹³

That is, due to the natural differences between men and women, women are limited to the sphere of the family while men are not and, in having sex with a man outside of the marriage contract, a woman sacrifices an important aspect of her individuality and a man does not.¹⁹⁴ This is then relevant for “Pleasure and Necessity” because, since women are not naturally active, they do not experience pleasure as actualization. Instead, she experiences sex as a surrendering of her body—incompatible with actualization—sacrificing her “honour” instead of externalizing her individuality.

Schlegel suggests a fundamental equality between men and women, going as far as to say that men and women can exchange sexual roles. However, Hegel believes that the natural inequality of the sexes plus the logic of desire itself makes this exchange

¹⁹¹ Hegel, *Outlines of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. Houlgate, §165, 168.

¹⁹² Hegel, *Outlines of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. Houlgate, §166, 168.

¹⁹³ Hegel, *Outlines of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. Houlgate, §164, 168.

¹⁹⁴ In the margins of Hegel’s critique of Schlegel, Hegel writes, “*Sophisterei*”—further evidence that Hegel views the sexual relationship between men and women as fundamentally unequal. Reid explains: “The seducer uses a sophistical argument in order to demand that the girl prove the freedom and depth of her love by giving herself to him sexually. In this act of seduction we find what qualifies as *Sophisterei*: sophistry as an argumentation employing the arms of the understanding (*Verstand*) and its dominating aspect, linked to a bad form of particular subjectivity that is out to gain what it desires.... In that *Sophisterei* implies both desire and argumentation, it is perfectly suited to sexual seduction.” Reid, *The Anti-Romantic: Hegel Against Romanticism*, 19.

impossible. Schlegel calls the exchange of roles the “loveliest situation in the world”, where:

One above all is wittiest and most beautiful: when we exchange roles... I see here a wonderful, deeply meaningful allegory of the development of man and woman to full and complete humanity.¹⁹⁵

That is, Schlegel suggests a fundamental equality between men and women in the sexual relation, such that each is able to perform the sexual role of the other. In contrast, in his *System of Ethical Life*, Hegel tells us that “The sexes... are not absolutely equal,”¹⁹⁶ and it is impossible for Faust and Gretchen to exchange roles due to the logic of desire itself. Erotic desire or pleasure involves an imbalance between the desiring subject and the object of desire. Hegel explains,

The inconceivability of this being of oneself in another belongs therefore to nature [and as such,] remains in inequality and therefore in desire in which one side is determined as something subjective and the other as something objective.¹⁹⁷

That is, desire originates in the difference between men and women and, more importantly, because someone who desires always determines his other as object, the erotic relationship between lovers is fundamentally unequal.¹⁹⁸ Therefore, due to the natural inequality between the sexes and the logic of desire, Hegel believes that a reversal of sexual roles—with Gretchen as the protagonist and Faust as her object—is impossible.

Third, I demonstrate that consciousness is a man with reference to “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman”, the first moment of Spirit in the *Phenomenology*. This

¹⁹⁵ Schlegel, Friedrich. *Lucinde and Fragments*, trans. Firchow, 49.

¹⁹⁶ G. W. F. Hegel, *System of Ethical Life and First Philosophy of Spirit*, trans. H.S. Harris and T. M. Knox, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1979), 110.

¹⁹⁷ Hegel, *System of Ethical Life and First Philosophy of Spirit*, trans. Harris and Knox, 110.

¹⁹⁸ For more on this idea, see Jeffrey Reid, “La Jeune Fille et la Mort: Hegel et le Desir Erotique,” in *Laval Theologique Et Philosophique* 61, no. 2 (2005): 345–353.

stage is significant for two reasons. First, Hegel reviews “Pleasure and Necessity” from the perspective of a stage of consciousness where he explicitly speaks in terms of men and women. Second, Hegel’s description of the husband-wife relationship demonstrates that Hegel does not think that women experience pleasure as a form of consciousness and, therefore, it is impossible for consciousness to be a woman in “Pleasure and Necessity”.

Because “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” plays a role in both the current chapter and “Chapter 5: So What of Antigone?”, allow me to first explain the interesting place that “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” occupies in the *Phenomenology* before moving onto the husband-wife relationship. “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” is the first stage we encounter in the “Spirit” section of the *Phenomenology*.¹⁹⁹ “Spirit” comes on the scene once “Reason” has “elevated to truth its certainty of being all reality... conscious of itself as its own world and of the world as itself.”²⁰⁰ Here, the “objective actual world” has lost all of its alienness, independence, and separation and the *Phenomenology*’s protagonist finds himself grounded in the ethical substance which “engenders itself through the *activities* of each and all as their unity and their selfsameness.”²⁰¹ For consciousness, “Spirit” is only achieved after he moves through “Consciousness”, “Self-Consciousness”, and “Reason”. However, for the Hegelian scientist:

¹⁹⁹ Spirit is divided into three main subsections: “True Spirit: Ethical Life”, “Spirit Alienated From Itself: Cultural Development”, and “Spirit Certain of Itself: Morality”. “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” is the first stage within the first subsection.

²⁰⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §437, 383 (§438 in Miller).

²⁰¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §438, 384 (§439 in Miller).

Spirit is thereby the self-supporting, absolute, real essence. All previous shapes of consciousness are abstractions from it. They are just this, that spirit analyses itself, distinguishes its moments, and lingers at each individual moment. This activity of isolating such moments has spirit itself as its *presupposition* and its *durable existence*...²⁰²

That is, “Spirit” is the first three abstract sections of the *Phenomenology* as they are, namely how they exist and have existed in the world as history.²⁰³ We find this historical section in the *Phenomenology* because, as Hegel writes in the “Preface”:

Both because the substance of the individual, the world spirit, has possessed the patience to pass through these forms over a long stretch of time and to take upon itself the prodigious labor of world history, and because it could not have reached consciousness about itself in any lesser way, the individual spirit itself cannot comprehend its own substance with anything less.²⁰⁴

That is, because the *Phenomenology* is just as much the journey of the reader’s Absolute knowledge as it is the Absolute’s own self-knowledge, a possibility only reached through the labour of world history, our protagonist finds himself in an explicitly historical section of the *Phenomenology*.

“Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman”, as the first moment of “Spirit”, is the most abstract and natural, exemplified by ancient Athenian society. It is abstract insofar as ethical life “collapses into the formal universality of law,”²⁰⁵ namely the man-made laws of the *polis* and the divine laws of the family. It is natural insofar as Spirit has to know itself immediately before it can know itself as Spirit *per se*; as such the world is

²⁰² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §438, 384 (§439 in Miller).

²⁰³ Hegel writes: “In this content of the ethical world, we see that the purposes which the previous substanceless shapes of consciousness had set for themselves are now achieved” Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §460, 402 (§461 in Miller). That is, consciousness previously lacked substance as contentful mediation between consciousness and his object. As such, Spirit is not *ex nihilo* new but a revisiting of the previous subsections of the *Phenomenology* with ethical substance.

²⁰⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §29, 25.

²⁰⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §441, 386 (§442 in Miller).

divided into two spheres based on the natural division between men and women. That is, the law of the *polis* is the sphere of men and the law of the family is the sphere of women. Furthermore, it is the activities of these spheres themselves, through which ethical substance “engenders itself,”²⁰⁶ that expose “the contradiction of *those powers* into which substance has estranged itself”²⁰⁷ and causes the failure is this stage.

“Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” is significant for consciousness’ masculinity because, when Hegel reviews “Pleasure and Necessity” from this standpoint, he associates consciousness with the sphere of men. “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” is an *Erinnerung*—a recollection that is also a deepening²⁰⁸—of the stages that consciousness has passed through in “Reason”. When Hegel reflects on “Pleasure and Necessity” from this later standpoint, he writes:

The individual seeking the pleasure of *enjoying his individuality* finds it in the family, and the necessity within which that pleasure slips away is his own self-consciousness as a citizen of his nation.²⁰⁹

That is, consciousness, who previously attempted to actualize himself through sex in “Pleasure and Necessity”, now achieves the status of “*actual consciousness*,”²¹⁰ through his work as male Greek citizen because his laws, as both man-made and real, are “*actuality conscious of itself*.”²¹¹ The citizen has his “actual vitality in the

²⁰⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §438, 384 (§439 in Miller).

²⁰⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §444, 388 (§445 in Miller).

²⁰⁸ *Erinnerung* means recollection but it also contains the word ‘inner’ as in deeper, meaning that later stages of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* are the return of earlier stages, yet at a deeper and more substantial level.

²⁰⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §460, 402. (§461 in Miller).

²¹⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §446, 389 (§447 in Miller).

²¹¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §447, 390 (§448 in Miller).

government,”²¹² overcoming his naturalness by working towards “*virtue*, towards a life lived in and for the universal.”²¹³ Thus, consciousness, as citizen in the *polis*, has achieved consciousness’ purpose in “Pleasure and Necessity”. However, this achievement pertains only to the sphere of men because, Hegel writes:

The brother leaves this *immediate, elemental*, and for that reason genuinely *negative* ethical life of the family in order to acquire and to bring forth the actual ethical life which is conscious of itself... He makes a transition from the divine law, in whose sphere he had lived, to the human law. However, either the sister becomes, or the wife remains, the overseer of the household and the guardian of the divine law.²¹⁴

That is, the brother leaves the family to become actual consciousness. However, because the woman remains within the family, she is an “unreal [*unwirkliche*] shadow,”²¹⁵ “unconscious spirit,”²¹⁶ or is “unaware,”²¹⁷ “natural,”²¹⁸ and “immediate being.”²¹⁹ That is, consciousness is a man in “Pleasure and Necessity”.

Similarly, in “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman”, the family transforms the necessity of “Pleasure and Necessity”—that abstract universality that pulverized consciousness through the threat of death—into the ceremonial burial as “something done.” Here, Hegel presents burial as significant only for men, suggesting that only men need this type of ceremonial burial to mediate the activity of his life with the universality of death. Hegel writes:

²¹² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §454, 396 (§455 in Miller).

²¹³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §450, 391 (§451 in Miller).

²¹⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §447-8, 400-1 (§448-9 in Miller).

²¹⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §450, 393 (§451 in Miller).

²¹⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §462, 405 (§463 in Miller).

²¹⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §449, 391 (§450 in Miller).

²¹⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §449, 391 (§450 in Miller) and Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §450, 391 (§451 in Miller).

²¹⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §450, 391 (§451 in Miller).

The duty of the family member is thus to augment this aspect so that his final *being*, that is, this *universal* being, would also not belong solely to nature and remain something non-rational. It is to make it so that it too may be *something done*... individuality crosses over into this *abstract* negativity, which, without consolation or reconciliation *in itself*, must receive them *essentially* by means of an *actual* and *external action*... It thereby comes to pass that the *dead*, universal *being*, is elevated into a being returned into itself, a *being-for-itself*, that is, the powerless pure *singular* singularity is elevated to *universal individuality*.²²⁰

That is, women save the male citizen from being entirely consumed by the abstract negativity of universal being—i.e. death—by mediating his relationship with the universal through the burial as ‘something done.’ The male citizen, who initially left the family to become actual consciousness in the *polis*, returns home (*bei sich*) through burial where the family, “weds their kin to the womb of the earth.”²²¹ As such, consciousness, whose individualistic actualization was pulverized by abstract universality in “Pleasure and Necessity”, must be a man because only men require ceremonial burial to mediate the relationship between the civic actuality of their life and the universality of their death.

Finally, consciousness in “Pleasure and Necessity” is a man, for Hegel, because Hegel explains in “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” that women do not experience pleasure as a form of consciousness, i.e. as a desire-laden way of knowing oneself within an other. The sexual relation between the husband and wife is merely,

... *natural* self-cognizance and not ethical self-cognizance, it is merely the *representation* and *picture* of spirit, not actual spirit itself.²²²

That is, the husband-wife relationship is merely the recognition of their natural sexual differences in the physical sexual interaction. But, instead of desiring “*this* man,”²²³ a

²²⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §451, 393-4 (§450 in Miller).

²²¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §451, 395 (§450 in Miller).

²²² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §455, 397-8 (§456 in Miller).

²²³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §456, 399 (§457 in Miller).

woman “remains both immediately universal and alien to the individuality of desire”²²⁴ because, “these female relationships are grounded not on sentiment but on the universal.”²²⁵ That is, the wife is too universal to conceive of herself individually and her relationships with others are grounded on the universal itself. This contrasts to the husband, where “as a citizen, he possesses the *self-conscious* power of *universality*, the life of the social whole, he thereby wins for himself the right of *desire*.”²²⁶ Thus, Hegel writes that, the woman’s “individuality is a matter of *indifference* and the wife goes without the moment of knowing herself as *this* self in an other.”²²⁷ That is, she does not experience sexual intercourse as a form knowing herself as this individual within another. Thus, consciousness is a man in “Pleasure and Necessity”—first, because pleasure is partly, “activity that of *desire*,”²²⁸ which, for Hegel, women do not experience and second, because the purpose of pleasure is for consciousness, “to become conscious of itself as an individual essence within that other self-consciousness,”²²⁹ which, for Hegel, is not how women experience sexual intercourse.

Therefore, consciousness is not an “it.” Consciousness is a person and the protagonist of the *Phenomenology* who should be referred to as either “he” or “she.” I demonstrate that consciousness should be referred to as “he” through a comparison between “Pleasure and Necessity” and other texts within Hegel’s system, namely Hegel’s discussion of the education of women and his critique of Schlegel in the *Philosophy of*

²²⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §456, 400 (§457 in Miller).

²²⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §456, 400 (§457 in Miller).

²²⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §456, 400 (§457 in Miller).

²²⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §456, 400 (§457 in Miller).

²²⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §362, 317.

²²⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

Right along with Hegel's discussion of the husband-wife relationship in "Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman" in the *Phenomenology*. As such, I conclude that, in Hegel's eyes, consciousness is a man in "Pleasure and Necessity". What this means for the female reader and the possibility that consciousness can be imagined as a woman, despite Hegel's intentions, is explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Male Pleasure and Alienating the Female Reader

Forster writes that, “Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* has the ambivalent reputation of being simultaneously one of the most obscure and one of the most important works of philosophy,”²³⁰ implying that it is a “classic,” an important and fixed philosophical text. Yet, in this chapter, I argue that, because “Pleasure and Necessity” alienates the female reader, it *should* be re-written—both for her sake and for the sake of Hegelian science—and that, since the *Phenomenology* is both alive and already contains the outline of its own re-writing, it *can* be re-written. Following a discussion of what it means to be alienated from the text, I discuss three ways in which the female reader is alienated from “Pleasure and Necessity”. First, I explain how, in this stage, a woman becomes consciousness’ antagonist for the first time. Second, I review arguments from the previous chapter to demonstrate that the female reader is placed in a paradoxical relationship to the text. Third, I argue that men and women do experience sexual intercourse differently, although not for the reasons that Hegel describes and, thus, the natural difference between the sexes that Hegel emphasizes is not eliminated by merely modernizing it. Finally, I argue that, for the alienation of the female reader to be resolved, a primary text must be created—or (re)created—through a process of re-writing. Moreover, this re-writing process is not foreign to the *Phenomenology* because it is not a fixed and dead text and because it already contains the outline of its own re-writing.

Here I argue that female readers become alienated from consciousness’ journey in “Pleasure and Necessity”. By ‘alienation’ I mean no more or less than the dictionary definition, that is, “the state or experience of being isolated from a group or an activity to

²³⁰ Michael N. Forster, *Hegel’s Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*, 1.

which one should belong or in which one should be involved.”²³¹ Being alienated from the *Phenomenology*, then, is what occurs when the female reader is excluded from sinking into a form of consciousness where sinking—getting bogged down in the propositions in the text in order to read them speculatively—is not only an activity that is purportedly available for all readers, it is an activity is essential to the movement of Hegelian science as an Absolute process.

In what follows, I discuss three moments of the female reader’s alienation from consciousness’ experience in “Pleasure and Necessity”: first, when consciousness’ object is explicitly represented by a woman, Gretchen; second, when Hegel does not believe that Faust and Gretchen could exchange roles when “Pleasure and Necessity” is compared to other passages in Hegel’s works; and third, when consciousness’ masculinity is an essential feature of the language in which this stage is articulated.

First, the female reader becomes alienated from “Pleasure and Necessity” when consciousness’ object—the protagonist’s antagonist—is represented by a woman. Although not the first stage where Hegel’s reference to other texts connects consciousness with a male figure, “Pleasure and Necessity” is the first stage in the *Phenomenology* where Hegel refers to a woman and this reference places the woman in the position of consciousness’ other. That is, by quoting an early version of *Faust*, Hegel invites the reader to represent the sexual relationship with consciousness’ other as a relationship with a woman in the form of Gretchen. In order to explain the significance of

²³¹ Archie Hobson, *The Oxford Dictionary of Difficult Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 16.

this for the female reader, allow me to contrast this interpretation with Rakefet Efrat-Levkovich, who also discusses the femininity of consciousness' antagonist.

In "Reading the Same Twice Over", Efrat-Levkovich writes that, "The [*Phenomenology's*] protagonist is evidently masculine"²³² with woman as his constant antagonist. That is, Efrat-Levkovich argues that, although Hegel's only "explicit consideration of women or the feminine appears in the chapter on the ancient Greek ethical order,"²³³ consciousness' other or world is the feminine throughout the text. In contrast, I argue that "Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman" is not the only time that Hegel refers to the feminine because, by referencing Faust's sexual relationship, Hegel refers to Gretchen in "Pleasure and Necessity". Moreover, the feminine does not constantly stand in as consciousness' other or world. Rather, "The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself", where we find "Pleasure and Necessity", is a part of the text where, distinctly, consciousness' other is a person. As such, "rational self-consciousness" is an interestingly contradictory form of consciousness that operates in "Pleasure and Necessity". Rational self-consciousness combines two certainties that emerge in "Reason": on the one hand, consciousness is certain that the world is essentially subjective and identical with himself and, on the other hand, consciousness develops "that other certainty, namely, that there is an *other* for me."²³⁴ That is, a significant part of "Pleasure and Necessity" involves how and why, for the first time, an

²³² Rakefet Efrat-Levkovich, "Reading the Same Twice Over: The Place of the Feminine in the Time of Hegelian Spirit," in *Hegel's Philosophy and Feminist Thought: Beyond Antigone?* edited by Kimberly Hutchings and Tuija Pulkkinen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 155.

²³³ Efrat-Levkovich, "Reading the Same Twice Over," 156.

²³⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §234, 205.

individual in the form of a female sexual partner stands in as the world for consciousness and it cannot be said that the woman is consciousness' other throughout the text.

Although, at first glance, it may seem that restricting the femininity of consciousness' other to only some sections of the *Phenomenology*, rather than the entire text, would also restrict the alienation of the female reader—the opposite is the case. By positing a constant opposition between man and woman, Efrat-Levkovich argues:

...that Hegel's *bildungsroman* is better read as a *dual* narrative in more than one respect... that the dominant, explicitly articulated narrative of the protagonist's constitution is conditioned on an unspoken narrative that is that of the other.

That is, the *Phenomenology* is, explicitly, a male *Bildungsroman* and, implicitly, a female *Bildungsroman* such that “the feminine consciousness is constituted (symbolically and metaphysically) in Hegel's narrative.”²³⁵ On this interpretation, the female reader is not alienated from the *Phenomenology* because she is implicitly present at all levels of the text, if only in opposition to male consciousness. However, I find this interpretation implausible. For example, what could it mean to say that there is a female consciousness opposed to the male consciousness's naïve empiricism in “Sense-Certainty”? When Hegel explains that the objects in “Sense-Certainty” escape what consciousness means to say, he writes:

... *here* is the tree. I turn around, this truth vanishes, and it has turned itself topsy-turvy into its contrary: *Here* there is *not a tree* but rather a *house*.²³⁶

Is the female consciousness the tree or the house? She is neither—naïve empiricism is a form of knowing that women sink into just as men do. There is no barrier for the female reader when she comes back to the propositions in “Sense-Certainty” to grasp them in a

²³⁵ Efrat-Levkovich, “Reading the Same Twice Over,” 156.

²³⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §98, 89.

speculative light. Furthermore, the same goes for the sophisticated forms of empiricism in Perception, the “explanation”²³⁷ of laws in Force and the Understanding, stoicism and scepticism in Freedom of “Self-Consciousness”, or the natural sciences of “Observing Reason”. In other words, until consciousness comes on the scene in “Pleasure and Necessity”, the female reader is able to look back on the path she has traversed with consciousness and see herself in it. Thus, “Pleasure and Necessity” alienates the female reader because, *for the first time*, she finds her experience represented by the *Phenomenology*’s antagonist, rather than its protagonist.

Second, the female reader is alienated from “Pleasure and Necessity” because she has a paradoxical relationship to this stage. In the previous chapter, I discussed Hegel’s reference to female education, Faust and Gretchen in “Pleasure and Necessity”, his critique of Friedrich Schlegel in the *Philosophy of Right*, and “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” to demonstrate that, as written, consciousness is a man in “Pleasure and Necessity”. However, the female reader is not alienated merely because the protagonist is a man and she is a woman. Rather, investigating these passages reveals that Hegel thinks that it is impossible for consciousness to be a woman for three reasons: *a*) women cannot be educated in the advanced sciences like Faust, *b*) men and women cannot exchange sexual roles in the way Schlegel suggests in *Lucinde*, and *c*) women do not experience pleasure as a form of consciousness. That is, consciousness is a man in “Pleasure and Necessity” because, in Hegel’s eyes, consciousness *cannot be* a woman in this stage—and it is this negative definition of consciousness’ masculinity in “Pleasure and Necessity” that creates an alienating paradox for the female reader. On the one hand,

²³⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §154, 137.

she is supposed to read the stage and sink into the propositions to rethink them speculatively. However, on the other hand, the text itself suggests that she should not be able to read “Pleasure and Necessity”. In other words, the female reader is placed in the paradoxical position of both trying to sink into consciousness’ actualization in “Pleasure and Necessity” and, at the same time, reading that women are “unconscious,” “displaced from actuality”²³⁸ and, as a consequence, are barred from pleasure as a form of consciousness.

One could say that there is no paradox for the female reader—she is not *supposed* to read Hegelian philosophy because, by definition, she cannot. Hegel writes:

Women are capable of education, but they are not made for activities which demand a universal faculty such as the more advanced sciences, philosophy, and certain forms of artistic production. Women may have happy ideas [*Einfälle*], taste, and elegance, but they cannot attain to the ideal [*das Ideale*]... Women are educated—one knows not how—by, as it were, breathing in ideas, by living rather than by acquiring knowledge. The status of manhood, on the other hand, is attained only through the achievement of thought and much technical exertion.²³⁹

That is, a woman cannot be a philosopher because, as naturally passive, she is incapable of the active exertion necessary for philosophical education. However, the paradox remains. In one sense, the paradox remains because, in fact, women are educated in philosophy. But, more importantly, the *Phenomenology* purports to be, “the path offered to everyone and equally available for all.”²⁴⁰ As such, to define “all” as “all men” would render Hegelian philosophy un-Absolute—cutting it off from women based on the too-natural sexual distinction, an opposition suitable to “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” but not Hegelian philosophy as a whole. On this reading, “Hegel’s supposedly

²³⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §456, 399.

²³⁹ Hegel, *Outlines of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. Stephen Houlgate, addition to §166, 169.

²⁴⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §13, 11.

complete speculative system”²⁴¹ would indeed fall prey to arguments made by scholars such as Patricia Jagentowicz Mills, whose argument that “Hegel’s dialectical theory becomes a closed system,”²⁴² I discuss in the following chapter.

These first two ways in which the female reader is alienated from the text are significant because the natural difference that Hegel posits between men and women creates an inequality between male and female readers of the text. Yet, some scholars, such as Alice Ormiston in *Love and Politics: Re-Interpreting Hegel*, suggest that Hegel’s distinction between men and women can be modernized. Ormiston writes,

In viewing women as incapable of reflective reasoning, Hegel shows himself to be merely bound by the prejudices of his own times. But history has proven him wrong on this point, for women have historically asserted and substantiated their equal capacity for reason and their right to participate in the public sphere. Hence, if he were alive today, Hegel would have to recognize the principle of will and reflective reasoning as operative also in women.²⁴³

That is, Ormiston wants to re-interpret Hegel because she thinks that Hegel’s distinction between male and female mental capacities is a mistaken historical prejudice that Hegel would have abandoned, ultimately reconciling the female reader with the text.

In contrast, I want to argue that, in the case of “Pleasure and Necessity”, modernizing Hegel’s views about men and women presumes too much. That is, it presumes that there are no differences between how men and women experience sexual intercourse or, if there are differences, that such differences are irrelevant to “Pleasure and Necessity”. However, I argue that men and women do not experience sexual pleasure

²⁴¹ Antoinette M. Stafford, “The Feminist Critique of Hegel On Woman and the Family,” in *Animus*, 2 (1997): 71.

²⁴² Mills, “Hegel’s Antigone,” 84.

²⁴³ Alice Ormiston, *Love and Politics: Re-interpreting Hegel*, (State University of New York Press, 2004), 93.

in the same way and, although my reasons are not the reasons that Hegel proposes, the posited difference is the same.²⁴⁴ Moreover, these differences between how men and women experience sexual pleasure are related to the central terminology of “Pleasure and Necessity”, namely: first, the penetration of actualization; second, the subject-object asymmetry of pleasure; and third, the momentary orgasm of necessity. As such, we arrive at the third sense in which the female reader is alienated from “Pleasure and Necessity”.

First, actualization within the context of “Pleasure and Necessity” is penetration expressed phallically. The last word of “Observing Reason”, before we begin “Pleasure and Necessity”, is *Pissen*, urination, where Hegel tells us that, if we compare consciousness to a penis—a combination of higher and lower functions which “nature naively expresses in the combination of... the organ of generation—with the organ of urination”—then consciousness is “trapped within representational thought [that] conducts itself like urination.”²⁴⁵ This image of a phallic consciousness at the end of “Observing Reason” then carries over into “Pleasure and Necessity”. The actualization of consciousness’ certainty that he is all reality is expressed as the immediate, desire-laden, and individualistic attempt to actualize himself through sexual pleasure, where pleasure is

²⁴⁴ In the following investigation of the differences between male and female sexuality, I cite comparative studies of male and female sexuality. However, it is important to adopt a critical stance towards such studies. It was with this approach in mind that I chose to focus on Elisabeth Lloyd’s work. Lloyd conducts her own research on female sexuality but “Pre-theoretical Assumptions in Evolutionary Explanations of Female Sexuality” is not about Lloyd’s own experiments, but is a critical assessment of the major research projects on female sexuality. Lloyd is very sensitive to the idea that: “In the cases examined here, science is not very separate from the social and cultural context. Rather, social assumptions and prior commitments of the scientists play a major role in the practices of science itself, at many levels—experimental design, data collection, predictions, hypothesis, formulation, and the evaluation of explanations.” Elisabeth Lloyd, “Pre-theoretical Assumptions in Evolutionary Explanations of Female Sexuality” in *Philosophical Studies* 69 (1993), 150.

²⁴⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §346, 306.

the real penetrating of the “*depth* from which spirit pushes out from its inwardness,”²⁴⁶ something consciousness previously investigated at the level of representation, but now achieves at the level of penetrating another person in the sexual relation. Thus, the sexual relation in “Pleasure and Necessity” is a kind of judgement, a literal copula, where the subject reaches out of himself into his object by means of his penetrating organ.

Furthermore, the link that “Pleasure and Necessity” requires between penetration and orgasm is more applicable to male sexuality. Consciousness attempts to actualize Reason’s certainty that consciousness is all reality by, “becom[ing] conscious of itself as an individual essence within that other self-consciousness.”²⁴⁷ Instead, consciousness finds that:

... this unity is for consciousness just pleasure itself, that is, the *simple individual* feeling, and the transition from the moment of its purpose into the moment of its true essence is for it a pure leap into the opposite...²⁴⁸

That is, the unity, the literal copula of the sexual relation, is reduced to the simple individual feeling, the orgasm. Here, the link between sexual penetration and orgasm indicates a male consciousness due to the nature of female orgasm. In “Female sexual arousal: Genital anatomy and orgasm in intercourse”, Kim Warren and Elisabeth Lloyd write that:

Although approximately 90% of women report orgasm from some form of sexual stimulation, most women do not routinely (and some never) experience orgasm solely from sexual intercourse. By contrast, nearly 100% of men routinely experience orgasm solely from sexual intercourse.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §346, 306.

²⁴⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

²⁴⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §365, 321.

²⁴⁹ Kim Wallen and Elisabeth Lloyd, “Female Sexual Arousal: Genital Anatomy and Orgasm in Intercourse,” *Hormones and Behavior* 59.5 (2011), 780-792.

That is, men routinely experience orgasm from sexual intercourse whereas women do not. This is not because women do not experience orgasm, just that they rarely experience orgasm from sexual intercourse without concurrent clitoral stimulation.²⁵⁰ Thus, actualization and its failure are concepts that pick out important differences between the male and female sexual experience.

Second, pleasure in “Pleasure and Necessity” requires an asymmetry between consciousness and his object that reinforces consciousness’ masculinity. Consciousness in “Pleasure and Necessity” experiences his object as a *Nichtansichseienden* translated as “what-does-not-exist-in-itself.” Hegel writes:

With its destiny [*Bestimmung*] that of being in its own eyes the essence as *existing-for-itself*, self-consciousness is the *negativity* of the other. Hence, in its consciousness it is the positive, and as the positive, it confronts the kind of self-consciousness which certainly *exists* but which has the meaning of what-does-not-exist-in-itself [*Nichtansichseienden*].²⁵¹

That is, just as Gretchen is presented as a ripe fruit ready to be plucked, consciousness has “for an object this free *thinghood* of an other” the merely negative of himself which he “finds before him.”²⁵² Moreover, for Hegel, pleasure is not the pleasurable sensation of sex, which men and women may share in equally; instead it is the temporary overcoming of the separation between consciousness and his world where his sexual partner must stand in for that world. The sense in which one sexual partner can stand in as the whole world is that she is objective—something just as objective as the furniture of

²⁵⁰ Again, for Hegel, the difference between the clitoris and the penis is that the former is inactive while the latter is active. Hegel writes: “The clitoris moreover, is inactive feeling in general; in the male on the other hand, it has its counterpart in active sensibility; in the swelling vital, the effusion of blood into the corpora cavernosa and the meshes of the spongy tissue of the urethra.” G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Nature*, vol 3, trans M. J. Petry (London, UK: Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1970), 175.

²⁵¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §358-359, 315.

²⁵² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §350, 309.

the world. Simone de Beauvoir writes that sex is, “profoundly different here for man and woman.”²⁵³ The man, “seizes in woman the attributes his sensuality requires of any object,”²⁵⁴ whereas, for the women, “[s]ince she is object, her inertia does not profoundly alter her natural role.”²⁵⁵ Thus, pleasure operates on a differences between men and women in sex, namely the historical object-status of women and social inequality between the sexes²⁵⁶ makes it easier to represent the subjective consciousness as a man and his object of desire as a woman.²⁵⁷

Third, necessity as the momentariness of sexual ecstasy picks out another difference between how men and women experience sexual pleasure. In “Pleasure and Necessity”, the evanescence of the orgasm means that ceaseless repetition is required in order to maintain consciousness’ actualization, creating a fixed relation between consciousness and the medium of his actualization, his sexual partner. Thus, consciousness “exists merely in relation to its opposite... and it is this *absolute relation* and abstract movement which constitutes necessity.”²⁵⁸ This necessity is consistent with the male orgasm, because it is momentary and single, but not with the female orgasm, which is continuous and multiple. Comparative studies of male and female sexuality have showed that, after an orgasm, men—but not women—quickly return to a pre-erotic state.

²⁵³ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H.M. Parshley (New York, USA: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1953), 383.

²⁵⁴ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H.M. Parshley, 383.

²⁵⁵ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H.M. Parshley, 385.

²⁵⁶ For more details on the lived experience of the object-status of women, see Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H.M. Parshley, 283-766.

²⁵⁷ For a discussion of the contemporary inequality of women in the context of Hegel’s critique of Schlegel, see: Frances Olsen, “Hegel, Sexual Ethics, and the Oppression of Women: Comments on Krell’s ‘Lucinde’s Shame,’” in *Feminist Interpretations of G.W.F. Hegel*, ed. Patricia Jagentowicz Mills (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 109-17.

²⁵⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §363, 319.

In “Pre-theoretical Assumptions in Evolutionary Explanations of Female Sexuality”, Elisabeth Lloyd writes that women maintain their sexual arousal, and after orgasm they “return to the plateau phase of sexual excitement, and not to the original unexcited phase, as men do.”²⁵⁹ Moreover, as reported by Masters and Johnson in *Human Sexual Response*, women, unlike men, have short refractory periods, meaning they are capable of multiple orgasms in quick succession.²⁶⁰ Thus, the fleetingness of sexual ecstasy crucial to the experience of sexual pleasure as necessity is represented by the male orgasm as momentary and single, not by the female orgasm as continuous and multiple, meaning that, unlike the male orgasm, the truth of female pleasure is *not* necessity.

Thus, the natural difference that Hegel emphasizes between men and women does not go away when Hegel’s views are modernized. Modern studies of female sexuality demonstrate that men and women do experience sexual intercourse differently. In other words, the reasons why men and women are different have changed but not the fact that men and women are different. Moreover, the differences are not irrelevant to “Pleasure and Necessity”, rather they relate to the stage’s central terminology: actualization, pleasure, and necessity.

To summarize the argument made thus far: there are three aspects to the idea that “Pleasure and Necessity” alienates the female reader. First, “Pleasure and Necessity” alienates the female reader because, for the first time, she finds her experience represented by the *Phenomenology*’s antagonist, rather than its protagonist. Second, the negative definition of consciousness’ masculinity, that in “Pleasure and Necessity”

²⁵⁹ Lloyd, “Pre-theoretical Assumptions in Evolutionary Explanations of Female Sexuality,” 146.

²⁶⁰ H. W. Masters and V. Johnson, *Human Sexual Response*, (New York: Bantam Books, 1966), 65.

consciousness *cannot* be a woman for Hegel, puts the female reader in a paradoxical relationship to the text. Third, the natural difference between men and women that Hegel emphasizes is not evacuated by merely modernizing it, the content changes but the form remains.

As such, I maintain that this alienation cannot be overcome by merely re-interpreting “Pleasure and Necessity” within the secondary literature. First, it is not enough to merely modernize Hegel’s statements about women as Ormiston does in *Love and Politics: Re-Interpreting Hegel* because modernizing the difference between men and women does not erase it. Second, re-interpretation is too abstract. For Hegel, it is not enough “to read reviews of philosophical works, and perhaps even to go so far as to read the prefaces and the first paragraphs of the works themselves.”²⁶¹ Rather, to resolve the problem of the alienation of the female reader, a primary text must be (re)created so that there is a concrete form of consciousness in which the female reader can sink.

Allow me to illustrate this point with reference to Burbidge’s article, “Secondness”. There, Burbidge questions Harris’ approach to the *Phenomenology* in *Hegel’s Ladder* because, by overemphasizing the historical or literary details of the possible references in the *Phenomenology*, Harris disrupts the reader’s relationship with the text by smothering it. That is, Burbidge stresses the importance of reading the *Phenomenology* in a way that mentally works through consciousness’ experience by sinking into the text itself. For example, Burbidge questions Harris’ method of understanding the “Mastery and Servitude” subsection of “Self-Consciousness” with

²⁶¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §70, 64.

reference to Eteocles and Polyneices, emphasizing symbols, metaphors, and analogies from the literary reference. Burbidge writes:

His approach sharply contrasts with the intuitions of my students, who immediately think of playground bullies and the way their struggles and wrestling matches anticipate the more serious combats of young men... Does not my students' insight get closer to the kind of necessity that drives the dialectic of the *Phenomenology* than Harris's literary reference?²⁶²

That is, because Eteocles and Polyneices are "known only through literature,"²⁶³ they are too removed and too abstract to pull the reader into the *Phenomenology*. Yet, in a footnote to the quote above, Burbidge writes:

Some of my female students have suggested that there can be analogous struggles among young women; but at present I am not sure whether those could really be called a struggle to the death, except metaphorically.²⁶⁴

That is, supposedly, there is a difference between the male and female readers such that the latter is not aggressive enough to truly experience a struggle to the death. Thus, she can only access the text metaphorically. However, it is exactly this metaphorical approach to the *Phenomenology* that Burbidge is arguing against in "Secondness" when he critiques Harris' reliance on literary and historical metaphors. Thus, whether or not we accept that female readers do not aggressively struggle, what Burbidge's footnote really suggests is that, male or female, the reader cannot rely on the symbolic or metaphorical interpretations of the *Phenomenology*'s secondary literature. Rather, the reader must put *herself* in the *Phenomenology*; she must sink into the text.

²⁶² Burbidge, "Secondness," 32.

²⁶³ Burbidge, "Secondness," 32.

²⁶⁴ Burbidge, "Secondness," 38.

Thus, I propose to re-write “Pleasure and Necessity”, (re)creating a primary text. Moreover, there are two aspects of the *Phenomenology* that make this re-writing possible.

First, re-writing is in the spirit of Hegelian philosophy itself. Malabou writes that:

One never learns Hegel once and for all. He is not to be possessed like a body of doctrine known by heart in all its operations and concepts. Hegel may well be the first philosopher to think that the author is not a ‘fixed and solid subject’ but an instance of writing, conceived in the joint play and speaking of two subjects of enunciation: a speculative reader, and the one who wrote because he was, first and above all, a speculative reader.²⁶⁵

That is, Hegel did not create fixed and dead texts. Rather, Hegel writes as a speculative reader in relation to speculative readers. As such, re-writing is my activity as a speculative reader of Hegel for speculative readers of Hegel—an activity that is already prescribed by the text I re-write. Furthermore, that Hegel is not a “fixed and solid” author is demonstrated by Hegel’s own proposal to revise the *Phenomenology*.²⁶⁶ Hegel himself writes that, “I regard revision of the work to be necessary,”²⁶⁷ and comments that the first version of the *Phenomenology* is “relative to the former time of its composition.”²⁶⁸ That is, the *Phenomenology* is not fixed and dead—to use Malabou’s term, the text is plastic—

²⁶⁵ Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic*, 185.

²⁶⁶ Forster writes: “The *Phenomenology* certainly is not, and was not perceived by Hegel to be, a flawless work. On the contrary, both during and after the work’s composition Hegel came to perceive numerous weaknesses in its execution.... Hegel immediately after the work’s completion in 1807, and forever thereafter, acknowledged to correspondents that there were significant flaws in the work, and stressed the need for a revised edition.” Michael N. Forster, *Hegel’s Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*, 547-8. Similarly, Fulda writes that the *Phenomenology*: “has to account for the Spiritual situation at the time of its appearance, the improved version would, if it were to be written nowadays, have to take into account the historical changes that have occurred since 1807.” Hans, Friedrich Fulda, “Science of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*: Hegel’s program and its implementation,” in *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit: A Critical Guide*, edited by Dean Moyar and Michael Quante, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 42.

²⁶⁷ Hegel, *The Letters*, trans Clark Butler and Christiane Seiler, 121.

²⁶⁸ Michael N. Forster, *Hegel’s Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*, 646.

it opens itself up to its own possible re-writing because it is alive and open to future revisions.

Second, the *Phenomenology* already contains the outline of its own re-writing. That is, as both *phenomena* and *logos*, the *Phenomenology* already contains the logical outline of any re-writing that changes the phenomena of consciousness' experience. And although isolating this underlying logic seems initially problematic, Hegel writes that “to every abstract moment of science, there corresponds a shape of appearing spirit.”²⁶⁹ That is, because the *Phenomenology* “takes cognizance of the pure concepts of science in this form, namely, in which they are shapes of consciousness,”²⁷⁰ stages in the *Phenomenology* are forms of consciousness that directly correspond to stages in the *Logic*, making it possible to isolate and understand this underlying logic with reference to this text. Thus, to use the metaphor of a palimpsest, an ancient page from a scroll or codex where the original words are removed so that the page can be reused, the shape of consciousness is removed from the *Phenomenology*, leaving the underlying logic of “Pleasure and Necessity”, and the trace of the original words, on which another shape of consciousness can be written.

Therefore, I argue that “Pleasure and Necessity” should and can be re-written—for the sake of the female reader as well as for the sake of Hegelian science itself. The female reader encounters three forms of alienation from “Pleasure and Necessity”, namely: that a woman becomes consciousness' antagonist for the first time, that the female reader is placed in a paradoxical relationship to the text, and that the natural

²⁶⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §805, 718.

²⁷⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §805, 718.

difference between men and women that Hegel emphasizes is not eliminated by merely modernizing it. Finally, for the alienation of the female reader to be resolved, a primary text must be (re)created through a process of re-writing; a process which is not foreign to the *Phenomenology* because it is not a fixed and dead text and because it already contains the outline of its own re-writing. This process of re-writing is developed further in “Chapter 6: The Underlying Logic of ‘Pleasure and Necessity’ ” and the re-written text is presented in an appendix to this thesis.

Part Three: The Solution

Re-Writing “Pleasure and Necessity”

Chapter 5: So What of Antigone?

In the second part of my thesis, I presented the problem that “Pleasure and Necessity” alienates the female reader. In this third part, I discuss how this alienation can be resolved. Yet, in this chapter, I demonstrate that Antigone—a figure who many scholars examine as a possible female heroine in an otherwise androcentric text—is not a solution to the problem I have presented. First, I discuss what Antigone is interpreted as representing in the text, namely, the brother-sister relationship in “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman”.²⁷¹ Second, I review interpretations of Hegel’s reference to *Antigone* that represent some of that diverse scholarship. Finally, I argue that Antigone is not a solution to the problem I am presenting, namely the alienation of the female reader.

In “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman”, Hegel alludes to Antigone as a figure of the brother-sister relationship. In what follows, I demonstrate the significance of this by explaining how the brother-sister relationship is different than other types of family relations in such a way that suggests that, uniquely among women, the sister becomes actualized. In “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman”, Hegel presents the family as “opposed to ethical life”²⁷² because “it does not exist within its *ethical* essence *insofar as* it is the *natural* relationship of its members.”²⁷³ The family jealously guards its members such that, when the male family members leave the family to enter political and ethical life, Hegel explains:

²⁷¹ Hegel’s reference to *Antigone* in “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” is more ambiguous than his reference to *Faust* “Pleasure and Necessity” because, in the former, he does not directly quote the text. Below, I discuss Karin de Boer’s argument that Aristophanes’ *Lystrata*, not Sophocles’ *Antigone*, is the intended reference.

²⁷² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §449, 391 (§450 in Miller).

²⁷³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §450, 391 (§451 in Miller).

This determination is to an even greater degree negative with regard to the family; it consists in taking the individual out of the family, in subjugating his naturalness and individuality and thus in leading him towards *virtue*, towards a life lived in and for the universal.²⁷⁴

That is, when male members of the family ‘become men’ and enter the *polis*,²⁷⁵ they leave the family entirely, only to return to the family when the “action no longer concerns the *living* but rather the *dead*.”²⁷⁶ Yet, once this man re-enters the family in death, Hegel explains that,

Because he is only *actual* and *substantial* as a citizen, the individual, taken not as a citizen but as belonging to the family, is merely the *unreal* [unwirkliche] shadow who lacks any core at all.²⁷⁷

Thus, the family is opposed to ethical life and actuality. No action on the part of its members can elevate the family into ethical life because the family is fundamentally a natural relation. Moreover, when the actual citizen returns to the family upon his death, far from actualizing the family, he is consumed again by the un-actuality of the family.

Hegel explains that there are three types of relationship within the family: “man and wife, parents and children, and siblings as brothers and sisters.”²⁷⁸ I have already discussed how the husband-wife relationship does not elevate the wife to the level of actual consciousness in “Chapter 3: Consciousness Is a Man in Hegel’s System”.²⁷⁹ Yet, the sexual relation between the husband and wife does achieve some actuality in the

²⁷⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §450, 392 (§451 in Miller).

²⁷⁵ Hegel argues against the idea that the male child is the product of the activity of the family when he says: “. . . nor must it be imagined that ethical action is actually his upbringing, that his upbringing is a *series* of efforts which have the individual as a whole as its object and which produce him as its ‘accomplished work.’” Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §450, 392 (§451 in Miller).

²⁷⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §450, 393 (§451 in Miller).

²⁷⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §450, 393 (§451 in Miller).

²⁷⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §455, 397 (§456 in Miller).

²⁷⁹ see “Chapter 3: Consciousness Is a Man in Hegel’s System”, 66-9.

child. However, the child's actuality does not amount to the mother's actuality. Hegel explains,

The piety of man and wife towards each other is thus intermixed with both a natural relation and with sentiment, and their relationship does not in itself have its return into itself, as does likewise the second relationship, that of the *piety* of *parents* and *children* to each other. The piety of parents towards their children is affected by the emotion brought on by their awareness that they have their actuality in an other and that they see their children come to their own being-for-itself without the parents being able to retrieve it.²⁸⁰

That is, the child is an actual result of the sexual relation between the parents. However, that actuality is in the child and does not reflect any actuality back on to the mother. The father, of course, is a citizen of the *polis* and achieves his actuality there. Furthermore, the parents experience the male child's actuality as a "vanishing"²⁸¹ since children "achieve being-for-itself and their own self-consciousness only through separation from their origin – a separation in which the origin recedes."²⁸² That is, as boys become male citizens, they achieve their actuality to the extent that they leave the family behind, putting further distance between the mother and children as actual.

However, Hegel explains that the brother-sister relationship is different than the husband-wife and parent-children relationships. Hegel writes,

Both these relationships come to a standstill in the transitions and the non-selfsameness of the aspects that are assigned to them. – However, the unmixed relationship is found between *brother* and *sister*. They are the same blood; however, in them it has reached its state of *rest* and *equilibrium*. Hence, they neither desire each other nor have they given or received this being-for-itself to each other. Rather, they are free individualities with respect to each other.²⁸³

²⁸⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §455, 398 (§456 in Miller).

²⁸¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §455, 398 (§456 in Miller).

²⁸² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §455, 398 (§456 in Miller).

²⁸³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §456, 398-9 (§457 in Miller).

That is, the brother-sister relationship is a relationship between a man and a woman that, because they are related, is not sexual and, because neither is the parent of the other, is not experienced as the vanishing actuality of parenthood. Thus, the brother can recognize the sister and “her recognition in him is pure and unmixed with any natural relation.”²⁸⁴ And, when the “spirit of the family sends the man out into the polity, and he finds his self-conscious essence in that polity,”²⁸⁵ the brother and sister can maintain their connection to one another.

Moreover, the brother-sister relationship suggests the possible development of the sister’s self-consciousness when Hegel writes,

... the moment of the *individual self*, as recognizing and being recognized, may here assert its right because it is bound up with the equilibrium of blood relations and with relations utterly devoid of desire. The loss of a brother is thus irreplaceable to the sister, and her duty towards him is the highest.²⁸⁶

That is, the brother-sister relationship is a relationship of recognition that goes beyond the natural immediacy of the woman’s body and the sexual union. In contemporary terms, this suggests that women may be elevated out of the naturalness of their sex and into the actuality of spirit via gender, a social and ethical version of the natural distinction between the sexes. Moreover, by stating that the sister’s duty—her familial responsibility to bury the dead—is highest to her brother, Hegel has been interpreted as referencing Antigone, who defies the human law of her father Creon and sacrifices herself to bury her brother Polyneices in Sophocles’ *Antigone*.

²⁸⁴ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §456, 400 (§457 in Miller).

²⁸⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §459, 400 (§457 in Miller).

²⁸⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §456, 398 (§457 in Miller).

However, Hegel curtails the power of this recognition²⁸⁷ when he explains that the sister's awareness of ethical life is nonetheless barred from actuality. Hegel writes:

The feminine, as the sister, hence has the highest *intimation* of ethical essence. This intimation does not rise to a *consciousness* of the actuality of ethical essence because the law of the family is the *inner* essence which exists-*in-itself*, which does not lie in the daylight of consciousness. Rather, it remains inner feeling, the divine displaced from actuality.²⁸⁸

Thus, the actualized and self-conscious ethical relationship of the brother is, for the sister, merely an intuitive awareness that lacks consciousness. Unlike her brother, the sister does not achieve the status of "actual consciousness,"²⁸⁹ instead remaining at the level of unconsciousness in "Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman".

Hegel has been interpreted as referencing Antigone and Polyneices as the figures of the brother-sister relationship in "Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman". And, if this is the case, we must neither ignore Hegel's reference to a literary character nor let the literary description of that character mask or obscure what occurs in Hegel's text. Because a referenced figure cannot encompass everything that happens in a stage of the *Phenomenology* and because the brother-sister relationship is only one element in "Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman", *Antigone* cannot contain or represent all that occurs in "Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman". Nonetheless, Antigone has taken on a life of her own in feminist discourse, as Judith Butler explains:

²⁸⁷ The mutualness of the recognitions between brother and sister is ambiguous. Most scholars emphasize the passage quoted previously ("her recognition in him" §456) to argue that the recognition is one-sided such that the sister does not recognize the brother, few scholars focus on the passage above ("as recognizing and being recognized" §456), which suggests mutuality. Nonetheless, because the sister is not fully conscious (as I demonstrate below), it remains unclear to what extent she can recognize her brother.

²⁸⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §456, 399 (§457 in Miller).

²⁸⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §446, 389 (§447 in Miller).

Indeed, in the interpretation that Hegel has perhaps made most famous, and which continues to structure appropriations of the play within much literary theory and philosophical discourse, Antigone comes to represent kinship and its dissolution, and Creon comes to represent an emergent ethical order and state authority based on principles of universality.²⁹⁰

Thus, whether scholars accept Hegel's interpretation of Antigone or not; Hegel's reference to Antigone is such a famous example of Hegel's discussion of women that classicists can no more ignore Hegel's interpretation of *Antigone* than feminist interpretations of Hegel can ignore the play. In what follows, I present five such treatments of Hegel's reference to Antigone by Patricia Jagentowicz Mills, Heidi M. Ravven, Luce Irigaray, Judith Butler, and Karin de Boer as a selection of the diversity of responses by scholars. However, although my interpretation of the female reader's relationship to the *Phenomenology* overlaps with each scholar in different ways, I demonstrate that the problem of the female reader's alienation from the text is not resolved by an investigation of *Antigone*.

In "Hegel's *Antigone*", Patricia Jagentowicz Mills argues that, although Hegel does not intend Antigone to overcome the opposition between human and divine law, Antigone breaks the mold of female unconsciousness by challenging the law of the *polis*. Mills writes:

While Antigone, as the paradigm of the ethical family, does not, in the *Phenomenology*, represent woman as the principle of particularity destroying the polis through intrigue and perversion, nevertheless Hegel misses what is most significant: that Antigone must *enter* the political realm, the realm of second nature, in order to defy it on behalf of the realm of the family, the realm of first nature. In doing this, as we shall see, Antigone transcends Hegel's analysis of 'the law of woman' as 'natural ethical life,' and becomes *this* particular self.²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ Judith Butler, *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 2-3.

²⁹¹ Mills, "Hegel's Antigone," 69.

That is, Mills grants that the *Phenomenology* intends to present “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” as the tragic opposition between human and divine law where male citizens achieve actual consciousness by moving out of the family into the *polis* while women remain, as unconscious and unreal shadows, in the family. However, Mills argues that when we take the reference to *Antigone* seriously, the details of the play demonstrate that Antigone herself overcomes the opposition between human and divine law. That is, when Antigone moves into the space of political life to challenge Creon, the representative of human law, she accomplishes the very transition from nature to free self-consciousness that Hegel denies her. When Antigone transcends Hegel’s own reference to her, Mills concludes that,

... Hegel’s attempt to include dialectically all oppositional ‘moments’ presents us with an abstract negation in which woman, defined as an ontological principle of otherness, represents the ‘difference’ that cannot be fully comprehended in the logical Idea. As a result, Hegel’s dialectical theory becomes a closed system, a system that is the quintessential form of identity logic in which difference is ultimately dominated and denied rather than reconciled.²⁹²

That is, Hegel’s system is closed and dead—felled by its own inability to take account of and reconcile itself with its self-made opponent, womanhood. As such, Mills views the *Phenomenology* as a “failure” that nonetheless articulates the problem that feminism faces in contemporary society.

Heidi M. Ravven argues in “Has Hegel Anything to Say to Feminists?” that Hegel’s presentation of the family, despite the natural inequality it posits between men and women, is fruitful for feminism because it provides a critique of the family on a journey towards social and political freedom. In contrast to Mills, Ravven argues that the

²⁹² Mills, “Hegel’s Antigone,” 84.

male and female spheres of Greek society are both critiqued and overcome by the dialectic played out in “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman”. Ravven writes:

... women and the family ought to be seen as capable of inner development through the process of dialectical self-criticism—this despite the obvious criticism that Hegel denied precisely this point. I show that Hegel conceived of the family and the Greek polis as fundamentally parallel and analogous social systems. The fate of Greek society was to transcend its natural, unexamined, and subjective harmony through inner conflict.²⁹³

That is, because the male and female spheres of Greek society are two sides of the same too-natural coin, they “stand and fall together.”²⁹⁴ As such, overcoming the male sphere equally overcomes the female sphere. Ravven admits that the parallel between the male and female spheres breaks down to the extent that: first, human law achieves actual consciousness in “the light of day”²⁹⁵ while divine law remains unconscious and restricted to an “otherworldly realm;”²⁹⁶ second, human law is identified with the social universality whereas “the scope of the family is, of course, as a subgroup;”²⁹⁷ and third, men are rational and active whereas women are emotional and passive. Thus, in the context of the broader development of the *Phenomenology*, Ravven concludes that:

... the bourgeois man has undergone the process of *Bildung*... Man, as bearer of historical society, has manifested himself politically, culturally, religiously, and ethically in a variety of forms which he has come to acknowledge as his own (past) and also to develop beyond. Woman, on the other hand, has remained the same throughout the ages.²⁹⁸

²⁹³ Heidi M. Ravven, “Has Hegel Anything to Say to Feminists?” in *Feminist Interpretations of G.W.F. Hegel*, edited by Patricia Jagentowicz Mills (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 226.

²⁹⁴ Ravven, “Has Hegel Anything to Say to Feminists?” 227.

²⁹⁵ Ravven, “Has Hegel Anything to Say to Feminists?” 228.

²⁹⁶ Ravven, “Has Hegel Anything to Say to Feminists?” 228.

²⁹⁷ Ravven, “Has Hegel Anything to Say to Feminists?” 229.

²⁹⁸ Ravven, “Has Hegel Anything to Say to Feminists?” 233.

Or, in other words, men are represented by consciousness' *Bildung* in the *Phenomenology* while women, who do no such development, are not. However, despite what Hegel maintains about the natural inequality between men and women, Ravven stresses that the dialectical tension in "Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman" is due to the fact that male and female spheres are equally arbitrary, contingent and natural and they are equally opposed to one another in an unmediated state. Thus, the tragedy of this section is the arbitrariness of the opposed spheres combined with their symmetry. Ravven explains:

Antigone portrays the classical Greek world as depending for its harmonious existence upon its two equally valid principles and communities: the family and the government. The power of Antigone's claim precisely matches that of Creon's. The inevitable clash of male and female realms, society and family, respectively, necessarily brings down the whole society—that is its destiny.²⁹⁹

That is, the most important aspect is that the spheres are mutually exclusive, equally powerful, and equally arbitrary and, as such, destroy each other. Thus, family is equally critiqued by Hegel on a journey towards social and political freedom and, as such, the *Phenomenology* is fruitful for feminist critiques of the family.

In "The Eternal Irony of the Community", Luce Irigaray questions why the brother and sister are drawn into the mutual exchange of recognition only to conclude that the equilibrium presented by the relationship between brother and sister is a delusion.

Irigaray writes:

But this moment is mythical, of course, and the *Hegelian dream* outlined above is already the effect of a dialectic produced by the discourse of patriarchy. It is a consoling fancy, a truce in the struggle between uneven foes, a denial of the guilt already weighing heavily upon the development of the subject... the brother is for

²⁹⁹ Ravven, "Has Hegel Anything to Say to Feminists?" 230.

the sister that possibility of recognition of which she is deprived as mother and wife, but does not state that the situation is reciprocal.³⁰⁰

That is, the peaceful recognition of the brother-sister relationship is a fantasy brought on by the survivor's guilt of men. Women are excluded from the *Phenomenology* to the extent that, "she does not achieve the enunciatory process of the discourse of History, but remains its servant, deprived of self (as same), alienated in this system of discourse."³⁰¹ Thus, she "*ensures the Erinnerung of the consciousness of self by forgetting herself.*"³⁰² Yet, "she remains the very ground in which manifest mind secretly sets its roots and draws its strength."³⁰³ And, as such, womanhood is the unconscious, pre-conceptual possibility of critique of patriarchal discourse that threatens to "rise up and lay waste to the community."³⁰⁴ Therefore, Irigaray champions the subversive power of Antigone in Hegel's phallogocentric creation.

In *Antigone's Claim*, Judith Butler challenges Hegel's interpretation of the figure of Antigone. By explaining how Hegel's interpretation of *Antigone* has been taken up by scholars such as Lacan, Irigaray, and Arendt, Butler argues that this interpretation has introduced a 'blindness that afflicts' the subsequent interpretations and obscures the importance of Antigone as an example of a woman who, in defying the state, "absorbs the very language of the state against which she rebels."³⁰⁵ In contrast to the standard Hegelian reading of *Antigone*, Butler emphasizes its complexity, writing:

³⁰⁰ Luce Irigaray, "The Eternal Irony of the Community," in *Speculum of the Other Woman*, trans. Gillian C. Gill, (Ithaca, USA: Cornell University Press, 1985), 217.

³⁰¹ Irigaray, "The Eternal Irony of the Community," 224.

³⁰² Irigaray, "The Eternal Irony of the Community," 225.

³⁰³ Irigaray, "The Eternal Irony of the Community," 225.

³⁰⁴ Irigaray, "The Eternal Irony of the Community," 225.

³⁰⁵ Butler, *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, 5.

Opposing Antigone to Creon as the encounter between the forces of kinship and those of state power fails to take into account the ways in which Antigone has already departed from kinship, herself the daughter of an incestuous bond, herself devoted to an impossible and death-bent incestuous love of her brother, how her actions compel others to regard her as ‘manly’ and thus cast doubt on the way that kinship might underwrite gender, how her language, paradoxically, most closely approximates Creon’s, the language of sovereign authority and action, and how Creon himself assumes his sovereignty only by virtue of the kinship line that enables that succession, how he becomes, as it were, unmanned by Antigone’s defiance, and finally by his own actions, at once abrogating the norms that secure his place in kinship and in sovereignty.³⁰⁶

That is, in stark contrast to Hegel’s reference to *Antigone*, the play itself explores the instability of gender and the overlapping of family and politics. Butler argues that her interpretation of Antigone is more philosophically interesting to the extent that Antigone is presented as a female rebel who both acts in and defies the political sphere, who both is excluded by and speaks in the language of her oppressors—all in a way that destabilizes society, gender, and politics.³⁰⁷

Like Ravven, Karin de Boer, in “Beyond Tragedy”, emphasizes the critical stance that Hegel takes towards “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” as the first—and the worst, least mediated, most natural—moment of Spirit. Notably, de Boer explains the stage’s logic to argue that Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata* is a better interpretation of Hegel’s literary reference. De Boer describes the *Phenomenology* as a “series of undercover operations,”³⁰⁸ that present each stage from within that stage, where each is enacted only in order to discover its defects. She emphasizes that equating what Hegel writes in a stage with Hegelian science generally, which some commentaries on “Human and Divine Law:

³⁰⁶ Butler, *Antigone’s Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, 5-6.

³⁰⁷ Butler, *Antigone’s Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, 82.

³⁰⁸ Karin de Boer, “Beyond Tragedy: Tracing the Aristophanien Subtext of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,” in *Hegel’s Philosophy and Feminist Thought: Beyond Antigone?* edited by Kimberly Hutchings and Tuija Pulkkinen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 134.

Man and Woman” risk doing, would be to approach Hegel’s texts in the way that consciousness treats entities in “Sense-Certainty”, namely as fixed and objective content. In contrast, de Boer argues that Hegel goes undercover in Athenian Greece through its literature, which he understands as “ ‘ideal,’ and distinct from its ‘real’ activity.”³⁰⁹ De Boer writes,

Hegel seeks to achieve insight into the *logic* of the process that pushed Greek culture toward its downfall. Since the classical texts on which he draws are exclusively selected in this light, Hegel nowhere purports to offer an interpretation of particular plays.³¹⁰

That is, de Boer argues that Hegel references Greek literature in order to gain access to Athenian society and the logic of history’s development, and not to interpret or assess the reality of that literature. Moreover, De Boer explains that Hegel presents the division between human and divine law from the perspective of a human law which necessarily generates a hostile and simplistic view of its opposite. De Boer writes:

In my view, Hegel here identifies with the prevailing paradigm of human law in order to consider how divine law first and foremost presented itself *to it*... I would like to note, however, that Hegel identifies with the prevailing mode of Greek culture only to show that its one-sided determination of ethical life contradicts the very principle of Greek culture as such, that is, the unity of divine law and human law.³¹¹

That is, divine law is presented, even misrepresented, from the one-sided perspective of its self-claimed opponent. Importantly, this does not detract from the overall goal of demonstrating the unity of the two spheres. De Boer explains how the logic of “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” transitions out of that stage, saying:

Hegel seems to hold that Greek culture actually survived the clash between divine

³⁰⁹ de Boer, “Beyond Tragedy,” 135.

³¹⁰ de Boer, “Beyond Tragedy,” 136.

³¹¹ de Boer, “Beyond Tragedy,” 137.

law and human law by incorporating elements of the former into the latter, *but that it thereby did not accomplish the work of spirit in an adequate way...* In Hegel's view, the mode of human law that resulted from the incorporation of divine law had, at some point, to emerge as a one-sided paradigm as well.³¹²

That is, overcoming the division between human and divine law does not immediately generate Absolute spirit. Divine law is merely added to the one-sided view of human law to create a moment of spirit that is still too one-sided; a true unity may come only at the end of the *Phenomenology*, if at all. Moreover, de Boer argues that the logic of "Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman" is best represented by Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, not Sophocles' *Antigone*. De Boer writes:

As I see it, Hegel implicitly draws on the insights achieved in Greek comedy to argue that Greek culture, organizing its ethical life in accordance with the natural distinction between the male and female sex, contradicts the principle of individuality it harbors.³¹³

That is, through an analysis of the logic of "Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman", de Boer argues that interpreting Hegel's reference to Greek literature as a reference to Sophocles' *Antigone* instead of to Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* is a mistake that obscures the meaning of the text.³¹⁴

The differences between the interpretations of Mills, Ravven, Irigaray, Butler, and de Boer represent some of the diversity found in the discussion of Hegel's reference to *Antigone*. Some commentators, like Mills and Butler, focus on *Antigone*, the play, whereas others, like Ravven, Irigaray, and de Boer focus on Hegel's texts. Some

³¹² de Boer, "Beyond Tragedy," 139.

³¹³ de Boer, "Beyond Tragedy," 145.

³¹⁴ De Boer's approach is similar to Jeffrey Reid's critique of use of Faust to interpret "Pleasure and Necessity". Reid writes: "It seems to me that exclusive reference to this work, as an exegetical tool, is neither justified by the Hegel text itself, nor completely helpful. In fact, this reliance may veil other aspects essential to understanding how Hegel presents sexual pleasure and the true nature of its self-destructive necessity." Reid, "Music and Monosyllables," 87.

commentators, like Mills and Ravven, approach Hegel's texts with an argument that Hegel systematizes a mistaken 'natural' inequality between men and women, whereas other commentators follow Irigaray in celebrating the difference between men and women and the rebellious power of womanhood. Butler and de Boer represent opposite interpretations, with Butler focusing on Sophocles' *Antigone* and de Boer arguing that Hegel is referencing Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*. Yet, the common thread between these commentators is an investigation of Hegel's interpretation of *Antigone* from the perspective of feminist theory generally. Some, like Mills, conclude that, because *Antigone* transcends Hegel's reference of her, the *Phenomenology* is a failure, a closed and antiquated system that is only useful for feminism to the extent that it represents patriarchal discourse. Some, like Ravven and de Boer, discuss the misogyny of Hegel's texts but argue that, as a philosophical text of history and freedom, the *Phenomenology* is useful for feminism. Irigaray and feminists of difference celebrate the destructive power of womanhood as explained by Hegel. Finally, some, like Butler, challenge Hegel's interpretation of *Antigone* in order to reclaim *Antigone* as a feminist heroine. For myself, I sympathize with Mill's suggestion that women are not wholly accounted for in Hegel's system; I respect Ravven and de Boer's contentful and logic-centred examinations of Hegel's texts; I appreciate Irigaray's irreverent and interpretive approach to patriarchal discourse; I welcome Butler's deconstruction of the "standard Hegelian interpretation" of *Antigone*; and finally, I am intrigued by de Boer's suggestion that Hegel references Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*.

However, interpretations of Hegel's reference to *Antigone* and the brother-sister relationship do not resolve the problem that the female reader is alienated from the

Phenomenology in “Pleasure and Necessity”. Although Hegel states that the brother-sister relationship is different than the other relationships within the family, the sister is not elevated to the level of consciousness by the relation to her brother. Thus, women remain barred from acting as a figure of consciousness in the *Phenomenology* and the female reader still experiences the second form of alienation outlined in the previous chapter.³¹⁵ Moreover, when commentators discuss the unconsciousness of the sister, such as Mills, Ravven, and Irigaray, they offer no solution to it. Mills juxtaposes Hegel’s assertion that the sister remains an unconscious, unreal shadow with the fact that Antigone enters the political sphere in the play to conclude that Hegel’s *Phenomenology* is a failure. In contrast, Ravven and Irigaray go beyond “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman” to argue that women are always alienated from consciousness’ journey in the *Phenomenology*. Ravven explains that the story of the *Phenomenology* pertains only to the *Bildung* of men and Irigaray explains that women must always forget themselves in Hegel’s system.

I, however, seek to resolve the female reader’s alienation from the *Phenomenology* by re-writing it because of its important role in Hegelian science for both its reader and science itself. Thus, Antigone is only a solution to the problem of the female reader’s alienation from the *Phenomenology* to the extent that it becomes possible to reintroduce Antigone as a figure of consciousness, the protagonist. And, before that is possible, I must return to “Pleasure and Necessity” and re-write it. By using the underlying logic as the outline for the re-writing of the *Phenomenology*, I explore the

³¹⁵ see “Chapter 4: Male Pleasure and Alientating the Female Reader”, 75-7

extent to which Hegelian science is open-ended and Absolute, the extent to which it is open to new—female—content.

Chapter 6: The Underlying Logic of “Pleasure and Necessity”

In this chapter, I demonstrate the method for isolating the underlying logic of “Pleasure and Necessity” by comparing it to its corresponding section in different editions of the Logic. First, I explain why isolating the underlying logic of the *Phenomenology* is important for its re-writing. Second, I compare two versions of the Logic to see which more accurately presents the underlying logic of the *Phenomenology*. Third, I present the correspondence between “Pleasure and Necessity” and §80 of “The Should or the Good” in the 1808 ff. Logic. Fourth, I contextualize my reading of §80 of “The Should or the Good” with reference to the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopedia Logic*. Finally, I isolate the underlying logic of “Pleasure and Necessity”.

The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a special kind of *Bildungsroman*. The text not only educates its reader on a path towards Hegelian science, it also justifies that science, facilitates the Absolute’s own self-knowing, and is itself Hegelian science in the sense that it has science’s logical method. As such, for both its reader and science itself, the *Phenomenology* provides an essential development. Hegel writes:

Without this development, science has no general **intelligibility**, and it seems to be the esoteric possession of only a few individuals.... The intelligible form of science is the path offered to everyone and equally available for all. To achieve rational knowledge through our own intellect is the rightful demand of a consciousness which is approaching the status of science.³¹⁶

That is, the path of the *Phenomenology* must be offered to everyone and equally available for all. However, as I have demonstrated, it is not. The inequality that Hegel posits between men and women in his system along with the difference between how men and women experience sexual intercourse results in an *inequality* between male and female

³¹⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §13, 11.

readers of the text. Thus, the *Phenomenology*, as written, is not as successful as it purports to be. As such, the solution to the problem of the alienation of the female reader is to re-write “Pleasure and Necessity”—in terms that are accessible to all readers—and not merely to re-interpret the text as originally written. The aim of re-writing is thus no more than to make the path to science ‘offered to everyone and equally available for all.’

Fortunately, the *Phenomenology* already contains the outline of its own re-writing. This is because the *Phenomenology* is both *phenomena* and *logos*, and in re-writing the text, I seek to change only the phenomena of consciousness’ experience and *not* the underlying logic of the stage. It is possible to isolate this underlying logic, since, as Hegel writes:

... to every abstract moment of science, there corresponds a shape of appearing spirit *per se*. Just as existing spirit is not richer than science, so too spirit in its content is no poorer. To take cognizance of the pure concepts of science in this form, namely, in which they are shapes of consciousness, is what constitutes the aspect of their reality.³¹⁷

That is, each stage of consciousness corresponds to an abstract moment of science, a stage in the Logic. As such, it is possible to isolate and understand this underlying logic of the *Phenomenology* with reference to the Logic. By identifying the section of the Logic that corresponds to “Pleasure and Necessity” in the *Phenomenology*, we can plan out a re-written section of “Pleasure and Necessity”, accessible to female readers, by using new figures to re-stage the logical operation that occurs in the original version of “Pleasure and Necessity” and the corresponding section of the Logic.

However, isolating the underlying logic of the *Phenomenology* is difficult because it is not clear which version of the Logic is meant to correspond, and referencing different

³¹⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §805, 718.

versions of the Logic generates different interpretations of the *Phenomenology's* underlying logic. In what follows, I consider two possible candidates for the version of the Logic to be mapped onto the *Phenomenology*: the *Jena System* (1804-05) and the “Philosophical Encyclopedia for the Higher Classes (1808 ff.)”. First, I consider Hans Friedrich Fulda and Johannes Heinrichs’ mapping of the *Jena System*. Second, I consider Michael N. Forster’s mapping of the “Philosophical Encyclopedia for the Higher Class (1808 ff.)” and the “Doctrine of the Concept for the Higher Class (1809/10)”. I conclude that Forster’s reading more plausibly and consistently maps the stages of the 1808 ff. Logic onto the *Phenomenology*. As such, I conclude that Forster’s mapping of “The Should or The Good”, paragraphs 80-83 of the “Doctrine of the Concept for the Higher Classes (1809/10)”, onto “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself” is helpful for understanding the underlying logic of “Pleasure and Necessity”.

Hans Friedrich Fulda, in “Zur Logik der *Phänomenologie* von ein thousand acht hundert sieben [1807]”, and Johannes Heinrichs, in *Die Logik der Phänomenologie des Geistes*, investigate the underlying logic of the *Phenomenology* because they think that Hegel’s statements that the stages of consciousness correspond to stages in the Logic can help scholars understand the *Phenomenology's* scientific procedure and its relationship to Hegelian science. Both scholars argue that the *Phenomenology* maps onto the “Logic” and “Metaphysics” sections of the *Jena System*, a manuscript dating from 1804-05, of Hegel’s *Logic, Metaphysics, and the Philosophy of Nature*. In favour of the *Jena System* as the underlying logic of the *Phenomenology* is the timing: the *Jena System* manuscript is written just before the *Phenomenology* and, therefore, could act both as the outline of

the *Phenomenology* and be the completed text that Hegel refers to when he says there is a one-to-one correspondence.³¹⁸

However, both Fulda and Heinrichs find it difficult to map the *Jena System* onto the *Phenomenology*. The first part of the *Jena System*, “Logic”, is missing some of the categories that occur in later versions and, in order to stretch it across “Consciousness” and “Self-Consciousness”, Fulda and Heinrichs have to skip some stages of the *Phenomenology*. Moreover, the second part of the *Jena System*, “Metaphysics”, presents a larger problem. Both scholars have to reverse the order of the stages in the “Metaphysics” section of the *Jena System* for the mapping to work. Fulda reverses the order of the three main sections of the “Metaphysics” so that its last moment, “Metaphysics of Subjectivity”, corresponds to “Reason” in the *Phenomenology* and its first moment, “Cognition as a System of First Principles”, corresponds to “Absolute Knowing”.³¹⁹ Although Fulda does not dwell on the reasons for this reversal, with its subsections “The Theoretical ‘I’ ” and “The Practical ‘I’ ”, the “Metaphysics of Subjectivity” seems like a good fit for “Reason”. On the other hand, Heinrichs reverses the order of the “Metaphysics” so that its second moment, “Metaphysics of Objectivity”, corresponds to “Reason” and its first moment, “Cognition as a System of First Principles”, corresponds to “Spirit”, despite the fact that neither part maps easily onto these sections of the *Phenomenology*.³²⁰ Thus, the *Jena System*, because it is still split

³¹⁸ Johannes Heinrichs, *Die Logik der Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Bonn, Germany: Bouvier Verlag, 1874), 96-7.

³¹⁹ Hans Friedrich Fulda, “Zur Logik der Phänomenologie von 1807,” in *Hegel-Studien* 3, (1966): 97-9.

³²⁰ Johannes Heinrichs, “Vernunft: die Idee in ihrer Endlichkeit” and “Der Geist und die Grundsätze” in *Die Logik der Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 221-409.

into the “Logic” and the “Metaphysics”—the latter of which cannot be mapped easily—and because it is missing categories that will appear in later versions, does not correspond well to the stages of consciousness as found in the *Phenomenology*. As such, both Fulda and Heinrichs are forced to conclude that, while Hegel began by intending for there to be a one-to-one correspondence between the stages of the *Phenomenology* and the abstract moments of science, he eventually abandoned this idea.³²¹

Michael N. Forster also investigates the underlying logic of the *Phenomenology* to help understand the *Phenomenology*'s scientific procedure and its relationship to Hegelian science in *Hegel's Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*. In “The Underlying Logic of the *Phenomenology*,” Forster maps the *Phenomenology* onto the teaching notes that Hegel created for his upper level students in the *Gymnasium* in Nuremburg: the “Philosophical Encyclopedia for the Higher Classes (1808 ff.)” and the “Doctrine of the Concept for the Higher Classes (1809/10)”.³²² Forster combines these texts because the third moment of the Logic, the “Doctrine of the Idea”, in the “Philosophical Encyclopedia for the Higher Classes (1808 ff.)” is very abridged whereas the “Doctrine of the Concept for the Higher Classes (1809/10)” provides a more in-depth explanation of the “Doctrine of the Idea”. In an appendix to *Hegel's Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*,

³²¹ Fulda, “Zur Logik der Phänomenologie von 1807,” 100; Heinrichs, *Die Logik der Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 102-3.

³²² Titles of the Logic in the *Nürnberger Schriften* can become confusing because there are so many [including *Logik für die Mittelklasse (1808/9)*, *Logik für die Unterklasse (1809/10)* and *Logik für die Mittelklasse (1810/11)*]. The German titles of the versions of the Logic used by Forster are *Philosophische Enzyklopädie für die Oberklasse (1808 ff.)* and *Begriffslehre für die Oberklasse (1809/10)* in *Nürnberger und Heidelberger Schriften 1808-1817* (Suhrkamp, 1986). They are referred to by Forster as the 1808 ff. Logic and Doctrine of the Concept (1809-10). Another English translation by A.V. Miller translates them as *The Philosophical Encyclopedia (for the Higher Class)* and *The Science of the Concept (for the Higher Class)* in *The Philosophical Propaedeutic* (Basil Blackwell, 1986).

Forster provides his own translation of these combined texts, which he collectively refers to as the 1808 ff. Logic.

There are three aspects of the 1808 ff. Logic that set it apart from earlier versions and recommend it as the version of the underlying logic of the *Phenomenology*. First, the 1808 ff. Logic is the first Logic to culminate in the “Absolute Idea”. Forster writes,

This change is very important, systematically speaking, for it is here that the fusion of the early Metaphysics into the Logic has taken place: Hegel has in effect turned the whole of the early Metaphysics into this single culminating category of the Logic.³²³

Thus, unlike the *Jena System* where the stages of the “Metaphysics” cannot easily be mapped, Forster can map the simplified “Absolute Idea” section of the 1808 ff. Logic onto the *Phenomenology*. And, by referencing passages in the “Introduction” to the *Phenomenology*, Forster concludes that:

Now we can see that Hegel had already effected this change, that he was already presupposing a Logic culminating in this category, by the time he began composing the *Phenomenology*.³²⁴

That is, although no published version of the Logic culminates in the “Absolute Idea” until 1808, Hegel had already incorporated this change into the *Phenomenology* in 1807.³²⁵

Second, the 1808 ff. Logic is the first Logic to contain the category of “Essence”. Other early versions of the Logic lack this section, and move directly from the category of “Being” to the category of “Relation” or “Actuality”, depending on the version. This is

³²³ Forster, *Hegel's Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*, 523.

³²⁴ Forster, *Hegel's Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*, 523.

³²⁵ For more on Hegel's shift in method from the *Jena System* and later Logics and this shift's relation to the *Phenomenology*, see: John Burbidge, “The Background to Hegel's *Logic*” and “Metaphysics and Hegel's *Phenomenology*,” in *The Logic of Hegel's Logic* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2006), 20-35.

significant because Forster notes that Hegel mentions the category of “Essence” when Hegel discusses the correspondence between subsections of “Consciousness”—“Sense-Certainty”, “Perception”, and “Force and the Understanding”—in the *Phenomenology* and stages in the Logic. Forster notes that Hegel tells us that the stages of the *Phenomenology* “make the *object in itself* into a spiritual essence,”³²⁶ and:

The object is therefore in part *immediate* being, that is, a thing *per se*, something which corresponds to immediate consciousness [in Sense-Certainty]. In part, it is a coming-to-be-the-other of itself, its relation, that is, *being for an other* and *being-for-itself*, the determinateness which corresponds to *perception*, and, in part, it is *essence*, that is, the universal which corresponds to the understanding.³²⁷

That is, Forster interprets this passage to mean that immediate being as “Quality” in the Logic corresponds to “Sense-Certainty” in the *Phenomenology*, “Quantity” corresponds to “Perception”, and “Essence” corresponds to “Force and the Understanding”. Since Hegel states that a stage in the *Phenomenology* corresponds to “Essence”, any version of the Logic that corresponds to the underlying logic of the *Phenomenology* should also have this category.

Third, because Forster is able to map the 1808 ff. Logic onto the *Phenomenology* without omitting sections or changing their order, this Logic is faithful to the idea that Hegel intended for there to be a one-to-one mapping. In contrast to Fulda and Heinrichs, Forster emphasizes that Hegel attests to the one-to-one mapping at both the very beginning and very end of the *Phenomenology*. For this reason, it seems unlikely that Hegel changed his mind or abandoned the idea of an underlying logic while writing the *Phenomenology*. Forster’s idea, I would argue, is also supported by the passages that I

³²⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §788, 701.

³²⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §789, 701.

discussed in “Chapter 1: Reading a *Bildungsroman*” from the *Phenomenology, Science of Logic*, and *Encyclopedia Logic* that attest to the *Phenomenology*’s scientific or logical procedure.³²⁸ That is, passages that attest to the scientific or logical procedure of the *Phenomenology* many years after its publication demonstrate that it is unlikely that Hegel changed his mind about the logical procedure of the *Phenomenology*.

For these reasons, I argue that Forster’s 1808 ff. Logic, a combination of the “Philosophical Encyclopedia for the Higher Classes (1808 ff.)” and the “Doctrine of the Concept for the Higher Classes (1809/10)”, is the most plausible version of the Logic that Hegel had in mind when he proposed a one-to-one correspondence between the stages of the *Phenomenology* and the abstract moments of science.³²⁹ As such, in what follows, I use these works to explain the underlying logic of “Pleasure and Necessity”. First, I discuss the section of the 1808 ff. Logic that Forster maps onto “Pleasure and Necessity”, namely §80 of “The Should or the Good”. Second, I place “Pleasure and Necessity” and §80 of “The Should or the Good” within the context of “The Idea of the Good” in the *Science of Logic* and “Willing” in the *Encyclopedia Logic*. Finally, I isolate the underlying logic of “Pleasure and Necessity”.

Broadly, Forster maps the “Doctrine of the Idea” in the “Doctrine of the Concept for the Higher Classes (1809/10)” onto “Reason” in the *Phenomenology*. More specifically, Forster maps the second moment of “The Idea of Cognition and the Good”,

³²⁸ see “Chapter 1: Reading a *Bildungsroman*”, 12-3, 19-20.

³²⁹ For an in depth defence of Forster’s mapping of the 1808 ff. Logic, particularly why Forster maps the Logic onto only “Consciousness”, “Self-Consciousness”, and “Reason” plus his arguments about the relationship between Spirit and Religion and these first three sections, see: Forster, “Part Four: *Phenomenology* and *Ur-Phenomenology*; *Phenomenology* and Logic” in *Hegel’s Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*, 499-543. For this thesis, I limit myself to an investigation of the merit of mapping “Pleasure and Necessity” onto §80 of “The Should or the Good”, which I do below.

“The Should or the Good” §§80-83 onto the second moment of “Reason”, “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself”, in the *Phenomenology*. In particular, Forster maps §80 of “The Should or the Good” onto “Pleasure and Necessity”.

This mapping has merit because there is a correspondence between these stages. First, “Reason”, in the *Phenomenology*, and the “Doctrine of the Idea”, in the “Doctrine of the Concept for the Higher Classes (1809/10)”, both begin with the same logical concepts. In “Reason”, Hegel writes:

Reason is the certainty which consciousness has of being all reality; or so it is in that way that idealism expresses its concept of itself.³³⁰

That is, “Reason” is the expression of the concept of idealism and, in “Observing Reason”, consciousness moves through two types of idealism, namely, a first “idealism [that] expresses the *simple unity* of self-consciousness as being all reality and *immediately* makes it the essence,”³³¹ and:

... a second idealism even more incomprehensible than the first idealism. This second idealism declares that there are *distinctions* in the category, that is, *species* of the category.³³²

That is, as consciousness moves through “Observing Reason”, he passes from an idealism that presents a unified picture of nature to an idealism that divides nature into species. Similarly, the “Doctrine of the Idea” begins with an idealism where the “*Idea* is the objectively True.”³³³ This idealism is first expressed by “Life... as the immediate unity

³³⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §233, 203-4.

³³¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §235, 207.

³³² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §235, 207.

³³³ Forster, “Logic (1808 ff.),” in *Hegel’s Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*, §66, 626.

between the Concept and determinate being... an *organic system*.³³⁴ Next, this idealism is understood as, “*Division* [that] expresses a genus or a universal in general, a species, an order, etc.”³³⁵ That is, this version of the Logic has the same structure as “Observing Reason”; it begins with an idealism presented as a unity where being is organic nature and moves toward an idealism concerned with dividing nature into species and kinds.

Furthermore, “Pleasure and Necessity” also shares logical concepts with the beginning of “The Should or The Good”. In “Pleasure and Necessity”, consciousness must elevate the certainty that he is all reality into an actual truth—“it must demand and engender its actuality in an other.”³³⁶ As such, Hegel writes:

This *first purpose* [Zweck] is to become conscious of itself as an individual essence within that other self-consciousness, that is, to make this other into itself; it has the certainty that *in itself* this other already is itself.³³⁷

That is, Hegel writes that consciousness’ purpose is to elevate the certainty that he is all reality into an actual truth by knowing himself in an other and making this other into himself. Similarly, in §80 of “The Should or the Good”, which also marks the transition from ‘cognition’ to ‘the good’ in the “Idea of Cognition and the Good”, Hegel writes:

In the Idea of Cognition the Concept is sought and should be appropriate to the object. In the Idea of the Good, conversely, the Concept has the standing of being the first and of being the purpose [Zweck] existing in itself which should be realized in actuality [in der Wirklichkeit realisiert werden *soll*].³³⁸

That is, in the “Idea of the Good”, the Concept moves from finding itself in objectivity, in the beginning of the “Doctrine of the Idea” as in “Observing Reason” in the

³³⁴ Forster, “Logic (1808 ff.),” in *Hegel’s Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*, §69, 627.

³³⁵ Forster, “Logic (1808 ff.),” in *Hegel’s Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*, §72, 627.

³³⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §348, 307.

³³⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §360, 316.

³³⁸ Forster, “Logic (1808 ff.),” in *Hegel’s Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*, §80, 628.

Phenomenology, to making itself actual. Actualizing itself is its first purpose, described in terms of ‘should.’ However, exactly how this purpose turns into necessity is not entirely clear in “The Should or The Good” because, with only four paragraphs for all of “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself”, it is heavily abridged and simply too short. However, the next paragraph, which corresponds to the stage after “Pleasure and Necessity”, “The Law of the Heart and the Insanity of Self-Conceit”, suggests that the first paragraph of “The Should or the Good” ends in necessity. Hegel writes:

The good in itself, since it first needs to be realized, stands in opposition to a world which does not correspond to it and a nature which has its own laws of necessity and is indifferent towards laws of freedom.³³⁹

That is, the actuality that confronts “the good” *has its own* laws of necessity. This is the same way in which necessity confronts consciousness in “The Law of the Heart and the Insanity of Self-Conceit” in the *Phenomenology*. There, Hegel explains that we, the readers, see how this necessity grows out of “Pleasure and Necessity”. Hegel writes:

This actuality, which appears in the present shape of consciousness as *confronting it*, is, as it has become clear, nothing but the preceding estrangement between individuality and its truth, that is, a relationship of dreadful necessity by which individuality is crushed. For that reason, *for us* the preceding movement confronts the new shape because the new shape has in itself originated out of it, and the moment from which it stems is necessary for it. However, in its eyes, that moment appears as something it *just finds as given to it*, since it has no consciousness of its *origin*, and in its eyes the essence exists to a greater degree *on its own*...³⁴⁰

That is, for us, it is clear that the necessity that consciousness confronts in “The Law of the Heart and the Insanity of Self-Conceit” is nothing more than the unresolved necessity of “Pleasure and Necessity”. As such, we can therefore see that “The Should or the

³³⁹ Forster, “Logic (1808 ff.),” in *Hegel’s Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit*, §81, 628.

³⁴⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §369, 322-3.

Good” has the same logical structure as “Pleasure and Necessity”—the Idea’s first purpose is that it should make itself actual, which then results in a necessity that confronts it as nature’s own laws of necessity in the next section.

Although §80 of “The Should or the Good” maps onto “Pleasure and Necessity” fairly well, the paragraph is so short that it only presents the bare bones of the logic of pleasure and does not explicitly treat its transition into necessity. Yet, because this moment of the 1808 ff. Logic is maintained in later versions of the Logic, it is possible to supplement this moment with details found in these versions. Sections similar to “The Should or the Good” can be found in both the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopedia Logic*. In the “Doctrine of the Concept for the Higher Classes (1809/10)”, “The Should or the Good” is the second moment of “The Idea of Cognition and the Good”. In the *Science of Logic*, it is “The Idea of the Good”, the second moment of “The Idea of Cognition”. In the *Encyclopedia Logic*, it is “Willing”, the second moment of “Cognition”. In what follows I will discuss these passages in order to examine the underlying logic of “Pleasure and Necessity” as found in these versions of the Logic.

In the *Science of Logic*, the link between the “Idea of the Good” and “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness” is made explicit. Hegel writes:

The complete development of this unresolved contradiction, between that *absolute purpose* and the *restriction* of this reality that stands opposed to it, has been examined in detail in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (pp. 323ff.).³⁴¹

That is, the contradiction is the incompatibility between consciousness’ purpose to actualize the certainty that he is all reality and the necessity that results, which is seen first in “Pleasure and Necessity”. Hegel’s citation is a reference to the third moment of

³⁴¹ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.233, 731.

“The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness” where this contradiction is finally resolved.³⁴² The citation itself is the following passage:

The two aspects mentioned above, in terms of which the universal became an abstraction, *are no longer separated*... What the way of the world offers to the virtuous consciousness is the universal, and it offers it not merely as an abstract universal but as a universal both brought to life by individuality and which exists for an other, that is, which is the *actual good*.³⁴³

Thus, Hegel makes explicit the connection between “The Idea of the Good” in the *Science of Logic* and “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself” in the *Phenomenology*. That is, in both cases, this is where this contradiction is resolved. In Hegel’s cited passage, consciousness finally achieves what he set out to do in “Pleasure and Necessity”, namely he has actualized himself as “the actual good” for an other and he has achieved this all by himself in a way that does not result in an abstract universality. The logic in the two sections is so similar that Hegel does not need to reiterate it in the *Science of Logic*; he simply refers to its demonstration in the *Phenomenology*.³⁴⁴

The corresponding term to pleasure in “The Idea of the Good” in the *Science of Logic* is impulse (*Trieb*). Hegel writes:

... it is the *impulse* to realize itself, the purpose that *on its own* wants to give itself objectivity in the objective world and realize itself.³⁴⁵

³⁴² This reference can be found in G.W. Hegel, *System der Wissenschaft, Erster Theil: Die Phänomenologie des Geistes*, First Edition (Bamberg, Germany: Geobhardt Verlag, 1807), 323, accessed January 2016, http://www.deutschestextarchiv.de/hegel_phanomenologie_1807. Or, it can also be found in G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Gesammelte Werke 9, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1980), 210.

³⁴³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §386, 336.

³⁴⁴ The same logical conclusion is found in Forster’s 1808 ff. Logic: “At the same time, though, there lies therein the determination that *in itself* actuality *agrees* with the good, or the belief in a moral world order.” §84, 629.

³⁴⁵ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.231, 729.

That is, impulse has the same logical structure as pleasure in “Pleasure and Necessity”. The purpose of impulse is to make the concept real. Just as consciousness is certain that he is all reality in “Reason”, the concept, “comes on the scene with the dignity of being absolute, because it is intrinsically the totality of the concept.”³⁴⁶ Yet, this intrinsic dignity of being absolute is not enough. Just as with consciousness in “Pleasure and Necessity”, in the *Science of Logic*:

This determinateness which is in the concept, is equal to the concept, and entails a demand for singular external actuality, is the *good*.³⁴⁷

That is, the concept must actualize its intrinsic dignity of being absolute. Just as pleasure is not mere hedonism in “Pleasure and Necessity”, impulse is not directed at itself. Hegel writes:

The activity of purpose, therefore, is not directed at itself, is not a matter of letting in a given determination and making it its own, but of positing rather its own determination and, by means of sublating the determinations of the external world, giving itself reality in the form of external actuality.³⁴⁸

Thus, in both “Pleasure and Necessity” and “The Idea of the Good”, Hegel emphasizes the purpose to actualize Reason’s certainty that consciousness is all reality or the concept’s certainty of being absolute—not the mere gratification of physical pleasure or impulses.

Moreover, like consciousness at the beginning of “Pleasure and Necessity”, this actualization seems simple. Hegel writes:

... the impulse is determined in this way: the concept is indeed the absolute certainty of itself; however, opposite its *being-for-itself* there stands its presupposition of a world that exists *in itself*, but one whose indifferent *otherness*

³⁴⁶ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.231, 729.

³⁴⁷ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.231, 729.

³⁴⁸ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.231, 730.

has for the concept's certainty of itself the status of something merely *unessential*; the concept is therefore the impulse to sublata this otherness and, in the object, to intuit its identity with itself.³⁴⁹

That is, it seems easy for the concept to actualize itself as absolute because the otherness that stands against it is not really that other, the otherness seems, to the concept, merely unessential. Similarly, in "Pleasure and Necessity", consciousness:

... sets itself on eliminating the form of its otherness, that is, its self-sufficiency, which is an essenceless facade. This is so because *in itself* that otherness counts in its eyes as the same essence, that is, as its selfhood.³⁵⁰

Just as in the passage from the Logic, here consciousness and the concept are both, in their own eyes, absolute—yet this is merely an inner certainty that must be actualized. Moreover, in both passages, at least in the beginning, this actualization appears to be easy because the otherness standing against consciousness or the concept is only un-essentially other.

In both "The Idea of the Good", in the *Science of Logic*, and "Pleasure and Necessity", in the *Phenomenology*, the logical structure of how impulse and pleasure fail is the same. Like pleasure, impulse is too immediate and subjective. Hegel writes:

Although the idea is indeed the free concept that has itself as its subject matter, it is nonetheless *immediate*, and just because it is immediate, it is still the idea in its *subjectivity*, and hence in its finitude in general. It is the *purpose* that ought to realize itself, or the *absolute idea* itself still in its *appearance*.³⁵¹

That is, impulse is immediate insofar as it is mediated by nothing. Also, it is so subjective that it cannot get beyond the finite. Both pleasure and impulse find this unmediated actualization problematic. Consciousness, "becomes not an object to itself as *this*

³⁴⁹ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.200, 697.

³⁵⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §362, 317.

³⁵¹ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.199, 696.

individual self-consciousness but to a greater degree as the *unity* of itself and the other self-consciousness,” in “Pleasure and Necessity”. Similarly, impulse, instead of actualizing itself, becomes a means. Hegel writes:

In being realized the finite purpose still attains only the status of a means; since it is not a purpose determined in and for itself already from the beginning, as realized it also remains something that does not exist in and for itself.³⁵²

Thus, just as consciousness experiences sexual intercourse as a “firm connection”³⁵³ that cannot be decoupled without sacrificing consciousness’ actuality, the impulsive action becomes attached to the effect of the action through a means. Consciousness experiences this unmediated unity as an abstract universality.

In “The Idea of the Good”, the concept experiences impulse as a “simple identity”³⁵⁴ but Hegel writes that this, “immediate *realization* does not itself require closer exposition here; it is none other than the previously considered syllogism of *external purposiveness*.”³⁵⁵ Yet, external purposiveness has the same logical structure as necessity in “Pleasure and Necessity”. Hegel writes:

Already in the formal *judgment* are *subject* and *predicate* determined as self-subsistent over against each other; but their self-subsistence is still only abstract universality... Accordingly, purpose is *finite*, even though according to form it is equally infinite subjectivity.³⁵⁶

That is, just as sex is a literal copula what creates “the unity of both self-sufficient self-consciousnesses,”³⁵⁷ in “Pleasure and Necessity”, impulse, as immediate realization of

³⁵² Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.232, 730.

³⁵³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §363, 319.

³⁵⁴ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.232, 730.

³⁵⁵ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.232, 730.

³⁵⁶ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.161, 658.

³⁵⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §362, 318.

the concept's absolute certainty, is a judgment that connects two self-sufficient parts and results in an abstract universality. Moreover, the lack of mediation and the one-sidedness of the connection means that impulse is finite. Or, stated succinctly in "Willing" in the *Encyclopedia Logic*,

The finitude of this activity, therefore, is the *contradiction* that the *purpose of the good* is being achieved and equally is not being achieved... This contradiction presents itself as the *infinite progress* in the actualisation of the good, which is fixed in this progress as a mere *ought*.³⁵⁸

That is, just as consciousness experiences the finitude of orgasm in sexual intercourse as a bad infinity of actualization, impulse is a finite activity that is contradictory. Impulse achieves its purpose—but only for a moment—and the logic of impulse generates a bad infinity of immediate acts that never fully moves beyond the "ought" of actualization to real actuality. As such, impulse has a similar deathly result as necessity. Hegel writes:

Since they have actuality only in the accidents and in the effects, their activity is a transition against which they do not maintain themselves in freedom.³⁵⁹

That is, the concept cannot maintain its freedom in its actualization and, since the concept is the free activity of thought, the concept cannot maintain *itself* in its actualization and experiences impulse as a kind of death.

Thus, the underlying logic of "Pleasure and Necessity" corresponds to Hegel's explanation of impulsive action and the bad infinity of "ought" in the 1808 ff. *Logic*, the *Science of Logic*, and the *Encyclopedia Logic*. However, it is important to note that there is a danger in relying too heavily on a version of the *Logic* when re-writing the *Phenomenology*, namely that consciousness, the unique protagonist of the

³⁵⁸ Hegel, *The Encyclopedia Logic*, trans Geraets, Suchting, and Harris, §234, 301-2.

³⁵⁹ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.160, 657.

Phenomenology will be lost and, rather than (re)creating an appearance of spirit with logic as its underlying structure, the re-written version merely becomes the Logic. Helpfully, Hegel repeats a discussion of the differences between the *Phenomenology* and the abstract moments of science in the “Idea of Cognition” in the *Science of Logic*, the section we have been discussing above. Here, Hegel writes, referencing “Reason” in the *Phenomenology*, that consciousness’ certainty that he is all reality, “has for it the significance rather of *a negative*,” because, since objectivity still stands against consciousness, “the objectivity confronting it is at the same time still only a *reflective shining*, for that objectivity still also has the form of a *being that exists in itself*.” Moreover, before the *Science of Logic*, “liberates itself from this determinateness and goes on to grasp its truth, the infinite spirit,” consciousness is limited to, “the subject matter’s determinations as on its own, on feelings, on representations and thought.” As such, to safeguard consciousness, the re-written version of “Pleasure and Necessity” must take objectivity as something that immediately stands against consciousness with “a being that exists in itself” and consciousness must be limited to his own feelings, representations, and thoughts.

Notably, in this passage of the *Science of Logic*, Hegel ambiguously refers to the *Phenomenology* when he writes that it, “has this course already behind it, or what is the same, it has it rather ahead of it,”³⁶⁰ and when he writes:

This stage is the subject matter of *the phenomenology of spirit* – a science that stands midway between the science of the natural spirit and of the spirit as such.”³⁶¹

³⁶⁰ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.198, 696.

³⁶¹ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.198, 655.

That is, Hegel seems to be referring to both the *Phenomenology of Spirit* [1807] as the first part of science and the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit* in the *Encyclopedia* where we find section B: “The Phenomenology of Spirit”, §§413-439. This opens up a further correspondence between stages in the *Phenomenology* (1807) and the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*. However, in the latter, “The Phenomenology of Spirit” occurs in the middle moment—section B—and, unlike its presentation of “Consciousness” and “Self-Consciousness”, “Reason” is only discussed briefly—merely, it seems, in anticipation of section C: “Psychology, The Mind”. As such, it is initially difficult to understand the connection between “Reason” in the *Phenomenology* (1807) and “Reason” in “The Phenomenology of Spirit” in the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*. Yet, the demonstrated connection between “Pleasure and Necessity” and impulse in “The Idea of the Good” in the *Science of Logic* helps us here. Just as “The Idea of the Good” is the second moment of “The Idea of Cognition” in the *Science of Logic*, “Practical Mind” is the second moment of “Psychology, The Mind” and there we—again—find a discussion of impulse (*Trieb*).³⁶² That is, we can use the underlying logic of “Pleasure and Necessity” as a key to open up comparisons between the *Phenomenology* and other parts of Hegel’s system.

Thus, by comparing “Pleasure and Necessity” to its corresponding moment in §80 of the 1808 ff. *Logic*, “The Idea of the Good” in the *Science of Logic*, and “Willing” in the *Encyclopedia Logic*, I can isolate the core of the logical structure of this stage and open it up to comparisons throughout Hegel’s system. And, being careful to safeguard

³⁶² Michael Inwood translates *Trieb* as “urge” in G.W. F. Hegel, “Practical Mind,” in *Philosophy of Mind*, trans. Michael Inwood (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007), §§469-80, 206-14 .

consciousness' perspective, I sketch the following basic plot that can act as the outline for any re-staging of "Pleasure and Necessity".

First, consciousness is set in a contradictory context. On the one hand, he believes that he is all reality such that subjectivity and objectivity are no longer opposed. On the other hand, objectivity stands against him as something actual and he experiences this actuality as a lack. Yet, because consciousness is not aware of the inconsistency of his context, consciousness is initially optimistic about actualizing himself. In consciousness' eyes, the actuality that stands against him is merely otherness un-essentially—the otherness is an essenceless façade. However, for us, consciousness has not yet mediated his relationship to the world in "Reason" in an *actual* way and we know that his actions are too immediate. Because consciousness stands alone, too subjective and too immediate, his actions are obviously incompatible to the Absolute claim that he is all reality. Regardless of the shape that consciousness' actions take in this stage, the actions are too self-centred, too finite, and too immediate to accomplish consciousness' purpose.

Next, consciousness' initial action must contradict itself. Notably, the mechanism of the action's failure is presented as a natural fact. In "Pleasure and Necessity", it is the natural finitude of sexual intercourse as orgasm and, in "The Idea of the Good", it is the natural finitude of the action outside of any social context. In each case, this natural fact propels consciousness into a bad infinity of momentary actualization—a bad infinity that is especially repulsive to consciousness in "Reason" who, in his own eyes, is the true infinity of the Absolute. As such, consciousness finally experiences the original contradiction of this stage: whereas consciousness sought to actualize his own individuality, he instead becomes a sublated individuality, an abstract universality. Thus,

consciousness is pulverized by ought or necessity, the abstract universality that he experiences as death.

In conclusion, for the *Phenomenology* to achieve its stated aim to be, “offered to everyone and equally available for all,”³⁶³ it must be re-written. Re-writing the *Phenomenology* is possible because Hegel tells us that each stage of the *Phenomenology* corresponds to a stage in the Logic. As such, the underlying logic of a stage can be isolated and the *Phenomenology* can be re-staged without altering this logic. As I have demonstrated, Forster’s 1808 ff. Logic is a useful tool in uncovering this logic. Forster’s argument that the 1808 ff. Logic is the underlying logic of the *Phenomenology* is corroborated by the fact that §80 of “The Should or the Good” maps onto “Pleasure and Necessity”. Moreover, it points to corresponding stages in the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopedia Logic*. The similarities between these corresponding stages demonstrate their underlying logical structure. Thus, this investigation of the underlying logic makes it possible to outline the basic plot of the re-written version of “Pleasure and Necessity”.

³⁶³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §13, 11.

Chapter 7: Re-writing “Pleasure and Necessity” as “Impulse and Ought”

In the previous chapter, I investigated the underlying logic of “Pleasure and Necessity” as the outline and basic plot of this stage’s re-writing. In this chapter, I perform this re-writing, (re)creating a text in which both the female and male reader can sink into entitled “Impulse and Ought”. Then, I reflect on this re-writing, demonstrating that, although “Impulse and Ought” resolves some of the alienation of the female reader, it does not entirely absolve Hegelian philosophy of its androcentrism.

“Impulse and Ought”, below, is the text (re)created through a process of re-writing. This text resembles a palimpsest insofar as I remove the original words, “Pleasure and Necessity”, before reinscribing “Impulse and Ought” on its traces. The page, the palimpsest itself, is the underlying logic of “Pleasure and Necessity”. That is, the logic of the first stage of “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself” that remains the same, even if it appears through a new form of consciousness. This re-writing stays as close as possible Hegel’s original writing style, paragraph structure and sentence order so that “Impulse and Ought” can, as seamlessly as possible, operate as the first stage of “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself”.³⁶⁴ Yet, because investigating the underlying logic of “Pleasure and Necessity” opens it up to comparisons with other parts of Hegel’s system, I include references to the *Science of Logic* and the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*. Where relevant, I indicate the connection between “Impulse and Ought” and the basic plot outlined in the previous

³⁶⁴ Based on Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §§360-6, 316-21.

chapter. Also, I include the original text that has been re-written in footnotes to each paragraph to illustrate its trace.

A. “Impulse and Ought”

§360. The self-consciousness which is in his own eyes *reality* has his object in himself, but as the sort of object which he initially has merely for himself and which does not yet exist. *Being* stands over and against him as an actuality that is other than his own and self-consciousness undertakes to actualize his inward certainty by putting her being-for-himself into practice.³⁶⁵ This *first purpose* is to become consciousness of himself as an individual, “as a determination of the will that is *in itself* to bring freedom in the formal will to existence,”³⁶⁶ that is, to make the object of the will into himself insofar as he has the certainty that *in itself* this object is already himself. “Observing Reason” has turned out to be the shape of consciousness that:

... *withdraws into itself* from the object, that *recollects itself* in the object and recognizes its *inwardness* as what is *objective*. The *will* now heads in the reverse direction, towards the *objectification* of its inwardness that is still burdened with the form of subjectivity.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ Plot: Consciousness is set in a context that is already contradictory. On the one hand, he believes that he is all reality such that subjectivity and objectivity are no longer opposed. On the other hand, objectivity stands against him as something actual and he experiences this actuality as a lack—he must actualize himself.

³⁶⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, trans. Michael Inwood, add. to §466, 206.

³⁶⁷ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, trans. Michael Inwood, add. to §466, 206.

Instead of the seemingly heavenly spirit of the universality of knowledge and action in which the impulses of individuality fall silent, this spirit is one to whom the only being which counts as the true actuality is that of the actuality of individual consciousness.³⁶⁸

§361. Consciousness therefore plunges into life and puts into practice the pure individuality in which he comes on the scene.³⁶⁹

§362. Impulse is only partly desire, and, as such:

The [impulse] must be distinguished from mere *desire*. Desire belongs... to *self-consciousness* and so occupies the standpoint where subjective and objective is *not yet overcome*... The [impulse], on the other hand... starts from the sublated opposition of the subjective and the objective.³⁷⁰

In his own eyes, consciousness can actualize himself through his impulses because the actuality that stands against him is merely otherness un-essentially. He therefore arrives at the feeling of impulse, that is, he arrives at the consciousness of his actualization in will as the unity of himself and the world. He achieves his purpose, and he then experiences in that achievement what the truth of his purpose is. He comprehends himself

³⁶⁸ Original: “360. The self-consciousness which is in its own eyes *reality* has its object in itself, but as the sort of object which it initially has merely *for itself* and which does not yet exist. *Being* stands over and against it as an actuality other than its own, and self-consciousness undertakes to intuit itself as another self-sufficient essence by way of putting its being-for-itself into practice. This *first purpose* is to become conscious of itself as an individual essence within that other self-consciousness, that is, to make this other into itself; it has the certainty that *in itself* this other already is itself.... the knowledge related to observation and theory, only lay behind it as a gray and gradually vanishing shadow, for observation and theory are to a greater degree the knowledge of the kind of thing whose being-for-itself and whose actuality is other than that of self-consciousness. Instead of the seemingly heavenly spirit of the universality of knowledge and action in which the feeling and the gratification of individuality fall silent, the spirit of the earth has entered into it, a spirit to whom the only being which counts as the true actuality is that of the actuality of individual consciousness...” Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, 316-7.

³⁶⁹ Original: “361. It therefore plunges into life and puts into practice the pure individuality in which it comes on the scene...” Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, 317.

³⁷⁰ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, trans. Michael Inwood, add. to §476, 211. My alteration of the text reflects the fact that *Trieb*, which I am translating as “impulse” (like George di Giovanni) is translated by Inwood as “urge.”

as *this individual essence existing-for-himself*.³⁷¹ However, the actualization of this purpose is itself a sublation of the purpose, since self-consciousness becomes not an object to himself as *this individual self-consciousness* but to an even greater degree as the unity between himself and an other, and thereby as a sublated individual, that is, a *universal*.³⁷²

§363. The impulsive action, to be sure, positively signifies that he has come to be objective self-consciousness *in his own eyes*, but it equally negatively signifies that he has sublated *himself*. Since he conceived of his actualization merely in the former sense, his experience is a contradiction in which the attained actuality of his individuality sees itself destroyed by the negative *essence*, which confronts him as empty and devoid of actuality, but which nonetheless is its all-consuming power. Impulse, “involves a *series* of satisfactions, and so is something *whole, universal*.”³⁷³ This essence is nothing but the *concept* of what this individuality is in itself and, as such, his essence is therefore merely the *abstract* category. This individuality is still the poorest shape of self-actualizing spirit,

³⁷¹ Plot: Although we, the readers, may be suspicious of consciousness’ first and most immediate attempt to actualize himself, consciousness is optimistic. In his eyes, the actuality that stands against him is merely otherness un-essentially—the otherness is an essenceless façade. Yet, because consciousness stands alone, too subjective and too immediate, his actions are obviously incompatible to the Absolute claim that he is all reality. Regardless of the shape that consciousness’ actions take in this stage, the actions are too self-centred, too finite, and too immediate to accomplish consciousness’ purpose.

³⁷² Original: “362. Only in terms of one of its moments is its activity that of *desire*. It has not set itself on eliminating the entire objective essence; rather, it sets itself on eliminating the form of its otherness, that is, its self-sufficiency, which is an essenceless facade. This is so because *in itself* that otherness counts in its eyes as the same essence, that is, as its selfhood... It therefore arrives at the enjoyment of *pleasure*, that is, it arrives at the consciousness of its actualization in a consciousness which appears to be self-sufficient, that is, it arrives at the intuition of the unity of both self-sufficient self-consciousnesses. It achieves its purpose, and it then experiences in that achievement what the truth of its purpose is. It comprehends itself as *this individual essence existing-for-itself*. However, the actualization of this purpose is itself the sublation of the purpose, since self-consciousness becomes not an object to itself as *this individual self-consciousness* but to a greater degree as the *unity* of itself and the other self-consciousness, and thereby as a sublated individual, that is, as *universal*.” Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, 317-8.

³⁷³ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, trans. Michael Inwood, add. to §476, 211.

since he is in his own eyes the very *abstraction* of reason, that is, it is the *immediacy* of the *unity* of *being-for-himself* and *being-in-itself*.³⁷⁴ Nonetheless, individuality no longer has the form of *immediate, simple* being. That is,

... in being realized the finite purpose still attains only the status of a means; since it is not a purpose determined in and for itself already from the beginning, as realized it also remains something that does not exist in and for itself.³⁷⁵

Ought is this *firm connection*, where consciousness exists merely in relation to the determinations of his impulsive actions. This:

... involves the *ought*, its self-determination as being *in itself, related* to an individuality that is *in being* and which is allowed to count only in its adequacy to that self-determination.³⁷⁶

It is this *absolute relation* and abstract movement that constitutes necessity. As such,

The finitude of this activity, therefore, is the *contradiction* that the *purpose of the good* is being achieved and equally is not being achieved... This contradiction presents itself as the *infinite progress* in the actualisation of the good, which is fixed in this progress as a mere *ought*.³⁷⁷

Thus, instead of having plunged from dead theory into life, the merely singular individuality, which initially has the merely pure concept of reason for its content, has now to an even greater degree merely toppled over into the consciousness of his own lifelessness, and in his own eyes, the cards he is dealt are merely those of an empty and alien ought, a *dead actuality*.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁴ Plot: Consciousness' impulsive action contradicts itself. Notably, the mechanism of the action's failure is presented as a natural fact, in this case the finitude of an action wholly outside the context of society. This natural fact propels consciousness into a bad infinity of momentary actualization—a bad infinity that is especially repulsive to consciousness in “Reason” who, in his own eyes, is the true infinity of the Absolute.

³⁷⁵ Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.232, 730.

³⁷⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, trans. Michael Inwood, add. to §471, 208.

³⁷⁷ Hegel, *The Encyclopedia Logic*, trans Geraets, Suchting, and Harris, §234, 301-2.

³⁷⁸ Original: “363. The pleasure enjoyed, to be sure, positively signifies that it has come to be objective self-consciousness *in its own eyes*, but it equally negatively signifies that it has sublated *itself*.”

§364. The transition here is from out the form of the “one” to that of *universality*, that is, a transition from one absolute abstraction to the other. It thereby appears that the individual has been led to his ruin, and the absolute intractability of individuality is by the same token pulverized on that hard but uninterrupted actuality.—Since, as consciousness, he is the unity of himself and his opposite, this transition is still something for him. He is his purpose, and his actualization as well as the contradiction of what *to him* was the essence and what *in itself* is the essence.³⁷⁹—He experiences the twofold meaning that lies in what he did. He *helped himself to life*, but in doing so, it to an even greater degree laid hold of death.³⁸⁰

Since it conceived of its actualization merely in the former sense, its experience enters its consciousness as a contradiction in which the attained actuality of its individuality sees itself destroyed by the negative *essence*, which confronts it as empty and devoid of actuality, but which nonetheless is its all-consuming power. This essence is nothing but the *concept* of what this individuality is in itself. However, this individuality is still the poorest shape of self-actualizing spirit, since it is in its own eyes the very *abstraction* of reason, that is, it is the *immediacy* of the *unity* of *being-for-itself* and *being-in-itself*. Its essence is therefore merely the *abstract* category. Nonetheless, it no longer has the form of *immediate, simple* being, a form which it had for the observing spirit, where it was abstract *being*, or, when it was posited as alien, that is, was *thinghood* itself. Here, being-for-itself and mediation have entered into this thinghood. Therefore, they come on the scene here as a *circle* whose content is the developed pure relation of the simple essentialities... Necessity is this *firm connection*... each of which exists merely in relation to its opposite. Thus, they cannot be decoupled from each other. They are related to each other through their *concept*, since they are the pure concepts themselves, and it is this *absolute relation* and abstract movement which constitutes necessity. Instead of having plunged from dead theory into life, the merely singular individuality, which initially has merely the pure concept of reason for its content, has now to an even greater degree merely toppled over into the consciousness of its own lifelessness, and in its own eyes, the cards it is dealt are merely those of an empty and alien necessity, a *dead actuality*.” Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, 318-20.

³⁷⁹ Plot: As such, consciousness finally experiences what is the original contradiction of this stage. Consciousness seeks to actualize himself in the actual world, that is, he experiences his actuality as a lack that he ought to overcome. Overcome, moreover, all by himself. Thus, while consciousness sought to actualize his individuality, he instead sees himself as a sublated individuality, an abstract universality. As such, consciousness sees his individuality as pulverized by the ought, the abstract universality that he experiences as death.

³⁸⁰ Original: “364. The transition here is from out the form of the “one” to that of *universality*, that is, a transition from one absolute abstraction to the other... It thereby appears that the individual has been led to his ruin, and the absolute intractability of individuality is by the same token pulverized on that hard but uninterrupted actuality. – Since, as consciousness, it is the unity of itself and its opposite, this transition is still something for it. It is its purpose, and its actualization as well as the contradiction of what *to it* was the essence and what *in itself* is the essence. – It experiences the twofold meaning which lies in what it did.

§365. This *transition* of his living being into lifeless necessity thus appears to him as a topsy-turvy inversion that is mediated by nothing at all. What would mediate it would have to be that in which both aspects would be one, in which consciousness would therefore discern one moment in the other, that is, discern *his own essence* in this *ought*.³⁸¹ However, this unity is for consciousness just impulse itself, that is, the *simple individual* feeling, and the transition from the moment of his purpose into the moment of his true essence is for her a pure leap into the opposite, since these moments are not contained and connected with each other in feeling but exist merely within the pure self, which is a universal. That is, impulse:

... is nonetheless *immediate*, and just because it is immediate, it is still the idea in its *subjectivity*, and hence in its finitude in general.³⁸²

To consciousness, the consequences of his deeds are not the deeds themselves, and what befalls him is the fact that *for him* there is no experience of what he is *in himself*. *Abstract necessity* therefore counts as the merely negative and uncomprehended *power of universality* in which individuality is shattered.³⁸³

It *helped itself* to *life*, but in doing so, it to an even greater degree laid hold of death.” Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, 320.

³⁸¹ Plot: In order to move forward, consciousness needs to come to see this ought as himself, instead of something that pulverizes his individuality from outside.

³⁸² Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. di Giovanni, 12.199, 696.

³⁸³ Original: “365. This *transition* of its living being into lifeless necessity thus appears to it to be a topsy-turvy inversion which has been mediated by nothing at all. What would mediate it would have to be that in which both aspects would be one, in which consciousness would therefore discern one moment in the other, that is, discern its purpose and its activity in its fate and its fate in its purpose and its activity, that is, discern *its own essence* in this *necessity*. However, this unity is for consciousness just pleasure itself, that is, the *simple individual* feeling, and the transition from the moment of its purpose into the moment of its true essence is for it a pure leap into the opposite, since these moments are not contained and connected with each other in feeling but exist merely within the pure self, which is a universal, that is, is thought... To it, the consequences of its deeds are not its deeds themselves, and what befalls it is the fact that *for it* there is no experience of what it is *in itself*... *Abstract necessity* therefore counts as the merely negative and uncomprehended *power of universality* in which individuality is shattered.” Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, 320-1.

§366. However, *in itself* self-consciousness has survived this loss, for this ought, that is, this pure universality, is his own essence. This reflection of consciousness into himself, which consists in knowing ought as *himself*, is a new shape of consciousness.³⁸⁴

So ends “Impulse and Ought” and, with that, consciousness moves on to the next stage, “The Law of the Heart and The Insanity of Self-Conceit”. In this next stage, consciousness takes the ought as his own essence and, instead of merely acting out of his own selfish and impulsive self-gratification, he sees himself as acting for the greater good of humanity. That is, consciousness has internalized his experience of his own death, the abstract universal and bad infinity he experiences in the finitude of his impulsive actions outside of a social community as the infinite approximation of the Ought—a universal that he then takes as his own essence. As such, two seemingly opposed practical attitudes are logically connected: the selfishly impulsive actor and the moralist.

Thus, “Impulse and Ought” can replace “Pleasure and Necessity” to operate as the first stage of “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness By Way of Itself” or, in other words, as the stage after “Observing Reason” and before “The Law of the Heart”. First, in the Addition to §466 in the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*, Hegel discusses the transition from “Reason” in its theoretical and observing attitude to “Reason” as impulse. As such, Hegel himself believes that impulse is a consequence of the logic of “Observing Reason”. Moreover, necessity in the form of “ought” is a plausible essence for the

³⁸⁴ Original: “366. ... However, *in itself* self-consciousness has survived this loss, for this necessity, that is, this pure universality, is its own essence. This reflection of consciousness into itself, which consists in knowing necessity as *itself*, is a new shape of consciousness.” Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, 321.

moralizing consciousness of as he moves into “The Law of the Heart and the Insanity of Self-Conceit”.

Furthermore, “Impulse and Ought” resolves the alienation of the female reader, at least in part. In the same way that the female reader can sink into naïve empiricism in “Sense-Certainty”, sophisticated empiricism in “Perception”, the explanation of laws in “Force and the Understanding”, etc., there is no barrier for the female reader preventing her from sinking into “Impulse and Ought” and seeing consciousness’ path as her own. Specifically, “Impulse and Ought” resolves two forms of the alienation of the female reader. First, the female reader is not alienated from “Impulse and Ought” to the extent that consciousness’ antagonist is not a woman in this stage. Second, the female reader is not alienated because the difference between how men and women experience sexual intercourse is not relevant to the central terminology of “Impulse and Ought”.

As for the other form of alienation, the paradoxical relationship that the female reader has with “Pleasure and Necessity”, “Impulse and Ought” resolves it to the extent that consciousness is not a scientist and impulse is distinct from sexual intercourse. However, although “Impulse and Ought” is not alienating on its own, Hegel’s broader insistence that women are incapable of being educated in philosophy still places the female reader in a paradoxical relationship to Hegel’s texts in general. And yet, I hope that the process of re-writing “Pleasure and Necessity” as “Impulse and Ought” has demonstrated that, as speculative readers, female philosophers can open Hegelian philosophy up to new content. That is, the process of re-writing Hegel’s text pulls us into it—the process itself makes us “now grasp it in some other way”³⁸⁵—and, when the

³⁸⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §63, 58.

female reader sinks into Hegelian philosophy, she is brought out of the margins and into the text itself.

Conclusion: Bringing the Female Reader Out of the Margins

This thesis is an interpretation of the *Phenomenology* understood systematically. In it, I conceptualize the *Phenomenology*'s seemingly ambiguous relationship to Hegelian science typically restricted to Hegel's *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* and associated works. I argue that the *Phenomenology* is intimately linked to Hegelian science in four overlapping ways. That is, the *Phenomenology* is a special kind of *Bildungsroman* that educates its reader in Hegelian science, is the epistemological justification of science, facilitates the Absolute's own self-knowing, and is itself the first part of Hegelian science.

This thesis is an exploration of the readers of Hegelian science. I emphasize the importance, for science, of the *Phenomenology* being read. As readers, we are important for Hegelian science because, in thinking through its moments, we provide its movement, give it life, and keep the system open-ended. I also provide a rare description of what it feels like to read the *Phenomenology*, namely the identification we experience with consciousness, the way we mentally act out consciousness' form of knowing, the counter-punch we experience when the stage fails, and the movement we provide when we transition onto the next stage. I also emphasize that the reader's contingent content is important for Hegelian science and open up the possibility for more readers to express the particular ways in which they become alienated from consciousness' journey.

Feminist scholars have long been challenging Hegel's claim that the *Phenomenology* is, "the path offered to everyone and equally available for all."³⁸⁶ However, this thesis uniquely approaches Hegel's treatment of women from the

³⁸⁶ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §13, 11.

perspective of “Pleasure and Necessity”. I discuss an interpretation of this stage that emphasizes the sexual aspect of consciousness’ attempt to actualize himself. I also discuss how, for Hegel, consciousness is a man such that the *Phenomenology* is an androcentric *Bildungsroman*. I explore the differences between how men and women experience sexual intercourse and demonstrate that these differences relate to the central terminology of “Pleasure and Necessity”, namely actualization, pleasure, and necessity. Thus, I demonstrate that the female reader becomes alienated from the *Phenomenology*—to the text’s detriment. By focusing on “Pleasure and Necessity” rather than, like many other scholars, on “Human and Divine Law: Man and Woman”, I provide a fresh access point for feminist readings and demonstrate that there are still parts of Hegel’s androcentrism that have been overlooked.

This investigation of “Pleasure and Necessity” neither absolves Hegelian science of androcentrism nor completely clears a path for the female reader. However, I do present a method of opening Hegel’s system up to new content that, instead of merely scratching the surface of the figurative representations of stages, returns to the logical structure of the text and examines its place in Hegelian science. For the *Phenomenology*, the solution lies in the fact that, “to every abstract moment of science, there corresponds a shape of appearing spirit *per se*,”³⁸⁷ meaning that moments in the 1808 ff. Logic correspond to stages in the *Phenomenology*. Thus, by isolating this underlying logic of the *Phenomenology*, it becomes possible to re-stage it in a way that is both faithful to the *Phenomenology*’s logical movement and is not alienating to its readers.

³⁸⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Pinkard, §805, 718.

It is still possible that women are, “the ghost destined forever to haunt the margins of Hegel’s supposedly complete speculative system.”³⁸⁸ But, at least in “Pleasure and Necessity”, this thesis has brought the female reader out of the margins and into the text as its protagonist in “Impulse and Ought”. In doing so, this thesis is an example of what it could mean to keep Hegelian science alive, Absolute, and open-ended. By emphasizing the role that we, the readers, play in the movement of the *Phenomenology*, I resist the temptation to curate Hegel’s works like items in a museum of dead things. That is, I emphasize that, if we ignore the importance of *us* in Hegel’s system, we close the system off from new content and effectively kill it.

³⁸⁸ Stafford, “The Feminist Critique of Hegel On Woman and the Family,” 71.

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