

MARTYRED IN DYSTOPIA:
WOMEN EMBODYING THE POTENTIAL FOR HOPE IN
WE, BRAVE NEW WORLD, ANTHEM, AND
THE GATE TO WOMEN'S COUNTRY

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of
Southwest Texas State University
in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements

For the Degree

Master of ARTS

By Jennifer C. Hampton, B.A.

San Marcos, Texas
May, 2003

For Fanny Jane and Eva Margaret, my grandmothers, who always expressed love and hope. I miss you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A great many thanks to a great many people. Warm thanks to my thesis committee: Dr. Teya Rosenberg, for her patience, support, encouragement, and hope when I was unable to find it myself; and Drs. Kathryn Ledbetter and Susan Morrison, for agreeing to work with me after hearing the sketchiest of proposals. Thanks to the Department of English (including Karen, Maria, Felipa, and Scott). I am particularly grateful to those incredible professors in whose courses I enrolled and learned so much, as well as those with whom I have had the pleasure of working, namely Drs. Libby Allison, Sue Beebe, Lydia Blanchard, Michael Hennessy, and John Hill.

Also, thanks to my family—Dad, Mom, Holly, James, Ian, Maren, and Michael as well as the extended lot—for writing and phoning, letting me know they are proud of me and love me, and willingly tolerating my eons of indecision. To Jason, for loving and supporting me, even when I was ornery, and reminding me when it was time to go to sleep.

This manuscript was submitted April 28, 2003.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		
I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
	Dystopic Literature, and Yevgeny Zamyatin, Aldous Huxley, Ayn Rand, and Sheri S. Tepper	
II.	O-90 AND I-330.....	11
	Women of Zamyatin's <i>We</i>	
III.	LENINA AND LINDA.....	26
	Huxley's Women in a <i>Brave New World</i>	
IV.	LIBERTY 5-3000 BECOMES GAEA.....	43
	Relighting the Torch of Hope in Rand's <i>Anthem</i>	
V.	SUSANNAH.....	57
	The Despair in Tepper's <i>The Gate to Women's Country</i>	
VI.	STAVIA.....	68
	Hope Regained in <i>The Gate to Women's Country</i>	
VII.	CONCLUSION.....	81
	WORKS CITED.....	86

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: DYSTOPIC LITERATURE, AND YEVGENY ZAMYATIN, ALDOUS HUXLEY, AYN RAND, AND SHERI S. TEPPER

The identification and development of new genres in literature depends upon those genres that already exist. Sometimes it may be easier to draw from these established genres, noting similarities and differences between the old and the new to give the new genre shape. J.A. Cudden, editor of *Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, uses this tactic, drawing upon what is known of utopia to identify dystopia, writing, “The seeming impossibility of utopia (and the many failures to create it) has produced its converse: dystopia or anti-utopia; in some cases almost chiliastic forecasts of the doom awaiting mankind” (959). The point that Cudden makes is that the attempts to create the impossible society of utopia has resulted in the creation of the dystopic, literary works that are cautionary tales, attempting to warn readers of the perils of allowing elements of humanity to be overcome by technology.

Dystopian literature is literature that carries a warning to humanity. It is literature that warns specifically of the overuse (or abuse) of technology as well as the potential for humanity to be taken over by that

same technology. In *The Scientific World View in Dystopia*, Alexandra Alderidge acknowledges that many of the authors of dystopic works are not trying to deny the importance or useful nature of technology, nor are these authors trying to ignore the benefits received through the use of technology. She writes,

the dystopian novel is not *literally* anti-scientific or anti-technological in the sense that it represents machine-phobia...Instead its authors are, more accurately, anti-scientistic; they have remained watchful over the intrusion of scientific values—objectivity, neutrality, instrumentalism—into the social imagination. They have criticized the replacement of a humanistic ethos with a scientific/technological ethos; in short their fiction assails the scientizing of society. (18)

Alderidge believes that dystopic authors are trying to warn against replacing all that is human with mechanization.

It is through the overuse of technology that dystopic societies develop.

Ruud Teeuwen points out, in *Dystopia's Point of No Return*, that

Dystopian novels generally attempt to strike a balance between explaining the design of a certain utopia's terror and describing the experience of living under it. Attention to design makes dystopias political novels, admonitory imaginings of still-avoidable futures. A concentration on

experiences makes dystopias, like all novels, potential sources of knowledge and insight in human nature. (117)

Here Teeuwen states that authors of this type of work, whether or not their readers understand, exaggerate the world in which they live; the authors take their own experiences, and the experiences of those around them, and drive these experiences to their extremes. Having done this, the authors write down what they have created—dystopias. Just as these authors create the dystopic worlds they represent in their works, so do the human inhabitants of these fictional worlds create dystopias by enabling technology to take control.

People, the human characters of the dystopic novels, are initially creators and developers of the technology that in turn creates the dystopic worlds in which these humans live. Having accomplished great feats, particularly mastering mechanization, people allow themselves to believe they have created perfect societies or utopias. However, nothing can be further from the truth. These humans live in horrifying worlds, having forgotten their own possibilities, becoming little more than the reason actions take place or for necessities and commodities to be made. People are no longer creators, and creativity and invention are no longer needed, as society has become a well-oiled, smooth-running machine. Humans no longer need to work, no longer have purposes in their lives. At one time people created machines to make their lives simpler—in theory this was to provide more leisure time. Most dystopic societies

show civilizations in which humans have gone from the creators and users of useful technology to nothing more than end-users who have become the purpose for the technology that controls their very lives.

The majority of characters presented in dystopic works have become systematic users of technology, and in doing so have lost their individuality. According to Marie Louise Berneri in *Journey Through Utopia*, “some [dystopic authors] have gone as far as elaborating satirical utopias, visions of the future world where man has completely lost a sense of his uniqueness, perfect societies where men have become efficient machines, incapable of experiencing any strong emotion” (313). Even if people were capable of expressing their uniqueness in these novels, it would be considered wrong. Because of the disruption it causes, uniqueness is forbidden in a number of societies in dystopic works.

Men and women in the societies described in dystopic works have relinquished their roles as individual members of society, taking greater pleasure in being a part of a greater whole. These people have been trained to see themselves as incomplete units when apart from the totality of their own societies. Humans and machines have traded places with each other—humans having become machine-like, with control going to the masculine hierarchies governing communities and the machines having taken over the duties and responsibilities of humans.

Humans have become nothing more than a few of the simple parts making up the clock-like machine that is society.

Although considered small parts of the greater whole, the women of dystopic societies are seen as apart from the men, especially in patriarchal communities. In many of these worlds, women and men are separated, raised in different manners simply because of their biological genders. This is significant in and of itself to dystopic works because it shows that the “oneness” the societies believe they have created are not so exact, defying one of the primary principles the societies are trying to plant deep in the psyches of their citizens.

Within dystopic literature, many patriarchal leaders apparently dismiss or try to downplay the importance of the female units of society, limiting what they are allowed to do, denying them the rights to have an equal say in governments. In these worlds, it is imperative that women be completely controlled, not because they are wicked, nor because they are physically stronger. According to the leaders of these societies, women must be controlled because of the potential for a danger that is inherent in their very beings. Within their physical forms, women contain that which cannot be completely mechanized—the very essence of creation, of life.

Although women are shown in many dystopic novels to be of lesser importance than the men and nothing more than small parts of the larger whole, some of these female characters bring hope to the novels.

Ellen Peel, in “Utopian Feminism,” writes that utopian novels, “suggest that feminism can mean a revolution in thought that is much more thoroughgoing—and more frightening—than the achievement of such worthy goals as equal pay for equal work” (47). Not only is this a possibility for utopian works, but it is also at the very heart of the hope found for society in dystopian novels.

It is through these female characters that authors of dystopic works, whether consciously or not, develop even the smallest seed of hope for the future of humanity. Through these characters the authors reintroduce humans capable of renewing creativity in the world. These same characters begin to reclaim the roles, rights, and privileges inherent to being human—roles relinquished by humans when it was more convenient for technology to take them. These women demand the right to be mothers; they demand the opportunity to have a place in the world, taking part in its governing and developing. They demand the rights that had earlier belonged to human beings but that had been taken for granted, not seen as crucial to the very heart of humanity, of womanhood. These women embrace their longings to nurture, either their own children or the lives of those in the world, yet another of the dangers that patriarchies seek to quell.

Women become the very hope for humanity by accepting or demanding the roles they take on—they embody the characteristics of innovator, lover, partner, and the maternal. These roles are potentially

the most important roles for bringing about a renewed future, for promoting humankind, giving hope to those who don't realize they need it by making demands of time, effort, and consideration.

In the dystopic novels that present an idea of hope for the future, woman becomes an innovator in a number of ways. Through her desire to nurture, she approaches ideas that are not acceptable in her society, including being allowed to bestow her affection on those she deems worthy, not merely those who are available. She also renegotiates her role as human in a stagnant society, reassessing the importance of creativity by demanding to know about the world around her and determining for herself how she relates to it. She returns a bit of humanity to a world overrun by logic and mathematical reasoning, a world lacking feelings or passions.

In these same hope-promoting dystopias, woman demands to become a partner of the world she lives in. She decides it is important for her to have a say in the decisions made around her as well as for her. She wants to be allowed to have dreams and to follow them. She wishes to take an active role in society, in business, in her home, guiding the way her own life is lived.

Woman desires to be a lover, not just an object with whom one engages in sex. She wants to be allowed the freedom of loving whom she will without being restricted by society. She wants to share with the person she loves, not just actions but emotions, thoughts, feelings, even

those that are not approved by society's ruling members. She demands to be loved not because the physical act is required by society for the purpose of regulating hormones or procreation, but because it is what she wants, it is what she deserves simply by being human.

Woman embodies the maternal. This does not always mean she feels she must bear children, but she must be allowed to nurture life using whatever means she deems appropriate. This might mean working land to provide for herself or her loved ones or it may very well mean creating a child with the person she loves. Becoming a maternal figure might also mean taking care of those who are not able to care for themselves, be they young or old. To be maternal is to look to the future not for one's self, but keeping in mind those for whom a person cares.

The fact that woman is capable of all of these roles increases her responsibility for the world around her. She is connected with the natural world around her, not merely limited to human life, but all animal and plant life. Having such great responsibilities for more than herself increases her need to be creative and thus help save the world around her from ruin. If she is successful, she willingly takes on the role of martyr, thereby agreeing to suffer as a means of securing hope for humanity. If she recants her role and relinquishes her responsibilities, the world becomes hopeless and humankind fails. Man, by controlling women and promoting technology, is not capable of saving the dystopic

society from ruin—he simply does not have the inherent traits or characteristics to fulfill the necessary calling.

Four dystopic novels of the twentieth century illustrate the need for these roles and the ability or inability of women to fulfill these callings; these novels are Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* (1921), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1931), Ayn Rand's *Anthem* (1938), and Sheri S. Tepper's *The Gate to Women's Country* (1988). An almost hopeless world is portrayed in the early dystopic novel *We*, with the bleakness then escalating to the utter lack of hope in *Brave New World*. The world created in *Anthem* begins to rebuild the possibility for hope, leading to the potential for hope peaking with *The Gate to Women's Country*.

Although coming from different times and different areas of the world, these four novels have had an impact on the development of the dystopic genre. Zamyatin's *We*, although not allowed to be published in Russia in 1921, set a precedent for the future of dystopic works, laying the foundation by focusing on the rise mechanization and fall of humanity. This groundwork was recognized by Huxley, who built his own dystopic world writing *Brave New World* in 1931 England. Elaborating on the effects of industrialization Zamyatin had identified, Huxley created a world with even less hope for the future that Zamyatin created in *We*, presenting in *Brave New World* a society in which women are unable to make the choices that would bring hope to their world.

Rand's experiences in her homeland Russia, seven years after Zamyatin's *We* had been introduced to the world, are similar to those of her countryman and are exhibited in her own dystopic work. The two writers do have a number of crucial differences in their approaches to dystopic works, the most important being the obvious existence of hope in the conclusions of *Anthem*. Just as Huxley did with some of the ideas of Zamyatin, Tepper seems to have focused on the hope in Rand's work and expanded it in *The Gate to Women's Country*, creating a society that refuses to give up hope.

In the four dystopian works to be explored, examining the women to see what roles they agree to (or are capable of agreeing to), and whether they become innovators, partners, lovers, and/or mothers allows us to see how the books have affected the dystopic genre. Looking at the primary female characters and determining whether they fulfill the necessary roles establishes whether or not they are capable of developing into martyrs. The potential for martyrdom, although a far from pleasant calling for those who accept the responsibility, is what creates the potential for hope for the future of humanity. Where that possibility for a martyr is lost, so is the hope for the future.

CHAPTER II

O-90 AND I-330: WOMEN OF ZAMYATIN'S *WE*

The turn of the century, the close of the nineteenth and the opening of the twentieth, saw great developments in a number of areas, including the development of the automobile, advancements in medical science, and the increase of industrial technology. The expectations for technology were becoming critical in relation to the workings of government and opportunities for weapon creation. These expectations were revealed by military conflicts including World War I with the developments in firearms, vehicles, and communications. As mankind developed these weapons of war, assisted by the rise of industrial era advancements, individuals all over the world began to understand the critical need for peace. A number of writers approached their concerns in a variety of ways, including adding to the developments made in genres that seemed to express a desire (and a hope) for a more perfect—a world in which technology could be used to regulate the lives of citizens of society in order to ensure peace. Utopia became the much sought-out condition—with a utopic world, perfection and peace could be reached and maintained.

With the rise of expectations for peace and perfection through mechanization came the rise of something darker—the belief that through the automation of life mankind would be slowly destroying itself, creating machine-like worlds in which only machine-like people could be happy. As dystopias became more widespread, authors began to ponder the possibility of humanity’s reclamation from the automation of machines. Although they must have known they were commenting on the times in which they were living and the change that was taking place in the world around them, some of these authors included in their works something they didn’t intend, although it was something they recognized the world needed—hope. The most prominent symbol of this hope appears in one particular form—of one or more females capable (and willing) to sacrifice themselves or their well-being for others in an attempt to bring about change. In doing this, these women acknowledge the possibility of sacrifice themselves to allow for hope to be returned to their communities. In short, the women characters become heroes if they are willing to become martyrs for their worlds, and the actions of these martyred women bring hope for humankind.

Yevgeny Zamyatin was one of the twentieth century’s earliest dystopic writers. Born near Moscow in 1884, Zamyatin was witness to a number of military events, in Russia and throughout the world, giving him insights that would manifest themselves later in his works. His experiences included “join[ing] the Bolshevik faction of the Social

Democratic Part” (Ginsburg vi) and being exiled from Russia, the latter of which led to him settling in Paris and focusing on a life of writing.

Zamyatin’s studies in naval engineering at the St. Petersburg Polytechnical Institute, before his exile from Russia, allowed him to examine more closely the dangers inherent in the overuse and abuse of science and technology. Zamyatin recognized that although advancements in the sciences were not evil themselves, to allow them to replace humankind was. The dangers of technology surface when people, work, and work methods are driven to become automated or machine-like. According to Aldridge, in *We*,

Mathematical perfection resides in the way in which human behavior has come to resemble the workings of precision machinery...Zamiatin is imagining the time and motion studies designed by Frederick Taylor to eliminate wasted motion in factory work, adapted to the daily routine of an entire society. (37-38)

Thus the world of the mechanized human is created by trying to eliminate from humanity the “wasted motion” that allows for the definition of the individual.

In *We*, with the mechanization of the human being, Zamyatin creates a dystopic world with a dysfunctional government-controlled society he names the One State. With the One State, Zamyatin attempts to describe what might happen if humankind attempted to perfect the world

through over-use and abuse of technology. As Patrick A. McCarthy writes, in “Zamyatin and the Nightmare of Technology,”

Zamyatin’s novel is at heart a protest against the sterile and rigid concept of a final revolution, or static society—against a world, that is, ruled by a mechanism rather than by the human spirit. It is against this idea that man should emulate machine—not against the machines themselves, but against the ascendancy of technology over the imagination that created it. (127)

So, it is perhaps more accurate to say that *We* is a novel of warning—an attempt to prevent humankind from becoming that which is no longer human.

Written in the form of citizen D-503’s journal, *We* details D-503’s life from the anticipated launching of the spaceship he has helped create through his operation to remove his imagination. During the time frame of the novel, D-503 provides a detailed account of how the people in his society live their lives—with everything they do timed according to the tables that chart what should be done and when.

This journal describes D-503’s life, his sexual registration with O90 and his attraction to I-330. Both women, O-90 and I-330, have illegal desires. For O-90 the desire is to have a child, while for I-330 the desire is to see all of humanity free of society’s constraints. These two women affect D-503 in a manner he considers negative in nature, causing him to

question the laws that rule his world, encouraging illegal behavior, and resulting in his descent into “madness” as he begins to realize he has merit as a single human begins, he is entitled to freedom, and he has the obligation to concern himself with his own needs. Unable to deal with these new concepts, D-503 eventually subjects himself to a surgery that removes his imagination, wiping away the ability to be anything other than what society dictates is proper. Unfortunately for him, and the world around him, the imagination that causes him such inner turmoil is the same force that allowed him to create his spaceship.

We is an admonition about the dangers of becoming a community-centered social machine, the citizens concerned with little more than the good of the community as a whole. In *We*, society runs smoothly because its members have become increasingly mechanized, with freedom having become a thing to hate, an uncivilized condition. Writing his journal, D-503 mentions a quotation from his daily newspaper called the *One State Gazette* about the purpose of the One State’s desire for space exploration:

You will subjugate the unknown beings on other planets, who may still be living in the primitive condition of freedom, to the beneficent yoke of reason. If they fail to understand that we bring them mathematically infallible happiness, it will be our duty to compel them to be happy. (Zamyatin 1)

Clearly, the officials of One State are supporting the claim that science and mathematics have become the true ruling agents of society as well as promoting the idea that happiness can only be found in the rigid regulations provided by the government to the citizens of One State.

In the dystopic society presented by Zamyatin in *We*, human beings are considered nothing more than single, incomplete parts of a greater whole. Each citizen has been raised to believe that without others, s/he cannot survive, let alone experience happiness. According to the journal of D-503,

Every morning, with six-wheeled precision, at the same hour and the same moment, we—millions of us—get up as one.

At the same hour, in million-headed unison, we start work; and in million-headed unison we end it. And, fused into a single million-handed body, at the same second designated by the Table, we lift our spoons to our mouths. At the same second, we come out for our walk, go to the auditorium, go to the hall for Taylor exercises, fall asleep... (Zamyatin 12)

So the inhabitants of the One State are trained or to put it more mechanically, programmed, to act as one—a complete conglomerate created from a number of units.

The citizens of One State are also taught that logic, mathematics, and the sciences are of the utmost importance—to be creative or free is to pass beyond the boundaries of happiness into misery and despair.

Again, D-503 writes, comparing himself to units that make up a scientific whole,

We walked—a single million-headed body, and within each of us—that humble joy which probably fills the lives of molecules, atoms, phagocytes. In the ancient world this was understood by the Christians, our only predecessors (however imperfect): humility is a virtue and pride a vice; “We” is from God and “I” from the devil. (Zamyatin 128)

D-503 identifies what he perceives as his own importance and place in society—he is an assisting unit, nothing more than a cell whose only use is to rid society of the foreign bacteria that threatens the whole.

The majority of citizens of *We*'s One State fail to recognize the importance of humankind has diminished—it is no longer the single most important entity in existence. In fact, man has become slave to the technology he created. David Paul, in “Man A Machine,” points out that “Machines make the body expendable. If machines have accomplished nothing else, they’ve reduced the human self to the brain and central nervous system” (131). Man has turned himself into something other than man; he has mechanized himself to the point that he is no longer essential to society, at times becoming the unproductive waste he was trying to eliminate:

In short, the people are like automatons. Much of the conditioning needed to turn people into machines has been

accomplished through the implementation of measures derived in large part from Frederick Winslow Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management* (1911) and other writings. (McCarthy 124)

If society were to become truly efficient, technology would do away with mankind. The government of *We's* One State has attempted the mechanization of human beings with little or no concern that they have allowed technology to push men to the point that they are no longer recognizable as human beings. So although humankind is a part of the great machine called society, people only have use if they are mechanized themselves.

To become mechanized, humans must search out and destroy whatever it is inside them that makes them human. The government of the One State has figured out what this part of man is and has also figured out how to get rid of it, by using what is known only as the "Operation." D-503 goes to the doctor, afraid he is developing a soul. This doctor says to him "we must cut out the imagination. In everyone...Extirpate imagination. Nothing but surgery, nothing but surgery will do..." (Zamyatin 90). By destroying man's imagination, no one will have ideas apart from those they are told to have; no one will be capable of being different. All will be of the same importance, just as all parts of a machine are necessary to the machine's proper functioning.

Apparently, it is the women of society who become wrenches thrown in the cogs of the social machine. Women in the early years in the twentieth century, when Zamyatin was writing *We*, were demanding that changes take place for all members of their gender, demanding their rights and opportunities to take more active roles in the world around them. Although early attempts to make these changes saw limited success, these attempts led to women being granted the right to vote and the right to be known as individuals. These attempts were enough to begin a series of changes that would snowball into campaigns for equal rights, gender equality, and ideally the practice of true equality for women, allowing women to have as much say in their lives as men have had since the beginnings of recorded time. *We* is an excellent example of a work that comments on the difference between the theory of equality and its actual practice.

In *We* women are never shown to be true equals of men. There are no women in positions of power in the government. The female characters also seem to have little power in the community with regard to legal capacities. They appear to have the same roles they have held traditionally—those of caretaker of children and ornament. For example, when narrator and main character D-503 first sees a woman called I-330, he writes of her, “She wore the fantastic costume of the ancient epoch: a closely fitting black dress, which sharply emphasized the whiteness of her bare shoulders and breast, with that warm shadow,

stirring with her breath, between...and the dazzling, almost angry teeth..." (Zamyatin 17). I-330 is certainly not recognized for her mind or her accomplishments when D-503 spies her; she is initially identified as another ornament for a man to look upon with favor.

In addition to being ornaments for the aesthetic delight of the males in society, the women described seem to have limited occupations. In fact, one of the few times a woman is described in terms of her career is when D-503 describes one by saying "she works at the Child-Rearing Factory" (Zamyatin 122). Apparently this female is one of the many relied on to train or encode the youth of society in the ways of their mechanical world. It may be said that the average, law-abiding women who maintain the constructs of society are less than the equals of men; these women have no rights or responsibilities other than maintaining the status quo as humankind slowly becomes machine.

While the women who keep the laws or play by the rules have no true positions of power, the women who revolt—those who accept the callings of martyrdom—have power against the confines of society. The two primary women of *We*, O-90 and I-330, take on the roles of martyrs in order to help return humankind to its needed state of freedom. As the story opens, O-90 is the current sexual companion of the narrator. I-330 is almost immediately portrayed as, according to Andrew Barratt, "a Mata Hari figure, who... us[es] her sexual attractiveness as a means of luring D-503 away from his allegiance to the One State" (346). These

two women, through their acts of martyrdom, provide a glimpse of hope for those citizens of the One State who are willing to listen.

I-330 and O-90 become martyrs by acting as rebels, criminals or law-breakers, bringing much needed and much neglected hope to humanity. The hope they bring is not readily recognized or accepted by the majority of those who witness the actions of the two women, primarily because the two are going against the norm—trying to bring about the change that could return individuality, humanity, and creativity to the world of man. I-330, by accepting the roles of innovator and partner, takes up the challenge of helping humankind see the dire situation to which it has succumbed. O-90 takes a more subtle approach, willingly becoming a lover and maternal martyr, signifying hope for the future while quietly undermining the hold the government has on its citizens.

As innovator, I-330 tries to bring new ideas or return forgotten ideas to her society. She does this by acting like a common citizen in public but as a rebel in private. Her goal is to bring humankind back to the freedom they have been taught to fear and hate. According to Barratt, “Her [I-330’s] ultimate aim... is to arouse in the engineer [D-503] a love of freedom and an independence of spirit” (356). David Gurewicz even points out that “She’s an oddball: [she] drinks, smokes, likes old music, old clothes—she’s even sarcastic” (28). All these “oddball” things she does promote ideas of individuality; she says to D-503, “to be original is to be in some way distinct from others. Hence, to be original is to violate

equality” (Zamyatin 28). By voicing this idea of individuality in relation to equality, I-330 gives D-503 food for thought, causing him to ponder the two ideas in-depth, bringing him to an understanding of the idea of individual that forces him to question the laws—the very rules that govern his life.

I-330 also uses D-503’s own insight in an attempt to get him to understand the possibilities of the world around him and his place in society. After he tells her he is afraid of fog, she says to him, “That means you love it. You are afraid of it because it is stronger than you; you hate it because you are afraid of it; you love it because you can’t subdue it to your will. Only the unsubduable can be loved” (Zamyatin 72). This idea of being able to love and hate something at the same time starts his mind wandering in paths unknown to him before this time, creating in him intellectual and emotional turmoil as to his place or role in society—a role he finds himself unable to determine alone.

I-330 also chooses to be a partner in the fight for freedom. By making this choice she is risking her life to try to save the lives of others. Rather than saving them from immediate death, she is attempting to save them from living as beings less than human. Near the end of the novel, I-330 visits D-503 with two of her fellow freedom fighters as D-503 is taking a test-flight in his creation—the space ship *Integral*. D-503 writes of the experience saying, “I rushed in. There were three of them, all in winged receiving helmets. She seemed a head taller than ever, winged, gleaming

flying—like the ancient Valkyries. And the huge blue sparks above, over the radio antenna, seemed to come from her, and the faint, lightning smell of ozone, also from her” (Zamyatin 200). She comes to him in an almost vision-like form appearing to be an angel, reminding D-503 of the importance of the ideas she has introduced to him, but also as an immortal warrior, destined to carry strength and fortitude to those who fight the good fight. In this she is very different from the soft-spoken O-90 who comes to D-503 as a lover wanting only to please him even if it means leaving his side.

O-90’s martyrdom begins with her articulation of her desire to be D-503’s lover in a world in which all people belong to everyone else—singling one person out for sexual activity is forbidden. Already O-90 is his sexual associate, as citizens can request and be assigned to one another on sexual days. For O-90, however, this is not enough. She has developed for D-503 a deep, and highly illegal, love; she longs to be his alone and for him to be registered to none but her. She writes to him saying, “I cannot live without you—because I love you” (Zamyatin 106). This honest love she has for D-503 leads her to the next role she consents to take in her acceptance of martyrdom—the role of a maternal being suffering for the good of those she loves.

O-90 becomes a maternal figure in her role as martyr for the citizens of the One State. She has discovered in herself a love for D-503, but she also recognizes he is drawn to the rebel I-330. O-90 does not seek to

come between D-503 and the new object of his interest, putting what she perceives as his needs before her own desires. Before severing her ties with D-503, however, she does ask something of him—that he father her child, a highly illegal proposition that could mean death for them both. She says to him, “give me child and I will go, I’ll go” (Zamyatin 112). She is as good as her word—after she has forbidden sex with D-503, the sex that results in conception, she leaves the One State and goes to raise her child in love, beyond the Green Wall, the barricade separating the orderliness of the One State and the unruliness of nature. There O-90 decides to live, love, and give as she chooses, not as she is commanded. Barratt rightfully claims “[Her] pregnancy...is the promise of new life itself” (359) and what more can new life bring but new hope?

Unfortunately, for all of the sacrifices made by both I-330 and O-90, their dreams of freedom, individuality, and inventiveness do not come true for all inhabitants of the One State. The citizens who wish to continue living as parts of that society allow themselves to be surgically altered to no longer have the ability to dream, create, or be individuals themselves. These people, these numbers undergo the “Operation,” willingly separating themselves from the imagination that makes them entities in their own rights.

Those who attempt to stand against the One State find themselves being tortured and put to death, just as the One State makes an example of I-330 by suffocating her under the watchful eye of society. I-330

refuses to recant her beliefs of the importance of the individual self. D-503, who has already undergone the operation to remove his imagination, writes, “She was to testify [confess her wrongdoings] in my presence. The woman smiled and was stubbornly silent” (232). She is then placed under the Gas Bell and the air is pumped out of the Bell three times, after which she is revived. Remaining silent, I-330 seals her own fate—death at the hand of the Benefactor’s Machine.

It is misguided to think of the efforts of the two women as complete failures, however. The fact that O-90 and others with her courage are able to escape the One State’s tyrannical rules brings a hope for the future. Barratt asks a very important question: “Is O-90 then, the real ‘heroine’ of [We]? Certainly, hers is a story of real fulfillment” (361). Zamyatin does not subject her to the same operation D-503 and the other dependents of the One State undergo; nor is she condemned to death under the Gas Bell as I-330 is. Her future is an uncertain one, but it is a future that points to hope. It is she alone one who brings the message of hope to Zamyatin’s readers. This message stands out, claiming to all who read it: it takes only a few brave individuals to bring about change, to cause a revolution that might repair the very spirit of humanity.

CHAPTER III

LENINA AND LINDA: HUXLEY'S WOMEN IN A *BRAVE NEW WORLD*

Yevgeny Zamyatin was writing in continental Europe with experiences and background stemming from witnessing the control of communist Russian and the close of World War One, as well as the beginnings of the Russian Revolution. Shortly after Zamyatin published *We*, Aldous Huxley was writing in capitalist England, and the Great Depression of 1929-1933 was striking the United States. Although it was the United States that bore the brunt of the Depression, according to the *Philip's Atlas of World History*, "The Great Depression of 1929-33 was the most severe economic crisis of modern times...Industrialized nations and those supplying primary products (food and raw materials) were all affected one way or another" (O'Brien 228). England was one of those nations also affected. Having and drawing upon experiences comparable to those used by Zamyatin in the creation of *We*, Huxley similarly presents a horrific, dystopic world in *Brave New World*. Also like Zamyatin, Huxley creates this world as a very strong warning against allowing technology to take over human-specific actions or events, including the gestation of

fetal humans and the experiences of human emotions. In *Brave New World*, Huxley strives to warn against the dehumanization of man by attempting to create an unnaturally uniform society—creating the sterilization of humanity by machine in a dystopic world that is unable to provide a woman capable of making the choices that would enable her to embody the hope that is so desperately needed.

Huxley was no stranger to the effects of war on the world. By a stroke of luck, although he considered it bad luck, Huxley was struck by a disease that corrupted his sight. This luck proved to be in his favor, however, as it allowed him to forgo participating in the First and Second World Wars. Despite his inability to participate in the World Wars, Huxley was very much a product of the age. He witnessed many changes taking place in the world, including the development of the nuclear age and the growth of industry and mechanization. These subjects in particular were among many he addressed in his writings, and, although his family was filled with members of a variety of scientific communities, he was very much a skeptic—addressing the issues that concerned him with humor and satire. Those subjects he found to be the most alarming were those dealing with the impact of science and technology on the world as a whole.

Two historical figures whose ideas Huxley approaches with caution are Frederick Winslow Taylor and Henry Ford. Frederick Winslow Taylor studied efficiency in industrial settings, doing consulting work for a

number of companies. Taylor's primary focus involved the separation of labor from management. It was his belief that this separation would increase productivity and decrease wasted time, energy, and action. As he saw it, individuals would save time and effort if they were able to focus on fewer, more specific tasks. It was this concept he concentrated on in his books on scientific management.

Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Company, advanced Taylor's concept of separating management from labor, putting it into action with the development of the assembly line. Ford also believed that giving one specific duty to one particular individual would decrease the cost of production, increase the level of productivity, and increase his company's income. Each individual duty was not necessarily crucial on its own, and the individual performing that duty could be replaced as was necessary, but everything came together, gaining importance when a collection of individual workers, each with his or her own tasks came together for the creation of a complete unit—each person working toward the good of the whole.

Huxley drew heavily on the theories of these two men and the realms of science and technology to create the world of *Brave New World* that embodied a number of concerns Huxley had. While creating the society of the world state, he considered how important the advancements of industrialization would be to a world of the future and, determining the assembly line development to be vital, deified the figure of Henry Ford.

Mechanization became the religion of science overcoming all other religions, Christian or otherwise. Time formerly measured using A.D. or *Anno Domini* became A.F. or *After Ford*. Where the phrase “your lordship” was once used to indicate a man’s title or status, Huxley used “his fordship” in the same capacity, giving an indication of the worth this new world placed on the great inventor. Ford himself became God: “All crosses had their tops cut and became T’s” (Huxley 40). The symbol of the cross is overshadowed by Ford’s great development—the Model T automobile.

In *Brave New World* Huxley seems to have showcased the technology-based issues he felt should be of concern to the world as a whole. The novel is filled with the concerns of the overuse and abuse of science and industry. It is important to note that it is not science itself that Huxley seems to be attacking, but rather the scientists abusing the power they wield, a concept Aldridge terms “anti-scientistic.” Aldridge makes an important comment on this when she states,

And although Huxley’s novel was prompted by political and economic trends towards the brave new world visible all around him in 1931, the rendering of the future where a reductive scientific technique will be used to shape and control the entire spectrum of human behavior, that his anti-scientistic satire, could only have take the form it did

from material supplied by the mechanist/vitalist controversy. (49)

So, by drawing on his background and the knowledge of the science of the day, and the developments that were coming to light, Huxley was able to create the World State, the world unified in a single collective unit.

Brave New World is a work that, like *We*, portrays an automated society in which men and women are programmed—conditioned from embryonic stages to accept and appreciate their pre-determined roles in life. After Huxley describes this civilized, highly-ordered world he has created, he introduces an unknown element in the form of John Savage, a man from a Savage Reservation in which life continues in a manner comparable to that seen in twentieth-century Indian reservations of the United States.

This story details the experiences of John Savage, a man born of a civilized woman in an uncivilized land, as he attempts to come to terms with both his civilized ancestry and the savage world in which he was raised. Unable to make rational connections between the two worlds and unable to evoke any indication of hope from either of the two women in his life, Linda or Lenina, John finds he belongs to neither world, and no one is able to convince him the converse is true. The novel ends with John Savage having lost all hope in humanity, hanging himself to find the only freedom left to him—freedom from his worldly constraints.

In *Brave New World*, people appear to be little more than facilitators of sorts, specifically in that they seem to exist for the sole purpose of ensuring the machines that control society run smoothly. In turn, the machines allow, or force, man to become less than human, thereby creating a vicious circle. Paul indicates in his essay that the human body has become disposable because of the advancements of machines, making man little more than “the brain and nervous system” (131). This is as true in the world of Huxley’s creation as it is out of it, in the world of man’s existence. Paul goes still further to state, “As technology absorbs more and more human work, the line separating biology and mechanics gradually becomes less distinct. Though we are still tool makers and our ‘logic engines’ are still tools in the general sense of the word, the context has changed” (133). This change in the idea of people physically creating tools to mentally developing tools for machines to create is a belief that could be discussing Huxley’s World State exclusively. Humankind has become little more than a small piece of the world machine, with Ford becoming a deity as a result of his work with assembly line production and with Taylor writing the scripture of efficiency.

The men and the women of *Brave New World* seem to be on almost equal footing, but the hierarchies of government and businesses seem to be dominated primarily by males. For example, in the opening of *Brave New World*, Huxley describes a group of young male students on a field

trip to the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre—the place in which children are mechanically born and chemically conditioned to live as dictated by rules of society. As these students follow the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning on a tour of the facility, “Each of them carried a notebook, in which, whenever the great man spoke, he [each boy] desperately scribbled. Straight from the horse’s mouth. It was a rare privilege” (Huxley 1). No females in the story are shown to be held in such high esteem. Rather, the women seem to hold positions that help move society along—the chemical attendants to the hatcheries, secretaries, nurses—but no positions that command attention or power.

Men do not seem to recognize women as anything other than a fellow citizen or sexual opportunities, either past or future. As one of the male characters proudly states to another, “‘And I had six girls last week,’ he confided to Helmholtz Watson. ‘One on Monday, two on Tuesday, two more on Friday, and one on Saturday. And if I’d had the time or inclination, there were at least a dozen more who were only too anxious...’” (Huxley 119). No mention of names or individual traits of the women is made, merely how they figured into this man’s week numerically and sexually. Unfortunately, women do not see themselves or each other any differently. As character Bernard Marx point out, referring to his associate Lenina Crowne, “She doesn’t mind being meat” (Huxley 71). Apparently the women of *Brave New World* are content to see themselves, and be seen by others, as nothing more than bodies.

Although the women aren't given positions of power in Huxley's World State, they are seen as valuable. Females are needed to ensure the future of the human race to keep the machines running smoothly. Human eggs must be provided for the hatcheries to do their job, and humankind has not discovered or developed the technology by which a human egg can be fabricated. Among the few jobs for which women are mandatory, ovulation stands as one of the most important, but that is the extent to which any sort of motherly connection is deemed socially acceptable: "father' was not so much obscene as—with its connotation of something at one remove from the loathsomeness and moral obliquity of child-bearing—merely gross, a scatological rather than pornographic impropriety" (Huxley 116). Although it might be uncomfortable for a man to be considered a father to a child, the embarrassment, the social disgust, is nothing compared to what a woman might be subject to should she become a mother.

In *Brave New World*, the two main female characters, Lenina and Linda, are provided opportunities to become the martyrs for their world, saving society from its total mechanization. Unfortunately for those living under the rule of the World State, these two women are unable to accept the roles that will have a positive effect on humanity—they reject the roles of innovator, partner, lover, or mother. There is no one to save man from his own machine simply because the machine is too effective,

the act of conditioning becoming a way for technology to create the right human tools for the various jobs required by and for society.

The conditioning of civilized human beings undergo begins even before conception. Before the egg and sperm are introduced to each other, a human's future in the social hierarchy has already been determined. The individuals controlling the social predetermination have decided whether the resulting organisms will be Gammas—up to ninety-six individuals resulting from one egg and one sperm undergoing bokanovskification, “a series of arrests of development” (Huxley 3) resulting in individuals socially inferior with limited mental capacities—or socially and intellectually superior Alphas—the result of one egg and one sperm being spared the chemical influences that might otherwise cause them to subdivide—or one of the castes in between, such as Betas and/or Deltas.

Conditioning continues through embryonic development and decanting (the scientific process that has taking over the process of viviparous birth), up through school age. This conditioning includes anything from pre-decanting chemical stunting of physical and mental growth to hypnopaedia, subliminal messages transmitted to children in their sleep

“Till at last the child's mind is these suggestions, and the sum of the suggestions is the child's mind. And not the child's mind only. The adult's mind too—all his life long.

The mind that judges and desires and decides—made up of these suggestions. But all these suggestions are *our* suggestions!...Suggestions from the State.” (Huxley 20)

The reinforcement of the subliminal messages continues through a variety of games as “older children [amuse] themselves with...hunt-the-zipper, and erotic play” (Huxley 112). Sexuality and its open expression becomes one of the many ideas programmed into children as they are developing, concepts that are exhibited by men and women as they reach maturity.

Reinforcement of conditioning also takes place through adulthood with the use of such treatments as Pregnancy Substitutes and a mood-altering drug called soma. Pregnancy Substitutes are used at the direction of a woman’s doctor to help her purge any physical feelings or emotions that are not considered normal. The soma is a chemical created to provide “all the advantages of Christianity and alcohol; [with] none of their defects” (Huxley 42); such defects might be conscience (a result of a Christian way of living) or hangovers (a result of too much alcohol). Thus, soma is used as an outlet for uncomfortable feelings when an individual comes into contact with something that s/he has not been programmed or conditioned to comprehend.

Lenina Crowne is a young nurse who is initially introduced as she is giving inoculations to embryos at the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre. Although no exact age is given for her, she is

referred to as young by a number of other characters, and some of her actions seem rather girlish. When she discusses who she is seeing sexually, she appears hesitant to “have” more than one man at a time. She also has this same almost romantic notion when she decides she is interested in John Savage—he overshadows everyone else in her field of vision. She wants to do the right thing according to the laws and social expectations of her civilized world, but her programming hasn’t completely rid her of her desire to be unique. Although her position in the social system is not directly uncovered, it can be gleaned from the fact that she is able to travel with Bernard Marx to the Savage Reservations as well as her conversations with others, that she is either an Alpha or a Beta. For example, while traveling with one of her sexual acquaintances, Lenina sees a number of individuals of lower classes and states, “I’m glad I’m not a Gamma” (Huxley 49). Perhaps she is not completely aware of what these other people do or whether or not they are happy, she is just pleased to be a member of one of the upper classes.

Lenina has the opportunity to become an innovator for humanity but she refuses. She is drawn to John Savage in a way that goes against her own conditioning, wanting an exclusive relationship with him but knowing it would be received negatively by her social peers. Although Lenina is exposed to the ideas of love, devotion, and romance that John brings from the Savage Reservation, she remains distant from,

disinterested in, and disgusted by the knowledge he carries. She flatly refuses to examine, let alone promote, any of the ideas with which she comes into contact. Although she is drawn to John sexually, she refuses to look at anything from his perspective, trying to force him to live in a manner he finds uncomfortable instead of attempting to come to some sort of compromise. Lenina's inability to consider John's way of living rips from her one of the opportunities she is offered, taking her away from the much needed role of martyr, pushing the World State closer to humanity's doom.

Initially, Lenina shows signs of her desire to be a lover because she's not interested in being as promiscuous as is socially accepted or expected. After discovering Lenina has been seeing one man exclusively, her friend, Fanny, expresses concern for Lenina, reminding her,

“I really think you ought to be careful. It's such a horribly bad form to go on and on like this with one man. At forty, or thirty-five, it wouldn't be so bad. But at *your* age, Lenina! No, it really won't do. And you know how strongly the D.H.C. [Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning at the Centre where Lenina works] objects to anything intense or long-drawn. Four months of Henry Foster, without having another man—why, he'd be furious if he knew...” (Huxley 29-30)

Lenina's primary problem—the problem that keeps her from becoming a lover—is her desire to be accepted by the society in which she lives. In her attempts to do the “socially responsible” thing, she attaches herself to John Savage (as he is on the social rise) and she tries her hardest to seduce him. Unfortunately for her, he resists her advances and she is forced to seek sexual solace elsewhere. She does not see that he wants to provide her the opportunity to become something he sees as greater, something needed for the future of her world that he can never be—he pushes her toward the role of martyr.

Historically, the role of the mother has been one to be respected, a right of passage that bestows honor upon the woman who becomes maternal, either symbolically or literally. In the civilized lands of *Brave New World* motherhood has taken on a new meaning, becoming something grotesque that is not to be discussed in polite society. Linda, mother of John Savage, is an example of what can happen to the civilized when forced to experience uncivilized conditions. She is introduced to Lenina and Bernard Marx as the two arrive at the Savage Reservation located in New Mexico. Twenty to twenty-five years before, Linda had taken a similar trip to the reservation with a man she refers to only as Tomkin (he is later identified as the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning). Due to an unfortunate turn of events, Linda is accidentally left on the reservation where she bears a child and where she attracts the wrath and disgust of the native females as she attracts

the sexual attention of the native males. Because of the conditioning she has received, she is incapable of adapting to her new environment—she is unable to mend her clothes, or those of her son, as the native women do, and she is unable to accept the demands of motherhood, leaving John to find his own way in a world that wants nothing to do with him.

Linda has absolutely no desire to be a partner in any way—to be a partner means some sort of exclusive relationship with someone else. The very concept of such a relationship is considered morally wrong for the civilized masses, a belief reinforced by Linda's reintroduction to civilized society after being abandoned to the harshness of the Savage Reservation for a number of years. When Lenina and Linda meet, Linda tries to describe the terrible situations she encountered on the Reservation. She tells Lenina, "here...nobody's supposed to belong to more than one person. And if you have people in the ordinary way, the others think you're wicked and anti-social. They hate and despise you. Once a lot of women came and made a scene because their men came to see me" (Huxley 93). Instead of choosing one person to partner with and adapt to the ways of the reservation, ways that would enable her to become a martyr and a sign of hope for change in the future, Linda refuses to attempt any changes, preferring the comfort of her own conditioning to the comfort of being accepted by a culture holding beliefs she has been taught are wrong.

Unable to make choices that go against her conditioning, when Linda, pregnant and abandoned, discovers she is alone among strangers in a strange land, she withdraws into herself. By removing herself mentally from her situation, she can ignore the fact that her body has turned her into something that shouldn't be mentioned in polite society—a mother. In the society of the World State being the mother of a child is taboo, barbaric, smutty. Upon Linda's return to society with her son, she finds herself the center of attention in a horrible way, much like that of an object of disgust commanding the attention of those it disgusts the most. Huxley gives a very telling description as he writes, "Nobody had the smallest desire to see Linda. To say one was a mother—that was past a joke: it was an obscenity. Moreover, she wasn't a real savage, had been hatched out of a bottle and conditioned like any one else: so couldn't have really quaint ideas" (117). The response of "civilized" society to Linda's condition causes her to retreat into a world of soma, the drug of choice that can keep a person from feeling anything but bliss. This gives a frightening picture of what life in this type of a world would bring. Forced into motherhood, and intent upon rejecting it, Linda refuses to play any part in the saving of humanity. She retreats into her drug induced stupor never to emerge, without realizing or accepting the possibility of martyrdom placed at her very feet.

John Savage is a man who does not belong in either of the two worlds accessible to him. Although raised on the Savage Reservation, he has

learned of the World State without the “benefits” of being conditioned. His mother, Linda, has tried to teach him what she knows but it is left to him to assimilate what she is teaching him with what he learns from his acquaintances and peers on the Reservation. Without the help of a translator or guide of some sort, John is unable to reconcile the differing input he receives.

Being a member of both societies, born of a civilized woman in a savage world and yet unable to be a part of either culture, puts John Savage in the position of providing Linda and Lenina the opportunities they would need in order to become martyrs; for Lenina these are the opportunities to be an innovator, partner, and lover; for Linda, her opportunity is to experience the maternal. Neither woman is able to accept the gift John potentially offers, and by rejecting these opportunities Linda and Lenina reject John himself and all the hope he may promote. Removing John’s purpose for being a part of the world negates his reason for being or his use, leaving him the options of living in a world in which he has no purpose or removing himself altogether. He chooses the latter, at the end of the novel hanging himself, but even then he is not able to elicit the emotional response that would indicate he had led someone, anyone, to have hope for the future. So he swings where he has taken his own life:

Slowly, very slowly, like two unhurried compass needles, the feet turned towards the right; north, north-east, east, south-

east, south-south-west; then paused, and after a few seconds, turned as unhurriedly back towards the left.

South-south-west, south, south-east, east..." (Huxley 199)

trying unsuccessfully to point to a hopeful future.

In *Brave New World*, there is no cause to look for hope for the future in any of the humans presented. Although John Savage would like to make attempts at bringing hope to the World State, he lacks the true nature of females—the courage, the maternal nature, the connection with the development in and out of the womb. His tragic attempts at bringing humanity back to its roots and helping it to rediscover itself are met with horrible failure—a failure that results in the loss of John's hope as well as his life.

There are no women hope-bringers in the novel, simply because there are no women capable of accepting any of the roles that make up a martyr, let alone one single woman able to fulfill all the roles. Lenina and Linda turn their backs on becoming innovators, partners, lovers, and mothers. *Brave New World* represents the very worst that could happen to mankind—the loss of hope leading to the destruction of humanity. The extent to which humans are conditioned and that the conditioning is so heavily reinforced creates beings unable to develop their full potential. This lack of development results in women who are not strong enough to break the conditioning that would allow them to become martyrs, the much-needed saviors of this society.

CHAPTER IV

LIBERTY 5-3000 BECOMES GAEA: RELIGHTING THE TORCH OF HOPE IN RAND'S *ANTHEM*

When Ayn Rand introduced *Anthem* to the world in 1938, she did more than add a cautionary tale to the dystopic tradition. She added a female voice to the discussion that was taking place. In *Anthem*, Rand presents a world in which humankind has caused destruction on a global level, creating communal societies that are separated by great forests, societies that seem to have been thrown back to a time when individuals relied heavily on each other. The community developed in *Anthem* hearkens back to those created by Zamyatin and Huxley—worlds in which man is little more than a tool to keep the society running—but Rand presents something lacking in Huxley's *Brave New World*, something that glimmers weakly in Zamyatin's *We*: she introduces a world with a distinct and undeniable hope—a world in which a woman character gathers her courage and takes on the role of martyr.

Like countryman Zamyatin, Ayn Rand (born Alissa Zinovievna Rosenbaum) saw a number of uprisings in her homeland Russia, and because of that her writings to some degree resemble those of Zamyatin.

Out of this land of so much strife and turmoil came two of the crucial works that set the standards for the future of dystopic literature.

The Russia of Rand's childhood was filled with revolutionary movement, and, Chris Sciabarra notes, as "civil war intensified, the Rosenbaum family sought refuge in the Crimea," where Rand's family lived in a self-imposed exile until the civil war ended. At this time, "the family returned to Petrograd (formerly St. Petersburg)" (*American Writers* 3). Even with all this conflict going on around her, Rand entered college to pursue a course of study in social sciences, during which time she and her family found themselves terrorized by the political unrest in their homeland. This air of terror and uncertainty encouraged Rand's belief "that communism was strangling any possibility of a humane and moral society, and she soon began the arduous process of securing a passport to leave Russia" (Sciabarra, *American Writers* 4), a passport that would allow her to move to the United States in 1925.

Rand carried the views with which she became familiar into her writings, including *Anthem*, connecting political views regarding the inhumanity of complete government control with her convictions regarding reason and emotion: "[Rand] stressed the role of reason, she rejected the belief that there was an inherent antagonism between reason and emotion. She acknowledged the importance of emotion to a fully integrated existence" (Sciabarra, *American Writers* 13). With this collection of beliefs, Rand developed great concern for the possibility of

the governmental control overcoming the individuality humanity requires for the future:

Rand projects the primitive conditions that *must* predominate in any social order that destroys the individual. In *Anthem*, total collectivism has led to the obliteration of industry and the distortion of human relationships. Peoples' names have been replaced by euphemistic code words and numerical notations. (Sciabarra, *Ayn Rand* 111)

Rand was a firm believer in the importance of man over machine, believing that without emotion, the subconscious, imagination, or individuality, humankind would be doomed to a life without happiness, a life without future, a life without hope.

Rand should be considered an early feminist, even though many of her writings refer to man (in place of humanity or humankind), causing some critics to accuse Rand of damaging the feminist cause. For example, Ellen Snodgrass writes,

Ayn Rand, an influential female dystopist and lecturer, further degrades feminine intellectual powers with Liberty-5-3000, the mild-mannered sower of seeds who regresses toward an even more useless function as the wife of the hero in *Anthem* ([written in] 1937). The last straw is Liberty 5-3000's wish for a son to please her mate—ironically named Equality 7-2521. (565)

Assumptions such as these, however, could be no further from the truth. Rand's *Anthem* is an early example of feminist work; careful study shows how cleverly Rand advances the understanding of woman's importance in the world.

Anthem is the story of a post-apocalyptic world in which each human is assigned a place in society and deviation from that assignment means exile into the unknown Uncharted Forest or death, another journey into the unknown. In this world, the terms "I" and "my" have been forgotten, and cities are maintained as collective societies, to which all must contribute.

The story is presented in a sort of diary-format, a form similar to the journal of D-503 in Zamyatin's *We*. In *Anthem*, narrator and main character Equality 7-2521 describes how he has been refused the assignment in life that he most desires—to become a member of the House of Scholars, a place of science, learning, invention, and development. Instead of being granted the opportunity to learn, Equality has been doomed to the assignment of street sweeper, being told that he is important only insofar as he works for his fellow man. Instead of going along with the city's carefully crafted laws and plans, Equality finds himself breaking the laws in private, including developing an illicit emotional attachment to Liberty 5-3000 and uncovering the secrets of electricity without the approval of any governing bodies.

In the spirit of brotherhood, Equality attempts to bring his discovery to the community, hoping humankind will benefit from his work. By uncovering his illegal work, Equality dooms himself, preferring to run from a society that refuses to acknowledge the potential of his work. Equality flees to the Uncharted Forest without intending to, wanting only to leave the closed-minded society of which he was a part. Shortly thereafter, Liberty finds him, rejecting her world to follow him into the unknown.

After finding each other and expressing their love and devotion for each other, the two wander deeper into the forest and discover an abandoned house from past ages, filled with knowledge waiting to be uncovered. The two move into the house and make the most of the books available to them. As they read, they discover a number of long-forgotten concepts, most notably that of the individual. Caught up in this time of their own rebirth, the two take on new names for themselves. Equality becomes Prometheus, benefactor of man who stole fire from the sky and the gods and presented it to humankind. Liberty takes on the name of Gaea, mother of gods and mother of the earth whose actions led to the eventual creation of humankind (Rand 99).

In *Anthem*, Ayn Rand provides a warning similar in ways to those presented by Zamyatin in *We* and Huxley in *Brave New World*. However, Rand's warning is not about the overuse of science turning man into a machine or making all people identical through the unchecked

advancements in technology. Rather, hers is a warning against moving to the other end of the spectrum with regard to technology—being afraid of technology to the point that advancements are forbidden. At one point in the work, character Unanimity 2-9913 indicates the terror the community has for technological change, stating,

without the Plans of the World Council the sun cannot rise.

It took fifty years to secure the approval of all the Councils for the Candle, and to decide upon the number needed, and to re-fit the Plans so as to make candles instead of torches.

This touched upon thousands and thousands of men

working in scores of States. We cannot alter the Plans again so soon. (Rand 74)

So, in *Anthem*, one method used to force equality on the citizens of the community is by enforcing the law that anything new must come from the House of Scholars and only if it has been proven “safe.” This method of controlling equality also keeps each person a slave of the community, in an attempt to make sure that no one creates or develops anything new with complete abandon.

In *Anthem*, people are units that make up society; everyone is important in how s/he benefits the whole community. Although individuals are valuable, it is in the same manner they are valuable in *We* and *Brave New World*—they are valuable in that they keep society running smoothly. People join together, in spirit and in voice, singing

hymns—“the Hymn of Brotherhood, and the Hymn of Equality, and the Hymn of the Collective Spirit” (Rand 27). The singing of these hymns reinforces the need to be the same, the need to rely on others, and the need to maintain social organization.

Rand presents a series of councils besides the House of Scholars that control and govern the known world. The primary council, World Council, determines how individuals living in the civilized communities act, creating the laws for governing humankind. Control under the World Council is divided by cities, with each community having a City Council to ensure the laws of the World Council are being upheld. The City Councils are also responsible for the creation of additional councils, including the Council of Scholars, the council that works on developing technologies and determines what advancements are safe, and the Council of Vocations, the council that determines what work each person will be assigned during his/her life. People are not able to make their own choices with regard to work, love, or laws. Control over each individual is complete—allowing governing councils to ensure society operates smoothly. This is also how the council keeps each human being in check. These councils decide what ideas each person has access to, and with what mechanisms each person is able to have contact.

Men and women are seen as part of the whole, but strangely enough the genders are not considered equal. Men and women are not allowed to interact with each other except the times at which the government has

determined procreation should take place. According to the male narrator, Equality 7-2521, “The law...says that men may not think of women, save at the Time of Mating. This is the time each spring when all the men older than twenty and all the women older than eighteen are sent for one night to the City Palace of mating” (Rand 41). In addition to one person not being allowed to develop natural affection for another, friendships cannot be developed between the genders and family relationships are not recognized.

Men are granted the occasion to hold greater positions of power. Men are the students, men make up the Council of Scholars, even the Judges are men: “The Judges were small, thin men, grey and bent” (Rand 64). The only time women appear in positions of power is with the Council of Vocations:

So we waited our turn in the great hall and then we heard the Council of Vocations call our name: ‘Equality 7-2521.’ We walked to the dias, and our legs did not tremble, and we looked up at the Council. There were five members of the Council, three of the male gender and two of the female.
(Rand 25-26)

This slight representation is likely only a result of the realization that women must be assigned vocations just as the men must be assigned. So it would appear inequality for women is expected—women are not

allowed the benefits of education, they are underrepresented in government, and there are no women to be seen in the judicial forum.

For the most part, the women introduced in *Anthem* are portrayed as manual laborers—“The women who have been assigned to work the soil live in the Home of the Peasants beyond the City... Women work in the fields, and their white tunics in the wind are like the wings of sea-gulls beating over the black soil” (Rand 38). This very labor gives the women worth in the eyes of the members of the Councils. One member of the City Council, Similarity 5-0306, explains the importance of work by saying “men have no cause to exist save in toiling for other men” (Rand 74). It can be inferred, then, that to this world woman can only find worth by toiling for men as well—a concept Rand creates only to obliterate in *Anthem*.

Rand creates a heroine with *Anthem*'s Liberty 5-3000 and the choices Liberty makes, including putting Equality 7-2521's needs and desires before her own, Liberty is a woman capable of saving the future, a woman capable of becoming a martyr. She begins to develop into a martyr by becoming the innovator (or re-introducer) of ideas long forgotten; by becoming the partner of Equality 7-2521; by becoming the lover that Equality needs and identifying that she has the right to receive love; and by becoming the mother for the future—the hope for humanity.

As innovator, Liberty begins to bring the idea of individuality back to humanity. The world in which Liberty lives has lost the language to

express the idea “I” or “me”—the individual simply does not exist for the people of this society. However, Liberty re-awakens the concept of self after following Equality into the Uncharted Forest after his exile. Upon finding Equality, Liberty awkwardly tries to articulate her feelings for him, saying “We are one...alone...and only...and we love you who are one...alone...and only” (Rand 87). It is only after Liberty’s attempt to identify herself as an individual that Equality realizes something is wrong, noting, “we felt torn, torn for some word we could not find” (Rand 87). Liberty has recognized the importance of individuality, promoting the idea and working with Equality to rediscover the language to discuss it.

Liberty expects to have the opportunity to become a partner to Equality. After Equality has been banished from the city, Liberty is afraid of what the future may hold for him. She knows he has run into the Uncharted Forest, and, taking her future into her own hands, she enters the forest in search of him, eventually finding him in the midst of his despair. She turns her back on the certain safety of her prescribed life in the city. Expressing the role she intends to play while sharing Equality’s exile, she says, “We have followed you... and we shall follow you wherever you go. If danger threatens you, we shall face it also. If it be death, we shall die with you. You are damned, and we wish to share your damnation” (Rand 82). Risking life, risking damnation, Liberty has agreed to put herself in a precarious position, putting Equality’s need for

solace and companionship before her own safety, determined to bring hope to the world.

As she grows into a potential martyr, Liberty decides to take on the role of Equality's lover. She understands he is different from other men of the community and has come to appreciate his differences, developing a great love for him. When she reunites with him in the Uncharted Forest, Liberty points out his differences to him, not to shame him for being different from others, but to help him celebrate his uniqueness. She tells him,

“Your eyes are as a flame, but our brothers have neither hope nor fire. Your mouth is cut of granite, but our brother brothers are soft and humble. Your head is high, but our brothers cringe. You walk, but our brothers crawl. We wish to be damned with you, rather than blessed with all our brothers. Do as you please with us, but do not send us away from you.” (82-83)

Realizing that she has fallen in love with him and knowing she wants to be loved by him in return, Liberty gives Equality the gift of herself, seeing his potential and willing to trust him with her life as well as her love. By deciding to become Equality's lover, Liberty has agreed to give him the support he needs, deciding to stand by his side as a friend and lover, also offering him hope to live and help in creating a future very different from that which they escaped.

Liberty offers herself to Equality, but also offers herself as a potential sacrifice, deciding to have a hand in developing a new humankind for the future—Liberty agrees to take on the role of mother. She has already shown maternal traits by following Equality into the Uncharted Forest, determined to look after him because she realizes he is not capable of doing so for himself. She is willing to give her life to see to his safety, putting his needs ahead of her own—the very act of a loving mother. This act of love and devotion prepares her to be the mother of a new era. Equality says to her, “I have read of a goddess...who was the mother of the earth and of all the gods. Her name was Gaea. Let this be your name, my Golden One, for you are to be the mother of a new kind of gods” (Rand 99). Equality recognizes the maternal trait as a crucial characteristic needed for the future of humanity. A trait Liberty had already demonstrated is now finally recognized and validated by the very gender that had before belittled the female gender by repressing the expression of women’s capabilities.

In addition to becoming the mother of a new future, Liberty, now Gaea, becomes an actual mother, bearing and caring for her child in the manner nature intended. Within the community controlled by the City Council,

all the women older than eighteen are sent for one night to the City Palace of Mating. And each of the men have one of the women assigned to them by the Council of Eugenics.

Children are born each winter, but women never see their children and children never know their parents. (Rand 41)

This is a horrible tradition, demeaning to the men and women forced to participate, but also horrible to the children being raised without a true sense of themselves developing from a family unit. Having escaped the repression of the city, Gaea is now able to bear the child of the man she loves and raise her child in a manner befitting all children, giving her child the love and attention s/he deserves. Equality, going by the name Prometheus, sees the potential for future in the family unit he and Gaea will produce and it fills him with hope. He writes

Then here, on this mountaintop, with the world below me and nothing above me but the sun, I shall live my own truth. Gaea is pregnant with my child. Our son will be raised as a man. He will be taught to say "I" and bear the pride of it. He will be taught to walk straight and on his own feet. He will be taught reverence for his own spirit. (Rand 100)

Gaea is responsible for this change in character. She is responsible for the development of hope for the future where there was none. Like the Gaea of mythology, *Anthem's* Gaea becomes a mother of the gods of the future—human-gods who will bring with them the beginnings of a new era for the world. This new era will be filled with people capable of recognizing their own individuality, and will be an era in which a world of

choices is available and each person is allowed to choose. As this mother to the gods of the future, Gaea is responsible for the hope of humanity.

By the end of *Anthem*, Rand's darkly fashioned tale has been reformed, becoming a work alight with hope. Gaea's strength leaves the reader with the expectation that she and those who follow her ways will not allow humankind to regress to the point it had. She has become a beacon for those who wish to find hope in their own existences; Gaea becomes a kind of template for women to use as they make their choices in life. Acknowledging the past and providing opportunities for Gaea to develop into a martyr, Rand anchors the moral of the story to the idea that knowing it is wrong for the individual to "[give] up all he had won, and [fall] lower than his savage beginning" (Rand 102) will keep history from repeating itself and help humanity retain the individuality each person needs in order for the world to have a future. With *Anthem*, Rand sets a trend toward finding hope in an otherwise hopeless world, an idea that is further developed by the female writers of the dystopic tradition.

CHAPTER V

SUSANNAH: THE DESPAIR IN TEPPER'S *THE GATE TO WOMEN'S COUNTRY*

In the years between the publishing of Ayn Rand's *Anthem* and Sheri S. Tepper's *The Gate to Women's Country*, the world saw a number of changes that affected views of the future. Between 1938 and 1988, the Second World War, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Cold War, and the Nuclear Arms race took place and the effects of these events are evident in the literature of the time including the work of Tepper. By creating and portraying two cultures in her dystopic novel *The Gate to Women's Country*, one of despair and one of hope, Tepper identifies humankind's tendencies for self-destruction and the two possible outcomes that are determined by how humans live their lives and what roles women take.

Tepper exhibits in her writing several of the same ideas of the three previous authors, ideas including the concept that through the unchecked developments in technology, humankind is pushing itself toward destruction, toward a world in which every person has become less than human. However, in many ways Tepper is very much different from Rand, Huxley, and Zamyatin. One significant example of the

differences in her work is the role she gives women. In several, if not all of her novels, including *The Gate to Women's Country*, Tepper is not afraid to empower females, to make them capable of taking on strong roles, and, unlike Rand and Zamyatin, Tepper is not afraid to give her women true names as opposed to seemingly arbitrary titles and numbers.

Born in 1929, Tepper saw a number of extraordinary changes that affected the world. In addition to drawing upon these global experiences, Tepper also draws upon her personal experiences, including acting as the executive director of Rocky Mountain Planned Parenthood in Denver, to give her insight regarding many politically-charged concepts, a number of which come to light in her works. These concepts include concerns for the environment, women's issues, as well as the use and abuse of power.

In *The Gate to Women's Country*, Tepper presents two societies to demonstrate the power of individuals over the future of human kind. These two societies are the patriarchal Holyland and the matriarchal Women's Country. In Holyland, Tepper has created a society that is slowly, almost deliberately, killing itself, and it plays an important role in *The Gate to Women's Country* in a variety of ways. This society acts as a warning or wake up call for those who don't see the destruction to which humankind is subjecting the world. More importantly, however, Holyland acts as a foil for the strong, hope-filled society of Women's

Country. Women's Country is a society that has found or developed a plan for the survival of humanity, for the protection of the world against the carelessness of humankind. Women's Country is an embodiment of the hope for the future that Tepper believes can be discovered.

Using a series of flashbacks and scenes from the classical Greek tragedy *Iphigenia at Ilium*, Tepper tells the story of the life of Stavia, a woman living in post-apocalyptic times trying to validate her existence in a world with communities hearkening back to patriarchal dominated societies (seen in Holyland) and her own matriarchal society of Woman's Country. As Stavia grows from girlhood to womanhood to motherhood, Tepper identifies a number of experiences that have affected Stavia's development. These experiences range from going with her mother to take her brother to his warrior father to girlishly falling in love with warrior-in-training, Chernon. Stavia's story also takes her into Holyland, as she is kidnapped and abused by the men and customs there, through to having to take her own son to his warrior father.

This journey shows the world, primarily through Stavia's eyes, as she sees the horror of the situation of women in Holyland and tries to help them see hope. Stavia's attempts to bring hope to Holyland are defeated by the discovery that this patriarchal society has gone too far to be redeemed; the society has been doomed by its own acts of repressing the women living in its confines.

Stavia also looks carefully at her own society, Women's Country, and the division of men and women there. Stavia sees the inner workings of her society and the balance (or at times seemingly imbalance) of power. Throughout the work, Stavia learns the good and bad sides of the control that must be bridled and maintained by women in order for peace and hope to be a part of the world's future.

The community of Holyland is similar in ways to the male-dominated societies of *We* and *Brave New World*. In the Holyland community, men and women are expected to work for the good of the whole, but a problem arises with the examination of the way the work is divided. A small group of older men, the fathers or father figures, seem to control the community, determining what jobs specific individuals do. These same men seem to do the least amount of work, at the same time deciding how the family units will be formed—which individuals are allowed to produce young for which family groups.

The society of Holyland is divided into three strict castes—the upper class is the group of older men who are married to multiple wives and have a say in the controlling of the community; the middle class consists of unmarried males living at the Bachelor House, waiting to have wives chosen for them; and the lower class is of females of all ages and infant males. Like the class system seen in the civilized world of *Brave New World*, there is only a minimal hope for a person to change his or her status in society. The unmarried men, truly those with the only

possibility of changing their circumstances, are limited in their abilities to move to the upper class because there is a shortage of females.

One sign of the role infant males play in Holyland society is indicated by the fact that these children are not given names until they successfully live to their first year. One of the primary characters in Holyland, a woman named Susannah, tells of her own infant son, saying,

Baby had no name. If he lived to be a year old, Papa would give him a name. If he lived to be six, he would go over to Papa's house every day and attend school. Boys had to be able to read and write so they could discuss the Scriptures. They had to be able to calculate some, as well, in order to be efficient shepherds for All Father, who wouldn't tolerate lack of discipline or diligence. (Tepper 176)

Sadly, it is only the boys who are given these opportunities to learn to read and write. The girl children are not considered important; in fact in times of drought and famine, "a baby could disappear, just up and vanish, with nobody knowing a thing about it...Most always it happened to girls" (Tepper 176). It would seem that these daughters are considered burdens until they grow up enough to be seen as beasts of burden or breeding stock, never moving from their social standing of laborer or slave until death releases them from their worldly toils.

Holyland is filled with women who are not allowed to be hopeful, let alone be symbols of hope for the community. In this society, women are

repressed in mind as well as body, emotionally as well as physically. When Stavia is introduced into this very strict society, she is shocked to meet Susannah, a woman of comparable age who has lived so hard a life that she looks much older. Stavia notes, "Susannah was simply beaten down, worn down, worked down" (Tepper 226) and sees her as a sorry figurehead for a doomed society.

In the Holyland, women are repressed in mind as well as body. They are not allowed to read, they are not allowed to be individuals, and they are not allowed to be happy. These horribly mistreated people are not allowed to be innovators, they are not allowed to be lovers, and they are not allowed to be partners. Being considered little more than chattel, the women of Holyland are not allowed the opportunity to choose whether or not they are or wish to become mothers.

As women age, moving from childhood to womanhood with no consideration for so sizeable a transition, they are given or traded by their fathers to other males to become wives. At this time, women are granted the use of their husbands' names, but denied the right to assert any form of individuality. Upon marrying Elder Brome, Susannah has become Thirdwife Susannah Brome or just one of Elder Brome's wives. These wives are to be kept by their husbands, held in check, and kept from independent thinking. At one point, a young man of forty marries for the first time. He doesn't understand much about his fourteen year-old bride, so lowers himself to ask his mother, Rejoice, for advice.

Rejoice is concerned with the welfare of her son and would like to help, but has to remind him, “you remember I’m only a woman and don’t know much about things” (Tepper 181). She reminds him of the concepts that all children are taught, either through observation or through lecture—women are not to be considered worthy of knowledge and, therefore, should not be allowed anything that might cause them to have original thoughts.

Women are not to be considered equals of men in Holyland by either gender, so it is of little wonder that women are denied the right to be partners to the menfolk. A woman is a man’s property, either as his daughter or as his wife. A daughter is considered a bargaining chip—she can be traded for goods or other females at her father’s whim. Elder Resolution Brome, after realizing his daughter has physiologically shown she is a woman, has started trade negotiations with another elder:

There would be one good thing about giving Chastity to Elder Jepson...because Elder Jepson had a thirteen-year-old girl named Perseverance he was willing to give in trade...[And] if Resolution didn’t want her himself, he could give her to one of his boys. (Tepper 177).

Being raised in a world in which females were considered trade-goods explains how women would be unable to develop into partners for their husbands, being continually forced into positions of subservience.

Women are also seen as workhorses. Women bring the water from springs and rivers to the houses, looking after the needs of the males first, of course. Susannah remarks on the significance of bearing sons when she recalls the birth order of her children. She notes, “While it was meritorious of her to have had three sons before spawning a girl, she sometimes wished for the help another older daughter or two might have given” (Tepper 174). Women are born to be of help to one another. In actuality, women are not seen as born in a normal human manner—they are spawned or whelped or dropped, expelled from the wombs of their mothers in ways comparable to how the beasts of nature bear their young.

Wives in Holyland do not expect to be cherished by their husbands. They are taught to worship the power of their masters, their fathers and husbands. A woman has little chance of developing a bond of love with the man with whom she mates, simply because sexual intimacy is seen as an act of procreation that is a duty a woman must perform with her husband that neither should enjoy. Susannah “remembered her own initiation at fourteen, and no one could convince her that all that puffing and grunting had been divine duty” (Tepper 174). Although she had doubts about what she’d been led to understand about sex, that it was a godly act in which the ends (the creation of sons) justified the means, she remained unable to voice this opinion for fear of retribution and the punishment for heresy.

A woman in Holyland can also not expect to be held in esteem by her husband. In fact, she is to cover herself completely and attempt to make herself as unattractive as possible. This is another lesson outsiders must learn during their stay in Holyland. For example, when Stavia is kidnapped and taken to Holyland, she claims to be the wife of Chernon, hoping to find a way to escape without being molested by any of the community's men. Placing herself in this predicament, Stavia is required to follow the laws of the land and her head is shaved to show her husband's ownership. Naturally curious, Stavia asks Susannah the rationale behind this custom. Stavia is told "So's you don't look like anything to stir up lust. Man's got to do his duty, but he's got to do it as duty, not because he likes it" (Tepper 229). It is wrong for a woman to expect affection from the man to whom she is married, but it is evil for her to have any effect on him that would make him enjoy sexual relations with her.

The lives of the women in Holyland are completely controlled by men. Women are forced into motherhood in the same way that animals are bred—supposedly fitting in a land in which women are seen as having value primarily in the same sense that livestock do. One of the elders of the community makes the comparison saying, "Everybody knew when they started dropping babies before their time, it wouldn't be long before the mama dropped, too, if you didn't leave her alone. Ewe sheep and women, both of 'em worked the same" (Tepper 177). In fact, a woman

who has outlived her reproductive years has outlived her use in life: “No point keepin’ a wife who couldn’t produce” (Tepper 178). To be of any value, a woman has to be at her reproductive prime, a time in life that some women, including Susannah, regret. She remembers, “She’d been pregnant almost all the time since she was fourteen. She’d had eleven pregnancies...If she got pregnant again, she thought she’d kill herself. It would be easier to die than to go through it again” (Tepper 174). The fact that women have no control over their own reproductive capabilities leads to little hope for the society. Although forced to breed, the women have no input in the organization of family units. The men who are in charge don’t understand the damage they are doing to the community by allowing, even promoting, in-breeding. If the community continues in this fashion, as may be assumed by the inability of the leaders to change, the people of Holyland will eventually breed themselves out of existence. The roots of the true hopelessness of the society seem to stem from the fact that women are allowed no hope themselves.

Although the women of Holyland have the potential to do so, they are not allowed to provide hope for the future of their community. These women are not able to save their world simply because they are not given the opportunity to choose martyrdom; the role of martyr is forced upon them. Having suffering forced upon them does not incite hope, only despair. Watching Susannah suffering to the point at which she feels she must hang herself because it is her only way out of so terrible an

existence hearkens back to the suicide of John Savage in *Brave New World*. As John Savage hangs in death, his lifeless feet seem to be trying to divine hope the way mystics attempt to divine water. Susannah merely hangs, as if acknowledging that there is no hope to be found in Holyland.

CHAPTER VI

STAVIA: HOPE REGAINED IN *THE GATE TO WOMEN'S COUNTRY*

*We all like to invent worlds that are better than this one, better for lovers, better for mothers—Morgot to Stavia, *The Gate to Women's Country* (63)*

Of the four novels examined thus far, *The Gate to Women's Country* is by far the most optimistic, presenting Women's Country in contrast to the hopelessness of Holyland, introducing a society that sees a hopeful future. The primary character, Stavia, allows for an exacting comparison between the two communities, showing the stark contrast of the horrors of Holyland and the tranquility desired by the inhabitants of Women's Country. The woman-controlled city in *The Gate to Women's Country*, Marthatown, is a place that brings about the possibility of hope for humanity. In Marthatown, every person has a place of his/her own choosing. Every one is important to the whole, not because of the service s/he provides or the role s/he plays, but because each person has worth simply by being a member of humankind. In Women's Country there are women, there are warriors, and there are servitors, a group of men who act almost as house-servants in the homes of some of the women.

Although there are no apparent class barriers, there is a separation of the genders as well as a type of separation within the genders.

In Women's Country, the Joint Women's Country Council has created ordinances that dictate how the country is to be run. These rules describe the roles and responsibilities of the warriors, servitors, and women, operating in a manner almost opposite of that seen in Holyland. Each city is governed by a council composed entirely of women, and this council maintains the orderliness of the city, ensuring that ordinances are obeyed and justice is served when the need arises.

The men of the garrison live apart from the women and seem to be a backwards-thinking group of men, seemingly ignorant that of the idea women may know or determine their own worth. Ironically, the warriors seem to value women in a way comparable to that of the men of Holyland. The warriors believe women are good for hard labor and for breeding and refuse to acknowledge any familial ties between themselves and the women. When one of the younger warriors asks one of the older why the garrisons don't rip control of the cities away from the women, the response is

"I'm drinking beer made from Women's Country grain.

Tonight little Bilby will fix my dinner and he'll do it with

Women's Country meat and beans and cheese. You want to get out in those fields and dig? Get yourself all muddy and

cold? You want to be a shepherd, boy? Let the women run things. They like it, and why should I bother?" (Tepper 58)

In the eyes of these men, the women are there to do the work that is beneath the warriors—work that needs to be done, but that they have no desire to do.

The warriors are determined not only to enjoy the food, drink and clothing the women produce, they also intend to enjoy them physically and use them for breeding purposes—specifically to create more warriors. Therefore, it is important to keep women honorable. Chernon remembers what he has been taught at the garrison: "It was dishonorable to make a Gypsy of a young girl as it unfitted her for breeding" (Tepper 123). To make a woman a Gypsy is to take her from the protection of her Woman's Country town, leading her into a camp where she would be available to see to the sexual needs of the warriors whenever these warriors express their desire. To keep a woman clean of gypsy-taint is to ensure that she is free of disease and eligible to breed sons for the warriors, for the result of breeding is just as important to the soldiers as enjoying the act itself. To the warriors, the ability to create sons is a large part of what determines a woman's worth: "Sons were the single most important thing in life to a warrior, and the women knew that. 'In bearing a son for a warrior, a woman earns her life'" (Tepper 124). Unfortunately, for all the value they place on their male children, the warriors fail to see the importance of their female children.

According to one of the commanders at the garrison, “Warriors don’t have daughters. They may beget an occasional girl, my friend, but we don’t have daughters. You ought to know that! No, you’ve got to use girls for what they’re good for. Forget daughters” (Tepper 60). The warriors refuse to take pride in their daughters, refuse to see the potential they have as citizens in women’s country, fail to see the importance they hold for the community at large.

Another group of individuals the warriors fail to recognize the importance of is the servitors. These are the men who have decided leave the life of the warrior behind them. From the age of five, when the male children are taken from their mothers and sisters to their warrior fathers of the garrison, they are trained in the military arts and given the choice of serving with what the warriors consider honor, fighting and killing, or they can return to Women’s Country to act as servitors to women, becoming outcasts in the eyes of the warriors. This group of men, these servitors, have chosen to live in peace among the women. They are despised by the warriors but respected by a good number of the women in Women’s Country.

Many of the Councils of Women’s Country cities value what the majority of servitors have to say, listen to the insight they provide. Stavia’s mother attempts to explain it to her daughter, saying, “For the most part...the servitors are...highly competent, calm, judicious men, and they are highly respected, particularly by the most competent

women” (Tepper 254). Because these choices to leave the garrison are made by the servitors, they are despised by those whose lives they refuse to emulate—the warriors. One woman “did want [her brother]to come home, and yet men who did come home were cowards and tit-suckers... Or else gelded when they came back. All the warriors said so” (Tepper 33). This type of propaganda is produced and promoted by the warriors in their attempts to devalue women and those men who act as servitors.

The women in each of the cities of Women’s Country take on one of two positions in the community—that of council member or member of the general public. One thing is reiterated time and time again—young and old, every woman has value in this society: “After the convulsions... a lot of knowledge was lost because people didn’t know anything outside their own narrow areas, and the books were gone. Even if you’re seventy, you should be learning something more in case it’s needed” (Tepper 64). Although the women of the city councils seem to be in control, all citizens are given some say in their world. The women are granted the opportunity to choose what they will study, what their professions will be, whom they will love.

Women are the key elements to the success of Women’s Country. The society requires that choices be made by all members—men and women alike. One of the crucial choices women have to make is comparable to the choice presented to the women of *We, Brave New World*, and *Anthem*—whether or not to take on the roles that might make them

martyrs for the whole of Women's Country. This means willingly accepting the roles of innovator, partner, lover, and mother figure. Stavia, daughter of Morgot, is a prime example of women who, through their choices and decisions, take on these roles, ultimately sacrificing their desires and interests for the good of their community.

All women in Women's Country are encouraged to be innovators. For example, Stavia is allowed to choose to study medicine. She is also given the opportunity to go on an exploration expedition. After she leaves Marthatown, beginning her expedition of discovery, Stavia encounters Holyland and is subjected to its violation of women. She attempts to bring new ideas to Holyland but inhabitants are unable to accept them. Stavia discovers that she is not able to sacrifice herself for the inhabitants of Holyland because she is not originally of that society; she is only able to sacrifice herself for her own country. Being the innovator that she is, however, she does incite Susannah Brome of Holyland to try to become a martyr, to choose a life of suffering for the good of those around her. Unfortunately, Susannah is not able to accept the role, killing herself instead, unable to live any longer in Holyland under its atrocious rules.

The women are the only figures in Women's Country who can be innovators. They see the devastation caused by the weapons of an earlier human culture in the desolations left by nuclear war, and these women are determined to keep it from happening again. To do this, they

have created a number of rules to govern the lives of all inhabitants. These rules include forcing men to make the decision as to whether or not they wish to be warriors. Before she begins her medical training, Stavia is told of the consequences of the men who choose a life of war. Her mother tells her,

“Warriors can’t have doctors. And they must fight at close range, not at a distance. And they must see their own blood and the blood of their fellows, and they must care for their own dying and see their pain. It’s part of the choice they have to make.” (Tepper 111)

These men who choose to go to battle make the choice knowing that they will see the effects of their actions, knowing also that they will be denied medical care with the rationale that if men desire to kill each other, they must also expect to die.

The women of the councils also limit the information and technology to which the warriors have access. Even as children, Stavia and the other girls are taught

It could be dangerous for a warrior to know too much about certain things. Metallurgy, for instance. A warrior might obtain an unfair advantage if he had learning that other warriors didn’t. Out of loyalty to his garrison, a warrior might make some device which could return them to the time of convulsions [nuclear weapons]. Only equal match

between warriors at arm's length could decide things fairly without imperiling others, without threatening devastation.

(Tepper 73)

For these reasons, primarily the repetition of the wars and destruction of the planet, men are kept in ignorance—the women choose the saving of life over foolishly giving the warriors the ability to end the human race.

The women of Women's Country expect to be partners in the development and maintenance of Women's Country. They expect to have rights at least equal to, if not greater than, those the warriors enjoy.

They are provided better education; Stavia, for example, at ten years of age begins what is called "women's studies" which involves "management, administration, sexual skills" (Tepper 21), skills that she will rely upon when she reaches maturity. These skills will also help her determine her place in society, an ability crucial to the women of the community because they are valued for their abilities and capabilities.

In *The Gate to Women's Country*, the women living in Women's Country are able to demand the right to be equals in bed. They have the right to enjoy the love-making, the right to be lovers. They choose those with whom they will spend carnival (the two times of the year warriors and women come together to enjoy each other's company, in and out of bed). The rights of women to have a say in their sexual encounters are protected by the laws of Women's Country. Stavia discusses the views about sex she has been taught in Women's Country. She and her secret

warrior-companion Chernon have set off on an exploration of land outside of Women's Country. Not understanding Stavia really is venturing out to collect information, Chernon expects that she has created this opportunity for them to become intimate and takes Stavia almost roughly. Stavia addresses the situation almost immediately, telling Chernon,

“I'm not some girl you've seduce out to a Gypsy camp for your pleasure. The pleasure is supposed to be mutual. That means we both work at it and are careful of one another's feelings...it can't go on unless it's enjoyable for both of us...that wouldn't be fair to either of us.” (Tepper 210-11)

Stavia demands what is her right, as she has been taught by the ordinances created by wise women of her cultures' past, while a somewhat confused Chernon awkwardly tries to become the kind of lover she wants. Stavia is familiar with those women of the past who understood the rights women have in relationships, who came to realize that men like the warriors might take away those rights if women don't stand up for themselves as Stavia does.

Women must make choices regarding motherhood. For the most part they are able to determine when they will conceive, being able to wait until they feel they are ready. They also must keep in mind that the choice they are making has implications of their future, particularly if

they have sons. Morgot makes this point quite clear when she tells Stavia of her own experiences, saying,

“You bear a son. When he’s still a baby, you think of losing him when he’s five. You grieve. You get over it. Then the day comes that your son is five and goes to his warrior father. You grieve. You heal. Then, every time he comes home for carnival, it’s like ripping the wound open again. Each time you heal. And then, when he’s fifteen, maybe he chooses to stay in the garrison, and you grieve again. You lie awake at night with your eyes burning and your pillow wet. You choke on tears and they burn. You worry about his going into battle, being wounded, dying. Every battle means...every battle means someone dies.” (Tepper 61)

The women who bear children must know what happens if they have sons, and they are forced to make choices that may cause them pain emotionally. This comes from need of people to make their own choices; these women put the rights of their sons to make choices above their own mothers’ breaking hearts. Stavia experiences such heartache when she decides to bear the son of Chernon, knowing she will eventually have to give his keeping over to his father at the garrison.

The controlling members of the Women’s Country councils take on an even greater maternal role when it comes to the creation of new life within the walls of cities, as Stavia begins to understand after returning

from Holyland. She learns that each city has its own council that determines whose bloodlines will continue. These councils have developed breeding programs, eugenics programs that bring together the technology that was so destructive in *We* and *Brave New World* and the nature that is eventually discovered in *Anthem*. The eugenics programs developed in Women's Country were developed to promote life by cultivating the peacefulness and harmony the ruling women believed were inherent in all humans. Some individuals, however, manage to successfully repress these feelings to the point that they are able to only revel in states of conflict. These people, these warriors, live only for the moment, live to see blood spilled and answer to no one other than themselves. It is warriors such as these that threaten to send Women's Country in the direction of Holyland—threatening to make Women's Country into a place of fear and hopelessness, a place of damnation.

In Holyland, Tepper shows how devastation can result from the repression of women. If women are not allowed to develop their potential, to make their own choices, the result will be the end of humanity. Even if women are forced to take on the roles that make up a martyr, the future of that society is doomed to fail, simply because the roles are not chosen willingly.

The women of Women's Country, Marthatown in particular, demonstrate how encouraging women to meet their potential provides for humankind the opportunity to be saved from itself. The women of

Women's Country have identified the earlier causes of destruction, connecting the desolations to the pre-convulsive weapons, and take steps to prevent the re-occurrence of those evils. This they do by promoting nature, by "pushing at the desolations. Some of the new towns are close to the edge. There is much empty land, true, but little of it is good for farming" (Tepper 143). These women make difficult choices, but those choices will affect the lives of many people.

Women also look toward the future by denying the warriors medical attention in times of war, thus allowing the more destructive men to kill themselves off. By the women having the power to repress information and action as needed, better choices are made—choices that will allow for the continuation of the human species. So, as women take on the responsibilities of martyrs, they are able to provide for the future.

Although Stavia is seen as the literal martyr of Women's Country, other women take their stances as well and many have decided their land will not fall to the pre-convulsive ways; they will not allow the destructive technology humankind created to become a part of their world. Like Stavia, they refuse to let go of anything that might strip them of their individuality. They will take on the roles of innovator, bringing or returning knowledge that will help them develop as individuals and as a community. They will take on the role of partner and have a role to play in their own futures. They will take on the roles of lover as they demand the love and respect to which they are entitled. They will become the

figurative martyrs of their own families or of their communities as they help both continue to grow and progress.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Dystopic literature is, by its very definition, dark and desolate, its developments springing from stark industrialization and the mechanization that arose from the beginning of the twentieth-century. Many of the novels fitting into this genre seem to be acting as warnings for humanity, warnings against allowing the possibilities and potentials seen in mechanization take precedence over the importance of human life and individuality.

Although the works in the dystopic genre seem to share the overall sense of despair, they also share one other characteristic—they present a potential for hope, whether or not it is realized in the novel. The form this hope takes is that of women. Giving women certain choices allows for them to become martyrs, the saving graces of their communities, if they make the appropriate choices and agree to take on certain roles, either literally or figuratively—the roles of innovator, partner, lover, and mother.

The novels examined here, *We*, *Brave New World*, *Anthem*, and *The Gate to Women's Country*, all present opportunities for those choices that could eventually benefit humankind. The choices determine whether or

not the women in the novels might develop into martyrs. However, because the women in the novels have to choose their own paths in order to present hope to their communities, not all of the four novels end with the potential for a hope-filled future being realized.

Zamyatin's *We* ends on a somewhat ambiguous note. The roles that would potentially create a martyr are divided and taken up by two figures, O-90 and I-33-. While each woman takes her own course of action, those actions have an effect on D-503, who is unable to recognize the sacrifices the women make for what they are—keys to the salvation of the future. Unthinkingly, he and others like him refuse the gifts of these sacrifices and the novel ends with the hope embodied by I-300 rejected as she is tortured and put to death. Despair, however, is far from certain as pregnant O-90 escapes the confines of the society, but neither is hope certain. Zamyatin leaves it to his readers to imagine what happens to her after the novel closes.

The world of *Brave New World* is not as fortunate as that in *We*. In Huxley's World State, again the roles that would lead to martyrdom are divided, but the two women who are offered those roles are unable to make those difficult decisions that would promote hope. Linda, female progenitor of John Savage, is unable, because of her conditioning, to recognize her opportunity to become a mother to John and partner to any one of the men she beds. In similar manner, Lenina is not able to act on her urges because of her conditioning. Although she is drawn to

John Savage sexually, she hasn't the will to go against the concepts cultivated in her mind since birth. She is also unable to act as an innovator by sharing or promoting the lost ideas of love and devotion that John holds so dear. The novel ends with a sense of despair, as the man who creates these opportunities for Linda and Lenina, John Savage, is unable to reconcile the lack of hope he witnesses and his inability to create or promote any form of hope. Incapable of existing in such a world, John ends his life, signaling the end of hope for this society's future.

Rand's *Anthem* marks a noticeable change in the direction of dystopian literature. In *Anthem*, the four characteristics of innovator, partner, lover, and mother go in to the creation of a martyr are combined into one key female figure—Liberty 5-3000. *Anthem*'s main character, Equality 7-2521, presents the opportunities for Liberty to make the much-needed decisions that will promote hope as the two work to create a new world. Equality provides the opportunities for Liberty to reintroduce lost concepts to the world, becoming his partner in life, his lover, and a maternal figure not just to Equality who needs the assistance only she can provide, but also to her own children as well as a new humanity. In accepting those roles, Liberty becomes the one to provide hope for a new future, Gaea the earth mother.

Tepper brings together the two extremes found in the earlier dystopic novels. In *Holyland*, she provides a society in which the women are too

beaten down, or too controlled, to be able to choose anything but the suffering inflicted on them by their own society. Although the women of this community do suffer, it is not by their own choices and because they are not granted the choice, the suffering they go through leaves little hope for the future. If the women are not freely allowed to make decisions that may result in sacrifices, those acts become worthless. In the case of Susannah Brome, suicide does not become a stand she makes to try to promote change. For her suicide becomes an end to her own suffering—a slap in the face of her tormenter, her husband.

The foil Tepper uses to promote hope in *The Gate to Women's Country* is the society of Women's Country itself, run by women for the good of both genders. Because the women are in control of this society, they are able to demand the rights to make their own decisions. The choices Stavia makes, decisions that are terribly difficult, lead her to a life of potential suffering, and Stavia is willing to take the responsibility for her choices—she becomes innovator, partner, lover, and mother with the hope of providing a better future for the world.

The technologies humankind develops are not in themselves terrible or destructive, but the potential they have to overtake humanity can be disastrous. To maintain hope and secure the future more than merely effort is required. It requires that mechanization be kept in check. It requires beings capable of making decisions with their hearts as well as their heads, with an eye to the future instead of the moment. These

decisions are destined to make a difference for the good of humanity. In these dystopic novels, only the female characters are provided the chances to make these decisions, and even by refusing their own opportunities, they make decisions.

A literary genre originally seated in the dark and morose, the dystopian literature that began to flourish at the opening of the twentieth century has continued its growth, evolving into something more than merely a warning to humanity. This literature has started to offer a glimmer of hope in answer to the disaster some people believe mankind has permitted to come out of the industrialization of the world. Women seem to be the key figures in the struggle for hope, providing a future for the inhabitants of their communities by accepting the roles that have the potential to turn them into martyrs. As the genre continues to develop, no doubt a desire to see hope for a future will continue to be demonstrated, possibly bringing the genre full circle to its earliest beginnings in utopia, but with a more realistic stance—one that allows people to maintain individuality as well as the opportunities to make their own choices.

WORKS CITED

- Aldridge, Alexandra. *The Scientific World View in Dystopia*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research, 1984.
- Barratt, Andrew. "Revolution as Collusion: The Heretic and the Slave in Zamyatin's *My*." *SEER* 62.3 (1984): 344-361.
- Berner, Marie Louise. *Journey Through Utopia*. New York: Schocken, 1971.
- Cudden, J.A. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.
- Dervin, Dan. "Making Utopia Out of Dystopia: The Role of Men as Poison Containers in Radical Feminism." *The Journal of Psychohistory: Incorporating the Journal of Psychoanalytic Anthropology* 16.4 (1989): 427-443.
- Ginsburg, Mirra. Introduction. *We*. By Yevgeny Zamyatin. New York: HarperCollins, 1972. v-xx.
- Gurewich, David. "Zamyatin: A Heretic for All Times." *The New Criterion* December (1988): 21-34.
- Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World*. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.
- McCarthy, Patrick A. "Zamyatin and the Nightmare of Technology." *Science Fiction Studies* 11(1984): 122-129.

- Mihailescu, Calin Andrei. "Mind the Gap: Dystopia as Fiction." *Style* 25.3 (1991): 211-222.
- Moxnes, Paul. "Deep Roles: Twelve Primordial Roles of Mind and Organization." *Human Relations* 52-11 (1999): 1427-1444.
- O'Brien, Patrick K. (ed.). *Philip's Atlas of World History*. London: George Philips Limited, 1999.
- Osherow, Michele. "The Dawn of a New Lilith: Revisionary Mythmaking in Women's Science Fiction." *NWSA Journal* 12.1 (2000).
- Paul, David. "Man A Machine." *Apocalypse Culture*. Venice, CA: Feral House, 1990. 130-139.
- Peel, Ellen. "Utopian Feminism, Skeptical Feminism, and Narrative Energy." *Feminism, Utopia, and Narrative*. Eds. Libby Falk Jones and Sarah Webster Goodwin. Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1990. 34-49.
- Rand, Ayn. *Anthem*. New York: Signet, 1961.
- Sciabarra, Chris. "Ayn Rand." *American Writers: a collection of literary biographies*. Supplemental 4. Editor in chief Leonard Unger. New York: Scribner, 1996.
- . *Ayn Rand: The Russian Radical*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State, 1995.
- Snodgrass, Mary Ellen. *Encyclopedia of Utopian Literature*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1995.

Teeuwen, Ruud. *Dystopia's Point of No Return: A Team-Taught Utopia*

Class. New York: MLA, 1996.

Tepper, Sheri S. *The Gate to Women's Country*. New York: Doubleday,
1988.

Zamyatin, Yevgeny. *We*. Trans. Mirra Ginsburg. New York:
HarperCollins, 1972.

