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Fear and the Cisgender Audience: Transgender Representation and Audience Identification in *Sleepaway Camp*

Abstract

Identification can be read in a film text through the implied author and audience. Since most transgender films are created by cisgender authors for a cisgender audience, the point of identification is cisgender. Using the 1983 cult horror film *Sleepaway Camp* as a case study, I analyze how this point of identification leads to the film being constructed narratively and visually in line with a cisnormative ideology. The emotional response of fear prompted by the film is also in line with this ideology and contributes to negative attitudes and actions toward transgender people.

An image of transgender people that is well known to film audiences is that of a transgender woman with knife raised high, ready to plunge it into the unsuspecting body of a victim. Most memorable from the shower scene in *Psycho* (1960), similar images can be found in such films as *Dressed to Kill* (1980) and *Sleepaway Camp* (1983).[1] The fear felt by the audience comes not only from the shock of an unexpected event occurring but also from an unexpected encounter with the Other. Fear is the result of the Other coming too close and the accompanying turning away in order to protect oneself from harm.[2] The fear the audience experiences in transgender horror films reflects the cisgender lens through which the films are constructed and viewed, an approach that reinforces an ideology of cisnormativity.

Transgender people exist in a space of being familiar and unfamiliar at the same time. They are frequently positioned as abject in contemporary society, and in so doing, dominant cisgender society defines itself in opposition to that which it is not.[3] Accusations of deception extend from this familiar unfamiliarity and are an important aspect of the construction of the transgender characters in transgender horror films.[4] Because the characters are presented as actively hiding their transgender identities from others, it is implied that they must also be trying to deceive others, which in turn provides the justification for fearing them. The purpose of this article is to analyze the complex ways in which the characters in transgender horror films are constructed as objects of fear, focusing on the film *Sleepaway Camp*. In this 1983 cult horror film directed by Robert Hiltzik, Angela, a quiet girl who keeps to herself, is revealed to be a transgender girl after going on a murderous rampage at her summer camp.

Transgender films are generally constructed by cisgender authors—Alfred Hitchcock with *Psycho*, Neil Jordan with *The Crying Game* (1992), Kimberly Peirce with *Boys Don't Cry* (1999), and Sydney Pollack with *Tootsie* (1982) to name a few—for a cisgender audience.[5] This relationship between authors and audiences distances the transgender characters from the audience and limits the audience's understanding of actual transgender people.[6] The relationship between authors and audiences, as reflected in the film, can be understood through a rhetorical approach to identification. Rhetoric provides a useful means of analyzing the text itself through which the audience makes meaning about a film.[7] The films are constructed to elicit particular emotions from the cisgender audience, emotions that reflect cultural understandings of transgender people. In my analysis of *Sleepaway Camp* as an exemplar of transgender horror films, the emotion that is elicited is fear which shapes Angela's

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transgender identity through cisnormative ideology. The film *Sleepaway Camp* serves as the article's case study, but the narrative conventions and visual codes identified can be found across transgender horror films. I begin by discussing the approach to identification and emotion used in this article before analyzing the film itself.

Fear, Identification, and the Cisgender Audience

In a rhetorical approach, identification is not found with the characters or the camera but in the relationship between the implied author and audience. The author refers to all those who have a hand in the creation of a film (the director, cinematographer, editor, screenwriter, actors, etc.), and the audience refers to those members (not as individuals but as a group) of the undifferentiated mass audience to whom the author is trying to appeal.[8] The appeal is made across certain similarities between the author and audience that serve as the point of identification. A film is then constructed narratively and visually in line with the identification between author and audience within certain constraints like genre.

The approach to identification taken in this article is grounded in the rhetorical work of Kenneth Burke. For Burke, identification precedes persuasion and occurs across differences.[9] Two subjects, one of whom is attempting to persuade the other, search for real or perceived similarities through which to build persuasive arguments. In this process, which Burke labels "consubstantiation," differences persist while similarities are enhanced.[10] Audience members may have different backgrounds in terms of race, class, religion, sexual orientation, political leanings, etc. while still sharing a similarity with a film's author in terms of cisgender identity. This allows for a transgender film to be read in a way consistent with a cisnormative view on gender identity regardless of the other differences that may exist between a film's author and its audience.

Consubstantiation can be read through the text in the form of the first and second personae. According to Edwin Black, the first persona is the implied author and the second persona is the implied auditor or audience.[11] The first and second personae do not encompass everything about the author or the audience but instead reflect the image of her or himself the author wants to present and the ideal audience she or he envisions for the text. Individual filmgoers are complex people who hold a variety of positions on and understandings of gender identity. Despite the differences that exist within individual filmgoers, the film text is constructed for an ideal audience with the hopes that enough actual filmgoers identify with the text that the film will be successful. It is not necessary, for example, for a rhetorical analysis of a film text to identify the percentage of the authors or audience that identifies as cisgender to make an argument that the text is constructed according to a cisnormative view on gender identity. The images of the author and audience found in the text are intended to increase connection between the author and audience and the likelihood that the film will find an actual audience.

While identification between author and audience can help explain how films are constructed to appeal to an ideal audience, how do we account for the fact that films are generally constructed to reflect dominant ideologies? According to Sara Ahmed's work on affect, emotions function as a "form of cultural politics or world making."[12] Through contact with others, the "surfaces and boundaries" of our bodies take shape.[13] We come to understand who we are and who others are through the impressions left behind through our contact with others, so the emotions we experience and expect are shaped by dominant ideologies that regulate this contact.

Considering that transgender films are constructed by a cisgender author to appeal to a cisgender audience, being transgender is not the point of identification in the films. Being cisgender is the point of identification, and the narrative conventions and visual codes are constructed in line with this identification. These constructions are employed to elicit particular emotions from the audience in line with the point of identification. The emotions elicited by the films reflect an ideology of cisnormativity, "the rarely voiced assumption that all domains of sex and gender are consistent within individuals and across the lifecourse."[14] For example, at the end of *Sleepaway Camp*, Ronnie, the head camp counselor, cannot stop looking down at Angela's penis, demonstrating it to be the source of his fear rather than the fact that Angela is covered

in blood, hissing, and raising a knife above her head. Operating within a cisnormative ideology, Ronnie views gender in strict binary terms, and Angela's penis does not fit within that binary. It is not that the audience has come to identify with Ronnie as a character (the film does not give any of the characters much attention beyond their interactions with Angela and her cousin Ricky), but that the scene is constructed narratively and visually to reflect a cisnormative ideology that Ronnie represents in that moment. Identifying with the audience through being cisgender shapes the contact that the author and audience has with the transgender characters. The impressions that are left behind for the cisgender audience reflect the films' cisnormative ideology. In the case of transgender horror films, the impression is that transgender people are deceptive and dangerous.

The fear of transgender characters is built up in these films through the genre tropes of the horror film, particularly the focus on transformation.[15] The horror film "presupposes a *threat*, building tension with its promise that something hideous will occur, and there is no escape."[16] While for some scholars horror films ultimately confirm audience suspicions,[17] Altan Loker argues that the fear in these films is the result of the audience's guilt felt as the result of "conflicting wishes related to a story event that has morally acceptable and unacceptable components that are inseparable from each other."[18] Following Ahmed, fear is the anticipation of injury as a result of an encounter with the Other.[19] In order to contain the possibility of injury, the mobility of some bodies in space is restricted.[20] In the case of transgender horror films, the audience may have wished for the characters to face danger and death, and by aligning their emotional reaction with the films' cisnormative ideology, which tells them that the transgender character is the one they should fear, any guilt about such wishing is tempered. The transgender character must then be contained in order to assuage the audience's fear. Transgender people, as the object of fear in this case, must be restricted in their movements and expression of their identities (generally through incarceration, institutionalization, and murder) in order to reduce the possibility of fear, thus maintaining an ideology of cisnormativity.

The containment of the transgender character and the maintenance of cisnormativity are constructed in transgender horror films through the use of specific narrative conventions and visual codes. Narrative conventions include the characters being positioned as outsiders by cisnormative society, the characters killing the repressive agents of cisnormativity, and efforts at containment of the characters' transgender identities. Visual codes include the delayed revelation of the characters' transgender identities, the onscreen unmasking of their identities, and looks of fear in reaction to their identities. Efforts to maintain cisnormativity through positioning the transgender character as the object of fear are evident from an analysis of *Sleepaway Camp*, which was chosen for the ways it exemplifies the narrative and visual construction of transgender horror films and because its status as a cult film has limited its critical analysis.

Fear and Identification in *Sleepaway Camp*

Angela is labeled as an outsider as soon as she arrives at summer camp with her teenage cousin Ricky. Shy and quiet, lacking the hyperactive energy of the children or intense sexuality of the other teenagers at the camp, the first impression of Angela by Meg, her counselor, upon her arrival at the bunk they will be sharing for the entire summer is to say sarcastically, "Looks like we got a real winner here." From that moment, the film positions Angela as separate from the other girls in the bunk. When Angela refuses to eat her dinner the first night, Ronnie, the head camp counselor, takes her to the kitchen to find her something else to eat. Meg views this as special treatment, saying to Ronnie, "Startin' to spoil the little brat already." In describing Angela as a "little brat," Meg makes it clear that she sees Angela as receiving special treatment through behavior that differs from that of the other campers and intensifies her efforts to make Angela feel isolated from those around her. By narratively positioning Angela as an outsider and then revealing her to be the killer, the film signifies that the turning away of fear is a necessary response for the cisgender audience to protect itself.

Angela's mistreatment at being perceived as different goes beyond just being called names or made fun of. It starts at dinner the first night when one of the cooks tries to sexually assault her when she is left alone with him after refusing to eat. She is

rescued by Ricky but comes back later to get revenge on the cook by dumping an industrial size pot of boiling water on him. The targets of the violence in transgender horror films, like the cook, are the repressive agents of cisnormativity. As a cisgender man, the cook fully bought into the idea that it was his right to have his way sexually with any woman he chose, even a teenage camper, and he tried to force Angela to conform to his beliefs about gender by sexually assaulting her.

The murders in *Sleepaway Camp* follow this pattern of being directed at those who attempt to make Angela conform to the standards of cisnormativity.[21] Angela is particularly mistreated for failing to embody the sociability expected of young women. She does not say a word until thirty minutes into the film when she talks to Ricky's friend Paul after he is nice to her. She continues to talk almost exclusively to Paul and Ricky, completely ignoring frequent taunts by Meg and Judy. While Angela's inability to talk is interpreted by many of the characters as the result of some form of mental handicap, she keeps score of who mistreats her and exacts her revenge in a series of brutal murders. She drops a hornet's nest in the bathroom stall in which she has locked the ringleader of a group of teenage boys who hit her with water balloons, and she drowns another boy in the lake after he made fun of her when she ignored his invitation to join him and his friends skinny dipping. Her murder of Meg makes an allusion to *Psycho* with Meg showering alone in an abandoned bunk. The expectation is that Angela will fling the shower curtain open but, instead, she stabs Meg in the back through the partition between the shower stalls. Angela saves her most gruesome murder for Paul, who she is initially friendly with but with whom she becomes upset after he tries to make a move on her and then is caught kissing Judy during a game of capture the flag. Angela asks Paul to meet her on the beach by the lake for a late night rendezvous. When two of the camp counselors find her later, she seems to be cradling Paul's head on her lap while singing to him but when she stands up, Paul's decapitated head falls to the ground.[22]

The taunting and bullying Angela endures is rooted in her refusal to conform to the norms of the camp; she does not act like the other kids and is tormented for it. Her violent attacks on the other campers are motivated by the demands that she conform and the bullying she receives for her failure to comply. Judy's taunts are particularly upsetting to Angela, as they hit fairly close to her transgender identity: "Hey, Angela? How come you never take showers when the rest of us do? Oh, I know what it is. You haven't reached puberty yet. Is that it? I bet you don't even have your period!" She saves Judy for next to last among her victims, killing her just before Paul. The only characters to survive her violent rampage are the ones who do not pressure her to conform.

Sleepaway Camp offers an example of an extreme response to the type of abuse many transgender people are forced to endure on an almost daily basis. Verbal harassment and physical attacks are a common, almost daily experience for most transgender people in the United States, particularly transgender people of color. Generally, they do not respond by trying to murder their assailants. Suicide is a much more common response to bullying and abuse. However, because of the frequency with which cisgender people harass transgender people, Angela's fictive response of a murder spree increases the fear of transgender people for the cisgender audience who worry that they may become the next target. Rather than inspiring pity for her mistreatment, Angela's murders only increase the fear the cisgender audience feels toward her and other transgender people.

Having evoked a feeling of fear in the cisgender audience, the film must now work to contain Angela's violent rampage. Most efforts at containment come at the end of a transgender horror film, but in *Sleepaway Camp*, the containment effort comes at the very beginning. The film begins with a series of long tracking shots moving left to right of an abandoned summer camp paired with sounds of children playing heard on the soundtrack, echoes of happier times. As the ominous score builds in the background, the camp buildings show more signs of disrepair (broken doors, mattresses on the lawn) before the camera comes to rest on a notice from the sheriff posted on the front gate and a board with "For Sale" nailed over the sign for Camp Arawak. Despite the rampage that Angela is about to embark on, the audience can rest easy knowing that everything is taken care of in the end, though not without requiring the entire camp to be shut down.

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While Angela's murder spree may be narratively contained, it must first be shown visually for the audience. In keeping with the horror tradition of waiting until the end of the film to reveal the identity of the killer, Angela's identity as the killer is also saved for the end, requiring the audience to "rewind" the events of the film in order to understand them in light of this new information.[23] Angela's transgender identity is not fully developed in the film's narrative but is presented visually as a shocking twist for the audience. *Sleepaway Camp* uses a series of point of view shots to obscure the identity of the killer. Many of the murders are viewed from Angela's point of view, with the audience watching from her perspective as she enacts her vengeance. The point of view shot always cuts away to reveal the aftermath of the murder; the film may want to obscure the identity of the killer but not the gruesomeness of her murders. A recurring device associated with the use of the point of view shot is the victims only referring to the killer as "you," demonstrating knowledge of who the killer is but not giving away Angela's identity to the audience. After the audience gets its first real look at the killer as she comes to kill Judy in a dark bunk, the point of view shot is used again and is combined with Judy never saying Angela's name to make the audience doubt their certainty about the identity of the killer.

The fear that is produced from the delayed reveal once again reinforces the audience's turning away from the character. Fear indicates that the Other has gotten too close for comfort,[24] such as seeing a character on a large screen as the focus of a narrative. Delaying the revelation of Angela's identity as the killer increases the audience's anxiety. By combining the revelation of the killer with the revelation of her transgender identity, Angela's transgender identity then becomes the object of the audience's fear. Fear often transfers the emotion from the subject who experiences the emotion to the object of the emotion so that the object is then viewed as the cause of the emotion.[25] Angela becomes the cause of the audience's fear rather than the object of it. When Angela is finally seen covered in blood, hissing, and holding a knife ready to stab the camp counselors, the audience's fear reinforces cisnormative ideology that positions transgender people as outside the norms and to be feared for existing outside of the norms, removing any possibility of sympathy and understanding for a character like Angela. This lack of understanding is reinforced when it is made clear visually that this revelation of identity is not by choice.

The onscreen unmasking of a transgender character generally comes at the climax or end of a film as she or he is about to kill or is threatening to kill another character. Angela's unmasking comes at the end of her murder spree when the two camp counselors find her naked on the beach cradling Paul's head in her lap. When she stands up, Paul's decapitated head falls to the ground, and she turns to face them, hissing, knife raised, and covered in blood. The camera pulls back to reveal her penis, and Ronnie exclaims, "How can it be? God, she's a boy!" Angela's visual unmasking ensures that her transgender identity cannot be explained away.

The onscreen unmasking of Angela's transgender identity is all done visually with the audience clearly seeing her penis. The visual unmasking of a transgender character is important for the maintenance of cisnormative control. The manner with which Angela's transgender identity is revealed is evidence of this need to maintain control; the shocking twist built through the revelation of her transgender identity is not constructed to leave the audience guessing but to provide definitive proof. The fact that the unmasking is visual supports this need for proof. If the audience only learned about Angela's transgender identity through the narrative without ever seeing the proof for themselves, certain members of the audience could choose to disbelieve this information and decode the film in an alternative way. Cisnormative control depends on few variations from the preferred reading in the decodings of audience members, so visual proof is offered that is more difficult to read against. Cisnormativity demonstrates its control by not allowing Angela to keep her identity a secret. This revelation serves to maintain the status quo; cisnormativity is in control, and Angela is exposed and violated. Angela's exposure is also a byproduct of the audience's fear.

Clear images of transgender characters as objects of fear abound in transgender horror films. These films make use of the visual conventions of the horror genre to present the transgender characters as individuals the cisgender audience is supposed to fear. At the end of *Sleepaway Camp*, Ronnie and

Susie discover Angela on the beach where she has killed Paul. She stands up covered in blood, her hair and eyes wild, making a hissing noise, with her bloody knife at the ready. Susie screams and covers her eyes, but Ronnie's gaze keeps alternating between Angela's face and her penis. It is clear from his gaze that he is just as terrified of the fact that Angela has a penis as he is that she has killed Paul and a number of other people at the camp. What is visually terrifying about Angela is not just that she is a killer, but that she is a *trans woman* killer. Transgender womanhood becomes, in this sense, just another movie monster costume, with wigs, dresses, makeup, and hidden penises taking the place of Jason's mask or Freddy Krueger's clawed glove.

Conclusion

Transgender horror films are constructed for an assumed cisgender audience. The transgender characters are presented narratively in these films as violent, unstable individuals, and it is easy for the cisgender audience to decode the messages of the films as applying to transgender individuals in general. Rather than ending the films by arguing that the transgender characters are not as dangerous as presented, transgender horror films instead communicate the message that the transgender characters are well under control by cisnormative society. It is not just the violent tendencies of the transgender characters that are under control but their transgender identities entirely. Cisnormativity is challenged directly through the violent actions of the characters in these films, but it emerges unscathed. Audience members can leave the theater rest assured that any individuals who deviate from cisnormativity's standards will likewise be contained.

The visual construction of the films also distances the transgender characters from the audience and reinforces the cisnormative identification that exists between the cisgender author and audience for the films. Catching only brief glimpses of the characters' transgender identities prevents any understanding of their embodied experiences, while showing only fearful reactions to the revelations of their identities allows the audience to feel justified in their feelings of fear toward the characters and, by extension, transgender people in general. Visually representing transgender people only as horrifying monsters prevents the audience from viewing their transgender identities as legitimate. The cisgender lens through which transgender horror films are constructed by the authors and viewed by the audience limits understanding of what it means to be transgender and supports a cisnormative ideology.

Not much has changed in the representation of transgender people in film since *Sleepaway Camp* was released in 1983. Attitudes toward transgender people at the time of the film's release were extremely negative. The anti-transgender discourse found in works like Janice Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male* (1979) led many in the 1980s to see transgender identity in general as abnormal and transsexual surgery in particular as "a 'mutilating' practice."[26] While the contemporary cultural perception of transgender people has improved somewhat, recent efforts to restrict transgender people's access to restrooms consistent with their gender identities remind us of the persistence of anti-transgender attitudes.[27]

The persistence of these attitudes are also found in film. In M. Night Shyamalan's *Split* (2017), a man with multiple personalities kidnaps three young women. The film's trailer prominently features the antagonist dressed as a woman as a means of communicating the discomforting horror of the film through the presence of a seemingly transgender character. As the young women search for a way out of the cell in which the antagonist has imprisoned them, they plead with a woman whose feet they can see under the door for help. She walks toward the cell door, opens it, and then the camera pedestals up from her feet to her head which is revealed to be the bald head of the antagonist. Considering this scene in the trailer is the first indication of the antagonist's multiple personalities, the cisgender audience could easily assume the antagonist is a transgender woman and respond with the fear that has been elicited by other transgender horror films.

In order to disrupt this cisnormative ideology, the point of identification in transgender films must be shifted away from being cisgender. The transgender audience may always be too small to appeal to the film industry economically. There are, however, other identities that transgender people possess (family, friends, working people, romantic partners, etc.) that would allow for transgender

people to be featured. While identification is found between author and audience along one of these other lines, being transgender could then be another prominent part of the characters' identities. The shift in identification would allow for a large audience to still be attracted and create an emotional response from the audience that does not reflect an ideology oppressive toward transgender people.

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Notes

1. Other examples of transgender horror films include *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991), *Bad Education* (2004), *Split* (2017), and the sequels to *Sleepaway Camp*: *Sleepaway Camp II: Unhappy Campers* (1988), *Sleepaway Camp III: Teenage Wasteland* (1989), *Return to Sleepaway Camp* (2008), and *Sleepaway Camp IV: The Survivor* (2012). While not horror films, films like *The Crying Game* (1992) and *Ticked-Off Trannies with Knives* (2010) use a similar narrative and visual construction to elicit feelings of disgust rather than fear.
2. Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 65.
3. Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 2. Kristeva discusses this experience of encountering the abject thusly: "A massive and sudden emergence of uncanniness, which, familiar as it might have been in an opaque and forgotten life, now harries me as radically separate, loathsome. Not me. Not that. But not nothing, either." Kristeva recognizes the danger for many in dominant society of fully recognizing the abject: "On the edge of nonexistence and hallucination, of a reality that, if I acknowledge it, annihilates me. There, abject and abjection are my safeguards." Abjection is not simply a position into which undesirable people are placed but a way for those in the dominant group to protect themselves. Maintaining this distinction is important for many in the dominant group and why encountering the abject can be so troubling. For a particular focus on abjection as it relates to transgender people, see Robert Phillips, "Abjection," *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 1-2 (2014): 19-21.
4. Julia Serano, *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2007), 36. Accusations of deception allow for the blaming of transgender people's mistreatment on themselves thus protecting the status of those in the dominant group.
5. Directors like the ones named are just the most prominent examples of the authors of a film. Cinematographers, screenwriters, actors, producers, and anyone else involved in the creation of a film's content are also considered authors.
6. Ron Becker performs a similar analysis of the ways that a minority group is constructed in media representations to reflect the ideology of the dominant group in his analysis of gay and lesbian representation on television in the 1990s. Becker, *Gay TV and Straight America* (New Brunswich, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006), 188.
7. The meaning of a film can also be uncovered through analysis of a director or other author's intentions and through viewers' unique experiences of a film, but these meanings often differ from that found through an analysis of the text's construction. The rhetorical analysis found in this article is just one way that meaning can be made from a film.
8. Reference to the author here should not be conflated with the auteur in auteur theory since the author being discussed is the implied author in the text and not an actual person able to adopt a personal style.
9. Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1969), 21.
10. Ibid.
11. Edwin Black, "The Second Persona", in *Readings in Rhetorical Criticism*, 2nd ed., ed. Carl R. Burgchardt (State College, PA: Strata Publishing, 2000), 192.
12. Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics*, 12.
13. Ibid., 10.
14. Greta R. Bauer and Rebecca Hammond, "Toward a Broader Conceptualization of Trans Women's Sexual Health," *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality* 24, no. 1 (2015): 2.
15. Mark A. Graves and F. Bruce Engle, *Blockbusters: A Reference Guide to Film Genres* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 120.
16. Thomas M. Sipos, *Horror Film Aesthetics: Creating the Visual Language of Fear* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2010), 5.
17. Kendall R. Phillips, *Projected Fears: Horror Films and American Culture* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005), 5; R. Barton Palmer, "The Metafictional Hitchcock: The Experience of Viewing and the Viewing of Experience in *Rear Window* and *Psycho*," *Cinema Journal* 25, no. 2 (1986): 16.
18. Altan Loker, *Film and Suspense*, 2nd ed. (Victoria, BC: Trafford, 2005), 24.
19. Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics*, 65.
20. Ibid., 70.
21. This focus on the murders as reactions against cisnormativity is not intended to excuse Angela's violent actions but to provide a fuller picture of why certain characters are chosen as the targets. Focusing solely on Angela's actions ignores the role played by the dominant system of gender behavior in determining who is deviant and who is not. Angela's violent actions of could be avoided if

she was either fully accepted by society or left to her own devices.
22. Angela's relationship with Paul is particularly troubling for her because it brings back memories of catching her father with his male partner in bed. Having been forced to live as a girl by her eccentric aunt (thus having her transgender identity forced on her), Angela sees herself in many ways as gay while kissing Paul rather than as a straight transgender girl. Reawakening this confusion in her helps to explain Angela's extreme attack on Paul.
23. J. Jack Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 78-79.
24. Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics*, 65.
25. Ibid., 67.
26. Susan Stryker, *Transgender History* (Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2008), 110-111.
27. David A. Graham, "What's Behind the New Wave of Transgender 'Bathroom Bills,'" *The Atlantic*, Jan. 9, 2017, accessed Jan. 30, 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/states-see-a-new-wave-of-transgender-bathroom-bills/512453/