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Russian Body Politics: A Biopolitical Investigation of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Russia

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Abstract

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The purpose of this work is to analyze the HIV/AIDS epidemic from a biopolitical stance with a focus on body politics. Biopolitics is a term coined by Michel Foucault that refers to the "techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and control of populations as well as the set of mechanisms wherein the basic biological features of the human species become the object of a political strategy" (Stapleton and Byers, 1). In other words, bodies become the arena in which the government can exert social control. Body politics in this work refers to the interactions between the political, cultural, and social bodies and those those interactions affect the experiences of the somatic body. Bodies that deviate from the national standards are deemed "abnormal" and are subsequently subject to stigmatization against a value system purported by the government. This work deals with how the state strives to create ideal bodies alongside the creation of abnormal bodies, bodies possessing qualities or demonstrating behaviors aberrant to the state's desired vision of itself. This work positions its analyses on three abnormal groups - female prostitutes, homosexuals, and intravenous drug users - and analyzes their creation by an examination of the culture and laws that govern these bodies throughout the Imperial, Soviet, and Post-Soviet eras. The similarities in experiences suggest that the creation of abnormal bodies is a methodological one. This work proposes that HIV+ individuals is the state's most recent construct of abnormal. This investigation proposes a theoretical framework it dubs "the surgical approach" to better understand how the state deals with abnormal bodies. What emerges is this notion that the extensive censorship of abnormal bodies makes these groups largely invisible from the public view, suggesting a "social eugenics" project orchestrated by the state that is not implausible given Russia's history of erasure of people, as seen during Stalin's term. Analyses of the conditions that made our abnormal groups most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS is imperative because research demonstrates that associated stigmatization has direct adverse health effects. An investigation like present study that recognizes the effect culture plays is necessary to fully comprehend the epidemic.

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Table of Contents

Introduction

With over a staggering 1.5 million reported cases, the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Russia has soared to critical and alarming heights. The public awareness of the disease emerged on the heels of the post-Soviet transition in 1991 and its virulence escalated in tandem with a host of other social ills, such as heightened mortality, alcoholism, and drug abuse; however, what sets the HIV/AIDS crisis apart is its retrograde development. Relative to other European nations where incidences of infection have become virtually negligible, infection rates in Russia are *increasing* and increasing fast. To attribute the crescendo of the disease to factors limited to the twentieth century would be a gross trivialization. This work posits that the elements that helped precipitate the dramatic upshot of HIV/AIDS within recent years trace back centuries and are embedded in the literary and visual culture of its Imperial heritage. While a prodigious amount of research has been undertaken to characterize its nature vis-à-vis epidemic scope and trajectory, few studies have attempted to explain the soaring rates of the disease from within a cultural context. Combating the adverse effects of this epidemic requires a multidimensional strategy that does not neglect analysis of the essential human quality of disease and illness. Collected experience suggests that a culture-oriented approach, one that takes into consideration the diverse lifestyles and values of its populace, is crucial for implementing interventions and harm reduction programs that promote long-term behavioral changes (UNAIDS 2003). Culture is deeply intertwined with Russia national identity and may offer novel insights into this perplexing epidemic.

One theoretical framework that is useful in this analysis is the biopolitcal framework. Perhaps one of the most influential thinkers of his time, Michel Foucault pioneered the term "biopolitics" in his work *History of Sexuality*, which he defined as the "explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and control of populations as well as the set of mechanisms wherein the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy" (140; Stapleton and Byers, 1). The terms biopolitics and body politics are often used interchangeably, for both place the experiential aspect of the body as their primary locus of study. Body politics in this work refers in particular to the interactions of the various bodies within the polity (e.g. political, social, and cultural

bodies) and how those interactions each shape the experiences of the somatic body, particularly the expressions of sexuality and reproduction (**Fig. 1a).**

An understanding of the "body" is not a ubiquitous understanding by any means. It is imperative to define the body in operational terms. Kathleen Canning writes extensively on the term and suggests that bodies can be examined in multiple contexts. There is the social body as a whole; bodies rendered rhetorically and visually; bodies as "sites of experiences – for example, wounds and pregnancy – that indelibly shape them"; and finally, bodies as "objects of regulation by the state and other institutions" (Stapleton & Byers, 3). Accepting the breadth of the term allows us to better understand the mechanisms of control employed by the modern state system because the body serves as the vehicle by which biopolitical power is exercised (Stapleton & Byers, 2). In other words, the body becomes another arena in which government can exert social control by imposing physiological metrics in domains such as reproduction, sexuality, as well as physical and mental health, to name a few biopolitcal concerns (Stapleton & Byers, 2). These metrics allow for rapid identification of individuals who possess qualities that are contrarian to national ideals. Stapleton and Byers comment on how these biological qualities come to be politicized:

> "[These metrics make] possible the ability to better analyze and regulate ("govern") individuals and society as a whole and involving processes of 'correction, exclusion, normalization, disciplining, therapeutics, and optimization… biological aspects of society, and the biology of individual members of society, have come to be carefully managed by the state for its own ends…states have been and remain concerned with the management of populations to produce order and stability as well as managing an expanding population base from which state power can grow" (1-2)

Several key points may be extrapolated from this approach. First, the degree to which the body may be regulated by the state has been an issue hotly debated throughout the twentieth century. Biopolitics is concerned with regulation of "the behaviors and bodies of ever larger populations with the goal of transforming them into 'manageable subjects'" (Crary, 15). Foucault underscores this notion of manageability, or "governmentality, as he calls it. He describes it as the enterprise between officials and experts that promotes "particular models of health and personal behavior" through a multi-tiered "ubiquitous" system of surveillance and regulation of individuals within the sociopolitical body. The

disciplinary component is a critical aspect of biopolitical and social control. Biopolitics as a conceptual framework has proven to be a robust tool in deepening analyses from a wide variety of disciplines such as biotechnology to science fiction (Stapleton & Byers, 4-5). Makarychev & Yatsyak (2017) elucidate that "national identity making necessarily implies *disciplinary practices* of *controlling* and *regulating* human lives as a precondition for aggregating a population into a *single collective body*" (italics mine, 1). The creation of collective identity and by extension, national identity, is contingent upon harmony between each of the bodies within the polity. A manageable and functioning collective body may thus be understood as the pièce de résistance of biopolitics that bolsters visions of unity and positive national identity. Biopolitical strategies employed by the state serve to realize visions of a whole, collective body which is diagnostic of a functioning and healthy nation.

Regulation via surveillance of bodies is a hallmark biopolitical strategy. Alain Corbain reflects that the need to surveil bodies conveys the need to "enclose in order to observe, to observe in order to know, to know in order to supervise and control" (Corbain, 16). This work investigates surveillance by means of the gaze in shaping civic responses by bringing to visibility the bodies that demonstrate behaviors or qualities that offend societal values and undermine the collective identity **(Fig. 1b)**. The theme of the gaze is not merely a function of the somatic body, but is also a political and social enterprise. Bodies subject to such visibility are scrutinized against national ideals and undergo multiple tiers of regulation to rectify these offensive qualities. That said, the gaze operates by identifying "abnormal bodies" in order to regulate them. Official gaze emanating from the political body exercises governmental regulation of abnormal bodies by imposing laws that vitiate whatever legal sanctions permitted and/or protected these bodies and their activities. It aims to move abnormal bodies away from the visibility for fear of the deviant behavior or quality "spreading" to the otherwise "healthy" social body. Whenever deviant act is considered by the surveying gaze to be a pathology, the fear that the deviant quality will "infect" the masses is one principal concern of the political body. By contrast, the public gaze emanating from the social body functions via self-regulation in such a manner that the experience indicates that states are not what regulate the people, but it is *people* who regulate people. Public gaze polices abnormal

bodies on an individual level and oftentimes begets the stigmatization these groups endure. The principal aim of the gaze in bringing abnormal groups to public and official visibility is to normalize and compartmentalize them into the admittedly narrow spectrum of such biopolitical metrics that their abnormality is effaced and that they may be ideally "returned" to fill the "incomplete" collective body which their abnormality sets them apart from. In other words, abnormal bodies are removed from the collective body and are subjected to editing to make them better resemble the collective. Bodies are shaped to be "reproductive, productive, disciplined, fit, homogenous, normalized" as per Stapleton & Byers. Understanding the biopolitical tactics that mold citizens to serve as ideal exemplars of the nation is one mission of this investigation, for the creation of ideal bodies inadvertently, but critically, relies on the construction of abnormal bodies.

To further characterize regulation, it is important to clarify deviance as it relates to this investigation. The immediate political response to deviance is usually tighter regulation and enforcement of rules (e.g. discipline) to mitigate deviant behavior. Howard Saul Becker offers an invaluable nuance to his definition of deviance in his work *Outsiders:*

> "…deviance is created by society. I do not mean this is in the way that it is ordinarily understood, in which the causes of deviance are located in the social situation of the deviant or in 'social factors' which prompt his action. I mean, rather, that *social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance* and by applying those rules to particular persons and labelling them as outsiders. From this point of view, deviance is *not* a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an 'offender'. The deviant is one to whom the label has been successfully applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label" (Becker, 8-9)

What Becker emphasizes is the notion of relativity. Deviance is not a "fixed" quality inherently present or absent in certain acts or behaviors. Becker tersely observes: "Whether an act is deviant…depends on how other people react to it" (ibid, 13). What must be understood, too, is the influence that societal values have in characterizing deviance. "Manageable" populations tend to be collective in the sense that they work to promote sociopolitical values and thus punish abnormal bodies whose deviant behaviors subvert these values. An understanding of deviance is critical because the emergence of deviant behavior conveys a breakdown in social controls that work to obviate such breakdowns. These breakdowns project a subpar

image of the society that withstands them (ibid, 59). Thus, quelling by active social control the acts, behaviors, or bodies labeled as deviant which otherwise tarnish a society's idealized vision of itself becomes imperative in securing a collective and positive national identity.

Overview of the Russian HIV/AIDS epidemic

There is much dispute about the date of the first incidence of HIV/AIDS in Russia. The first reported case in the Soviet Union was as early as 1975 with an official diagnosis completed in 1984. Other sources cite that the first officially documented case was actually in 1987 because reports of earlier diagnoses were allegedly expunged. Just one year later, professor Andrei Kozlov documented the first death from AIDS. That same year, the first mother-to-child transmission case was observed when a baby was posthumously diagnosed with the AIDS. A few desultory outbreaks were observed during the initial stages of the epidemic. In 1989, a hospital in Elista, Kalymkia witnessed rapid spread of infection when the medical negligence of hospital staff who failed to sterilize syringes and catheters resulted in the infection of over 75 children and four mothers. The investigation was prompted by the death of a child who was later determined to have been infected in the hospital. Infected children were subsequently transferred to medical centers in Volgograd, Stavropol, and Rostov-on-Don but factual data on the disease was limited, and thus ignorance helped propagate the spread of over hundreds of new cases – by 1990, over 270 children were registered as having the human immunodeficiency virus in the their blood, or as HIV+ (Salkova 2016).

It is critical to note that these early infections were in part due to Russian contact with foreigners. The first man to have died from AIDS in 1988 was an engineer who was sent to Tanzania to aid in an industrial construction project wherein he worked as a translator at a Russian embassy. He acquired HIV through sexual intercourse abroad and it was asserted that he was responsible for spreading the disease to the 25 individuals he had been intimate with that year. Similarly, another Russian man acquired HIV through extramarital sexual intercourse with local women in Congo, having travelled there on business, and then unknowingly infected his wife upon his return to Russia. His wife, coincidentally, gave birth to a child in a hospital in Elista during the years of the initial outbreaks (Salkova 2016). In spite of these initial

transmission events, infection rates remained relatively low until the mid-1990's. One could argue that Russia was altogether in an advantageous position because while other countries grappled with soaring HIV/AIDS cases during the 1980's, Russia's relative geographic and political isolation mitigated possible outbreaks (Pape, 85). Because of the rise in infection rates occurring after Russia opened its political borders, many had come to regard HIV/AIDS as a disease of the West that had no origin or place in Russia.

Consequently, one of the most distinctive features of the Russian HIV/AIDS epidemic became its alarming virulence. Fewer than 1,000 cases were officially registered in 1995, but a little over twenty years later in 2016, as many as 1 million to 1.5 million individuals live with the disease (Osborn 2016). Another interesting aspect is the disease's permeation into the heterosexual population. According to Vadim Pokrovsky, head of the Russian Federal AIDS Center, approximately over 40% of cases were linked to heterosexual sex with only 1.5% of cases being linked to homosexual sex (Osborn 2016). In **Fig. 1c**, we see HIV incidence rates – defined as newly diagnosed cases in a certain time period – mounting up until 2001 and decreasing sharply before slow and steady increase from 2004 onwards. Some attribute this decrease to improved awareness and prevention programs. Others, such as Bobrik and Twigg in a 2006 study, speculate that HIV transmission is "moving beyond isolated high-risk groups into the general population, which can explain the slower, but continuous spread of HIV" (Pape, 63). HIV/AIDS is widely regarded as a disease that affects those who engage in deviant behaviors and for a long time many Russians believed – erroneously – that it does not affect those who engage in normative heterosexual behaviors. With the recent upsurge of HIV positive diagnoses in heterosexual populations, officials were hard-pressed to find solutions to a disease that they believed was domiciled only in the bodies on the fringes of society.

To date, both unsafe sex and intravenous drug use are recognized as the primary mode of HIV/AIDS transmission. The increase in HIV/AIDS infection rates observed in the mid-1990s was driven primarily by contaminated needle sharing in Russia's affluent and cosmopolitan regions such as Irkutsk, St. Petersbug, and Kaliningrad. These urban centers were often hubs for drug dealers, and thus "explosive

spread" characterized the pervasive nature of the outbreaks. Between the month of August to September 1996, HIV incidence within the city soared from one to over 100 per month. Investigative teams concluded that injecting drugs from a single contaminated needle was the source of the outbreak. It is no surprise that drug users' age bracket, which is an activity most often engaged in by young people, is not too far off from the average age of HIV+ diagnosis. According to a study by UNAIDS in 2006, the average age range of HIV+ people is between 14-30 years old, and the average age of death for HIV+ Russians is only 32.2 years old (Pape, 64). As observed by Ulla Pape and also critical to this particular investigation: "The epidemic mainly strikes Russian adults in their prime working age" (Pape, 64). Although intravenous drug users (IDUs) constitute the most vulnerable group to HIV/AIDS, sex workers and men who sleep with men are also heavily stigmatized in Russian society as the primary hosts of the disease. To be both HIV+ as well as a member of these groups (namely prostitutes, homosexual, or IDUs) results in *double stigmatization* that creates significant barriers to proper healthcare, such as access to treatment. Thus, it is no coincidence that HIV is predominantly domiciled in the bodies of abjectly stigmatized groups. Yale epidemiologist Robert Heimer observes that some members in the Russian government view vulnerable groups as "not redeemable and not worthwhile human beings" and therefore are not worth saving (Gilderman 2013). This response evinces the harrowing reality that marginalization of these bodies, bodies clearly vulnerable – isolated, stigmatized, and infected – existed long before an HIV+ diagnosis would surface. Bodies that are vulnerable are at risk for stigmatization by various entities, and as this work will explore, stigmatization creates significant barriers to healthcare for those who are stigmatized.

Methodology

The purpose of this work is to offer a biopolitical framework with a focus on body politics to better understand the Russian HIV/AIDS crisis that takes into account the profound effects culture has on influencing behavior and attitudes towards vulnerable bodies. These vulnerable groups represent "abnormal" bodies that are at variance with the state's desired representation of itself and are thus subject to various modes of regulation to curb their behavior. How different organizations manipulate literary and

visual culture to forward enforce and reinforce their platforms, to antagonize or elevate these bodies, is a complex narrative spanning through centuries of Russia's cultural history, and it is this aspect of the diseased bodies that will be addressed in our investigation.

This work is organized chronologically in three major time periods – Imperial, Soviet, and post-Soviet. Each chapter begins with a historical overview relating the era's working understanding of bodies. These introductory portions raise key questions of biopolitics such as how the body is manipulated, what the body represents, and how this influences our understanding of the nation of Russia as a whole. Thus, analyses of the laws governing abnormal bodies will necessarily exclude discussion of culture, for both often reflect off of one another. For example, the profuse amount of dissemination of literature in a certain tradition may be due to relaxed enforcement of censorship, as was observed in the flowering of literature in the homoerotic tradition during the late Imperial era. Every chapter, therefore, delves into analyses of the cultural representations of and laws governing these abnormal bodies with a primary focus upon literary and visual culture. Literary culture indubitably encompasses a wide breadth of fictional and nonfictional works. Fictional sources include myths and folktales, short stories, poems, and novels from various literary traditions (Symbolist, Classical, Socialist Realist, e.g.). Nonfictional sources include autobiographies, letters, surveys, journals, and news articles. Visual culture comprises a vast range of disciplines with various mediums such as film, sculptures, paintings, illustrations, and posters, all constituting an important part of our investigation.

Interviews were conducted and the questions are listed in the Appendix. These interviews were conducted with native Russian students studying abroad in the United States to understand how they understand their identity as well as if and how their views about controversial issues such as HIV/AIDS are shaped by their dual identities of Westerners and Russians. Their opinions about the frequency and implications of prostitution, homosexuality, and drug use were surveyed as well and analyses of these interviews were conducted to assay trends in responses.

Chapter Overview

Chapter 1 delves into the conceptions of the ideal body as raised most provocatively by Decadent writer Vasily Rozanov (1856-1919) during the late Imperial era. Rozanov contended that an ideal body is one that expresses sexuality uninhibitedly and ascribes procreation as participation in the divine. Rozanov's vision of the ideal body as one not tainted by "mixing" of parts alludes to his racialist predispositions, to which he ascribes biological metrics when he analyzes what qualifies as a national ideal. Both he and Leo Tolstoy contribute to the discourse on the value of the collective body, and rudimentary notions about diseased parts and its relationship to the whole is explored as it relates to the physical somatic body and the metaphysical collective body. Investigation of the culture and laws of homosexuals and prostitutes reveals a moderate amount of tolerance and de facto legal freedom by the bodies of the polity. Finally, tripartite patriarchal entity is introduced as a force that regulates women's bodies.

Chapter 2 delves into the Soviet construction of the disease was an enemy of the state and fixation of channeling sexuality into creating productive and reproductive bodies. Women's bodies operate as tools of the state and show how women's bodies were defined, manipulated, and regulated during the initial years after the revolution and then after the Stalinist years leading up to the liberalizing *glasnost* period during the final years of the Soviet Union are explored. Homosexuals, who subvert Soviet pronatalist visions, are virtually excluded from the cultural canon and endure restrictive regulation. The primary emphasis of the chapter is upon the erasure of physical and legal safe space for abnormal bodies. Moreover, hygiene emerges as a key value during the Soviet era wherein the health of the individual is positively correlated with the health of the nation.

Chapter 3 explores the post-Soviet and contemporary era and explores how conceptions of the body have been altogether vague given Russia's tumultuous sociopolitical history interfering with firm concepts of national identity. This chapter, then, puts its primary focus upon the laws that govern the state's surveillance of prostitutes and homosexuals; and integrates IDUs (needs to be clearer and syntax adjusted) into the narrative. The consequences following decades of prodigious legal repression have made these groups largely invisible and so removed from the collective body that they turn to themselves

as well as to civil and societal organizations such as non-government organizations (NGOs) for harm reduction and reprieve from abject alienation brought upon them by years of systematic regulation. Further, this chapter introduces a novel framework which I have termed as the "surgical approach" for understanding how abnormal bodies are created and employs the early Soviet dystopian novel *We* to demonstrate applications of this approach. This approach is subsequently applied to analyze the creation of HIV+ individuals as abnormal bodies which also serves as a transition point for discussing specifically the experiences of bodies affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Chapter 1: Envisioning the Body in Imperial Russia

One of the most incendiary events precipitating the Russian Revolution of 1917 was the assassination of tsar Alexander II. The tsar was responsible for a number of fundamental reforms that both liberalized and modernized Russia, the most significant arguably being his 1861 manifesto calling for the emancipation of serfs. Regardless of his contributions, virulent critics of the autocratic regime advocated for urgent need of a visible event that expressed their frustration at the state's iron hand and suppressive rhetoric. On the thirteenth day of March in 1881, members of anti-autocratic revolutionary group the People's Will (*Narodnoya Volya)* threw a bomb at a carriage transporting the tsar. The carriage was luckily bomb-proof, and the unscathed tsar stepped off the carriage to check on the people wounded by the bomb. Unbeknownst to him, another revolutionary loomed nearby and threw another bomb directly in between his legs. The detonation ripped the tsar's lower extremities apart, and his dying wish was to be carried home to the palace (Flantzer 2014). Historian Daniel Beer notes that newspaper reports describing the assassination were "astonishingly graphic about the physical damage inflicted on Alexander's body" and recounted it in grisly detail: "They [begin] talking about the shattered legs and the tendons hanging out and…what they're describing is this wound that has been inflicted on the body of the state [so] the king's two bodies were clearly there [on the streets of St. Petersburg]" (*The Russian Revolution*).

The emphasis upon the destruction of the body suggests that in the minds of the Russian people there existed? was a veritable understanding of the relationship of the somatic body vis-à-vis the political body. This chapter will investigate the origins of the Russian conception of the body. Vividly articulated by the artists and philosophers in the early twentieth century, the conception of the body in the Imperial Russia is the focus of this chapter and its examination of the cultural and legal gaze upon the so-called deviant or abnormal bodies.

Historical Overview

Emerging from the classical realistic tradition, the Symbolist movement (1870-1920s) surged through the artistic community with its novel understanding of the very purpose of art. Its initial origin was a "spontaneous revolt against all social and moral values" (Mohrenschildt, 1193). Imperial Russia bore an incredibly disparate proportion of wealthy aristocrats and starving individuals. The contradictions

of daily life weighed heavily on the minds of artists, who sought to escape these contradictions by fashioning the notion of an alternate world in pursuit of "higher ideas and eternal truths" ("Symbolism in Russian Literature of the Silver Age" 2015). The purpose of art, in the Symbolists' view, was to explore "the true essence of being" by tapping into the "higher reality" expressed poignantly in the Symbolist platform which in its later stages heralded mystical contents. This deep fascination with mysticism could be interpreted as a divorce from the "political and social actualities" that characterized the realistic literature of the time (Mohrenschildt, 1199; "Symbolism in Russian Literature of the Silver Age" 2015). How this mysticism affected the content of Symbolist literature is best exemplified through literature of "Decadent" writers during Russia's fin-de-siècle, particularly in the wildly controversial rhetoric of Vasily Rozanov.

Very few fin-de-siècle authors produced works as provocative or as paradoxical as Rozanov. Rozanov's means of capturing the "true essence of being" is marked by a prodigious amount of discourse on sexuality and its implications for the body. Sexuality, he surmises, is a crucial element for a functioning society. This investigation understands sexuality to be a biological expression of the somatic body and Rozanov contextualizes sexuality in relation to the ecclesiastical body of the Orthodox Church. He contends that sexuality that is "repressed by state and religion" is deleterious for the body politics as a whole, creating "a society that cannot function as a politically healthy organism" (Mondry, 1). The Russian Decadent's brand of body politics designates "bodies as sites on to which a given culture inscribes meaning" and healthy, ideal bodies are those that are "liberated from the sexual repression and inhibitions imposed by the European Christian culture" (Mondry, 9). In other words, the perfect body is one that expresses sexuality freely and without regulation. Rozanov valued sexuality greatly and ascribed positive biological qualities in association with it. His 1903 ethnographic piece 'Estonskoe zatish'e' (Estonian Backwater) related the superiority of Estonians who belonged to a polity wherein sexuality was not a taboo subject that is closely intertwined with questions of morality. Rozanov admiringly chronicles the Estonians' victory over social ills that plague the Russian peasantry: "…Amongst peasants and farmers there is a radically different attitude towards premarital sex and birth of children out of

wedlock…The passions of youth were thus satisfied and recognized by society as a normal part of real life [and] that this arrangement helped society to maintain pure morals and good physical health. There was no prostitution in these communities, no venereal disease, no infanticide…" (Mondry, 123-124). In his description of the Estonians, Rozanov notes that they were "quieter, less prone to drunken brawls" (Mondry, 123-124). This detail is significant because the writer steps into the terrain of biopolitics in attributing these behavioral tendencies to biological expressions of the somatic body and assigning cultural meaning to their expression of sexuality and reproduction.

Ascribing cultural meaning to the somatic body's biological features, Rozanov is not an isolated case. Blood emerges as a motif not only in his work but also in the works of other Decadent Symbolists of the period. Aleksandr Blok wrote expressly using the trope of blood as it is related to "racial health [and] to sexual perversion" (Matich, 12). His 1909 manuscript "Songs of Hell" (*Pesn'ada*) contained the poems "Vampire" and "Finally I Conquered Her!" ("*Ia ee pobedil nakonets!"); both of these works* depicted the "sadistic sexual encounter" and subsequent murder of a beautiful young woman by the male vampire who drinks her blood afterwards. In the latter poem, there are implications that the murdered woman that the vampire seduced was in fact a married woman:

"Storm of tangled braids, dim eyes,
On the ring there is a faded diamond…"

Blok himself suffered from venereal disease (Matich, 34) and in figuring his poetic persona as these sexually degenerate vampires, he may be speaking to his own feelings of degeneracy from his biological and sexual debilitation. Tolstoy similarly wrote about his own feelings of inadequacy with regards to his diseased condition. Although he is not a Symbolist, he may be regarded as the author in the liminal space between classical and modern works. The young Tolstoy chronicled his condition in his very first diary entry dated March 17, 1847 with "feelings of self-recrimination in response to his life of sexual debauchery" (Matich, 31). He dolefully related his positive diagnosis and writes the entry from the Kazan' University clinic: "I got gonorrhea, it goes without saying, the way it is usually gotten" (Matich, 31). In other words, Tolstoy acquired the venereal disease from one of the brothels of Kazan. His positive

diagnosis moved him profoundly because he had associated venereal disease with "youthful debauchery of the soul" and in his diary entries relating his recovery, he comes to terms with his diseased private parts by formulating theories about the relationship between parts and whole. He writes in his entries that "a [deleterious] part is incapable of upsetting the order" and that one must "arrange your reason so that it conforms with the [healthy, salubrious] whole, with the source of everything" (Matich, 31) While it may be his troubled mind making sense of how he acquired a venereal disease, Tolstoy represents one of the first cultural authorities in Russian literature to conceptualize the Gestaltian relationship of parts' relationship to the whole. Tolstoy remarks too on the necessity of the interaction between different body parts to promote a functioning and collective whole. He wrote another diary entry on April 17 relating his thoughts on the matter: "...each component part unconsciously facilitates the development of other parts" (Matich, 32). One interpretation of this excerpt suggests that he believes that the "development of organic unity" is obtained only through cooperation and proper functioning of each part (Matich, 32). Conceptions of body politics surfacing in the minds of Russia's most influential cultural authorities evince the value of the collective which is a theme that transcends each era in our investigation.

Rozanov extolled Tolstoy as one of the most exemplary figures expressing "Russianness" and most emblematic of the Russian national identity. Rozanov's metrics for qualifying Russianness within any one body again lean towards the foray of biopolitics. To fully appreciate Rozanov's appraisal of an ideal Russian body, one must look to the writings of his literary mentor Konstantin Leontiev whose works espoused the belief, shared by Rozanov, that "biological processes which occurred in the organic body could be viewed as a microcosm of the social and political life of society" (Mondry, 11). Using Leontiev's ideas, Rozanov merges the biological experience of life and death with his understanding of the national body's life and contextualizes this in an article wherein he describes mixing as a facet of a decaying body:

> The picture of a corpse is less complex than a picture of a healthy organism. In a corpse, everything is slowly blended together, fluids seep out, become still, firm tissues become friable, all the colors of the body fuse into one greenish brown. Soon it will become difficult to differentiate one corpse from another…Death and disappearance here are truly a return of the complex to the homogenous, of the differentiated to the mixed. That which by the force of life

> was held inside boundaries, is no longer held in its boundaries and mixes with the surrounding matter: what surrounds the body now encroaches into its place, vice versa. Parts of the formerly organized matter [cease to exist]. (Mondry, 13).

From this excerpt, what emerges is this key notion that boundaries are necessary for a functioning organic body. The reader will recall that abnormal bodies are removed from the collective, and this "distance" between the displaced part and the source body may be understood as creating "boundaries" between the abnormal bodies and the ideal collective. Rozanov was certainly prone to racialist attitudes and created during his lifetime a legacy of paradoxical but particularly denigrating discourse on Jews as abnormal bodies that possessed deficient physiognomic features, psyche, and character. He utilizes the biopolitical tactic of politicizing sexuality in his diatribes against Jews in order to implicate them in sadistic, perverted, and "transgressive sexual behavior" to "expose their alleged non-Russian ethnic identity (Matich, 16). While this work will not dissect how he created abnormal bodies out of the Jews, what is important to note is his stance on how to deal with them, viewing them as "alien, albeit racially pure body, which needed to be kept at a distance in order not to infect and contaminate the Russian members of the body politic" (Matich, 19). This creation of "distance" between the abnormal body and the collective speaks to how abnormal bodies become alienated and how they quite literally are marginalized from the larger collective. Abnormality, possessing qualities or behaviors errant to the those of the sociopolitical body, is purportedly contagious which justifies the regulation of these bodies. Rozanov's vision of the perfect body is one not tainted by "mixing" parts which alludes to his racialist predispositions, but what is interesting is that he ascribes biological metrics in his analysis of what qualifies "Russianness" which implied his contempt for the sexual mixing of Russian people with non-Russians, his ableism, and general "diseased-as-deficient" stance. The following thought captures the essence of these dispositions: "Pushkin was a Semite and so linked racially to ancient peoples; Gogol was an *inorodets*, a Ukranian; Turgenev had 'thin' Russian blood and needed an intake of Spanish and Gypsy blood [his wife possessed]; Dostoyevsky was ill (epilepsy) and also a poor specimen of Russian ethnicity" (Matich, 128). Rozanov's clear revulsion for "mixing of bloods" is evident and speaks to his

understanding of the ideal body as one not tainted by foreign blood which is expedient in this investigation's understanding of nationalism and our disease of interest – HIV/AIDS – as a foreign agent.

Rozanov's conceptions of the body were linked to his pursuit of understanding what constituted a perfect body. He loved the Russian people and ascribed "Russianness" as a qualifier for the ideal body and "mixed" heritage or biological deficiency (e.g. illness) as non-Russian. While there are biological stakes in his vision of the perfect body, Rozanov believes that there are spiritual stakes in his attitude. Rozanov's concern with sexuality and reproduction are integral components of his religiosity. He believed that Russianness and Orthodoxy can be understood as reflections of one another and are unable to exist without one another. Rozanov believed that relationship with God is "built on participation and involvement" and that "sex is a vital method to participate in God" (Ure, 83). He lauds the procreative aspect of God, and he shocked his contemporaries with his belief that God was a *bisexual* being, the divine possessing both masculine and feminine aspects, as opposed to an asexual being which was championed by fellow Decadent writer Vladimir Soloviev (1853-1900). The Decadent ambition of conquering death was rooted in reproduction. He describes the value of reproduction and procreation as the symbol of "God's continuing activity down onto the Earth" and "man's participation of divine work" (Ure, 19). Sex as Rozanov understands it is an expression of religiosity, which he believes to be tied to the Russian identity. The ideal body is a racially pure body, but it is also a procreative and sexual one. His criticisms about religion stem from his belief that sexuality should not be repressed or belittled to "debauchery of the soul" as Tolstoy had framed it (Matich 35). It was said that Tolstoy wept on the bedside after his first sexual encounter with a prostitute, and that expression of sexuality that carried moral connotations disturbed Rozanov profoundly, since he claimed that proclaiming sexuality as sinful was deleterious to society; suppressing these natural biological urges in his view was not only harmful; it was heretical (Matich, 35).

Rozanov represented one of the first thinkers who conceptualized the meaning of the body. His work reflects burgeoning questions about how expressions of the somatic body, namely sexuality, figure in the creation of the ideal body. Henrietta Mondry notes Rozanov's close positioning of the experiences

of the somatic body with the larger sociopolitical body in the author's understanding of body politics: "…certainly the body of Russian literature is the organism on which Rozanov plays out his 'practical politics,' his political aim being the survival of the Russian nation and his own body" (Mondry, 15). Decadent authors were deeply concerned about mortality and, in Rozanov's view, mortality could be overcome through the divine acts of sexuality and procreation. Ideal bodies are sexually free bodies as long as they do not mix with foreign agents that dilute their racial purity. Rozanov puts sexuality at the forefront of his body politics as a biopolitical tool that bears connotations about nationalism. The reaction of Rozanov's contemporaries revealed contradictory responses, consisting of both attraction to and rejection of his stance, revealing what was regarded as "an interest in the psychological aspects of sexuality" running at ends with the "belief that it was necessary to repress and sublimate sexual instincts and drives" (Ure, 4). Bodies practicing alternate sexualities, such as prostitutes and homosexuals, become objects of interest for numerous bodies of the polity. Crucial to this investigation and marking its beginnings in Rozanov's works, the demonization and sensationalization of sexuality marked the mounting interest in these somatic experiences that would eventually burst in the early twentieth century.

HOMOSEXUALS

Contrary to some beliefs, homosexuality was not a phenomenon ushered in when Russia opened its door to the west during the post-Soviet transition. Analyses of culture and laws governing the treatment of homosexuals suggests that these abnormal bodies were not stigmatized to the degree that some would think. The very existence and relatively modest circulation of works in the homoerotic tradition is indicative of the relative tolerance towards these groups and also of the belief that the nature of homosexuality is not inherently deviant in and of itself, and this practice does not offend social mores for a majority of the Imperial period. What this section aims to convey is that the considerably wide amount of safe space that these abnormal bodies occupied during this era that, in many respects, represents the most freedom and safety that these groups will possess leading up to the revolutions of 1917 and years onward.

Culture. Literature containing homosexual elements was not unheard of in the cultural body of Russia, and such elements were present in the earliest written records dating before the Imperial era. Rozanov raises in a 1913 correspondence that works dealing with themes of same-sex love originated in monasteries during the Kievan Rus' period (882-1240) and was played out in the venerated bodies of saints. Written by an anonymous monk during the late eleventh and early twentieth century, "The Legend of Boris and Gleb" ("*Skazaniye i stradaniye i pokhvala svyatym muchenikam Borisu i Glebu*") amalgamated elements of history, hagiography, and lyrical poetry to recount the martyrdom of Saints Boris and Gleb. The account related the assassination of the two young Kievan princes by their power-lusting brother. Within the work one finds a squire by the name of George the Hungarian who some may veritably interpret as Prince Boris' lover. The intimacy of their relationship is palpable in the few lines the author dedicates to describing their passion: "Он…был любим Борисом безмерно. [He…was loved by Boris immensely]" ("*Skazaniye i stradaniye i pokhvala svyatym muchenikam Borisu i Glebu* "). So favored was he by the prince that Prince Boris bestows upon him a lavish golden necklace crafted personally for the squire. George's devotion to the prince ultimately precipitated his own demise, for when he witnesses the prince being pierced to death, the squire prostrates himself onto the body of his beloved and passionately exclaims that he must die as well:

> "Seeing this, his boyfriend covered the body of the blessed man, exclaiming: "I will not leave you, my beloved lord — where the beauty of your body fades, then I will be able to finish my life!" ("*Skazaniye i stradaniye i pokhvala svyatym muchenikam Borisu i Glebu* ").

Another medieval tale in the homoerotic tradition is one that coincidentally involves George's brother who is venerated by the Orthodox Church as Saint Moses the Hungarian (Moses & Karlinsky, 15). According to legend, Moses was enslaved and subsequently purchased by a Polish noblewoman who made sexual advances towards him and bargained offered him his freedom in return for his hand in marriage. Moses refused and allegedly preferred to entertain himself with her other male slaves. Humiliated, she ordered his body to be lashed and castrated, but Moses survived this mutilation and scarcely makes it back to the monastery where he went on to live for another decade. Rozanov takes this tale to be representative of a "Russian medieval homosexual punished because he would not enter a

heterosexual marriage" (Moses & Karlinsky, 16). Whether these interpretations of these medieval saint stories were apocryphal and leaned more towards Rozanov's speculations, it is clear that homosexuality in the cultural body predates any modern trajectories of its possible origins.

The Golden Age of Literature in the 19th century produced brilliant literary artists who would eventually become household names both on native and foreign soil. Pushkin, Gogol, Lermontov, Dostoyevsky, and Tolstoy were arguably some of the most influential people in Russian society, and their works were receiving and still receive warm sentiments that bolster pride in the Russian national identity. Their contributions have dramatically reshaped the landscape of literary culture, and their hallmark novels are easily recognized by scholars and workingmen alike. Less known is the reality that these literary paragons' works and private lives bore homoerotic tendencies, perceptible only to discerning eyes of contemporary readers by today's standards. One must entertain the possibility that these allusions to their alternate sexualities were perhaps less esoteric to the writers' contemporaries.

Alexander Pushkin is indisputably one of the most beloved cultural icons in Russia today. He was the first author in the aforementioned series to receive international accolade that elevated Russian literature into the sphere of scholastic significance. The profundity of this could not be emphasized, for in the worldwide public gaze, Russia was regarded as a backwards nation lagging centuries behind in cultural and technological advances due to centuries of Mongol siege (1237-1480) that stymied milestones in modernization achieved by its Western counterparts Pushkin does not subscribe to homosexuality regarding choice in bedroom partners, but he is remarkably tolerant towards individuals who do. He, in fact, is so comfortable with this sexual orientation that he engages in humorously lewd banter with a close friend of his, the memoirist Philip Vigel. An 1823 letter containing a tongue-in-cheek poem addressed to Vigel made light of the memoirist's sexual preferences as Pushkin pokes fun at Vigel's drab living situations and sees him happier in "the civilized city of Sodom…that Paris of the Old Testament" (Moses & Karlinsky, 19). He then attempts to entice Vigel to pay him a visit in Odessa, hoping that the potential bed company of three handsome brothers in town would lure him out but with ramifications that he himself would be excluded from Vigel's *affaire de coeur*: "To serve you I'll be all

too happy/ With all my soul, my verse, my prose, / But Vigel, you must spare my rear!" (Moses & Karlinsky, 19). In an 1833 letter postmarked to his wife, Pushkin paints his friend Wiegel's homosexuality in a similarly humorous light: "Tell Princess Viazemskaya that she need not worry about the portrait of Wiegel and that *from that side* my honest conduct is above suspicion; but out of respect for her request I will place his portrait *behind* all the others (Moses & Karlinsky, 29). Apart from these jocular letters, Pushkin composed several poems with homoerotic themes? elements. His 1835 composition "Imitation of the Arabic" ("Подражание Арабскому") imitated the pederastic Greco-Roman poetic tradition. Pederasty was an institution of the aristocratic society in ancient Greece and Rome that involved a young boy being mentored by an older gentleman in the society who engaged his youthful charge with intellectual and physical (and often sexual) stimulation. Anthologies of poems collected and translated by classical experts in the field, most notably *Games of Venus* by Peter Bing and Rip Cohen, spoke widely to the erotic nature of pederastic poetry. Pushkin's rendition is no exception: "Sweet lad, tender lad, / Have no shame, you're mine for good; We share a sole insurgent fire, / We live in boundless brotherhood…" (Moses & Karlinsky, 29).

Homosexuality was a theme explored in the poetry of Mikhail Lermontov as well, but his compositions were far bawdier and more explicit than Pushkin's. His pornographic vignettes about cadet life and sexual exploration struck some readers as being too excessively graphic to have been purely fictional. In a poem called "Ode to the John" ("Ода к нужнику"), Lermontov spares no detail about the illicit nighttime activities of his salacious cadets:

> "And then again the white ass of a youthful beau/ Courageously appears inside you with no cover./ […]/ At last the final candle next to Beloven's bed/ Has gone out. Now it is the moon that sheds pale light/ onto white beds and onto lacquered hardwood floors./ But suddenly rustling, a weak noise, and two light shadows/ Glide over all the way to your desired cover; / They've entered…and a kiss resounds through the silence, / And a reddening cock has risen like a hungry tiger; / Now it is being groped by an immodest hand, / While lips are being pressed against the lips, and words are heard, / 'Oh be with me, I'm yours, oh dear friend, please hold / Me stronger, I am melting, I'm on fire…" / And one / Cannot recount all the impassioned words. / But here / The shirt is being pulled up, and one of them has bared/ His satin ass and thighs, and the admiring cock/ Is towering and trembling over the plump ass. / Now they get closer…And in just a moment they…/But here it's time to close the curtain over the picture; / It's time, so that the inexorable fate would not / Transform its praise into a caustic reproach" (Moses & Karlinsky, 37).

In the same collection is the poem "To Tiesenhausen" ("К Тизенгаузену") that contained equally provocative and pornographic overtones:

> "Do not move your eyes in languor, / Do not twist your round ass / […] / Do not go to the beds of others / […] / All of those who now are begging / At your feet, stretched on the ground, / Will not quench your melancholy / With the sweet dew of a kiss – / Although then just for a cock's tip / You would gladly give your life" (Moses & Karlinsky, 37).

Needless to say, there is a great deal of shock value in Lermontov's meticulously-detailed compositions that raises the possibility that he may have engaged in similar trysts during his years as a cadet in the cavalry school where was considered the "life of the party" and conjured up jokes that were far from innocent (Tveritina, 2014).

In his wildly controversial book *Sexual Labyrinth of Nikolai Gogol*, Simon Karlinsky emphatically argued for Gogol's concealed homosexuality. Unlike Pushkin or Lermontov, very few outright expressions exist in Gogol's fictional work to indicate his sexual preferences. While critics of the piece characterize Karlinsky's positions as a series of noncontiguous "fun facts" and coincidences, the author admits that although there are limitations to his argument and indeed it may have simply been artistic convention that – for example – none of his works involve a "female love interest" and that all females in his works have been archetypal "fairy-tale beauties, or witches, or caricatures, empty-headed figurines or formidable harridans"; however, he argues that considering the body of evidence as a whole, the prodigious amount of coincidences substantiate his claim Gogol was a homosexual at heart and never emerged from the closet, so to speak. Scholars must turn to the author's biography and personal diaries to trace the most compelling evidence for the author's homosexuality. Gogol became romantically and intimately involved with a Count Joseph Vielhorsky whom he tended to up until the count's untimely death from tuberculosis. In these entries, Gogol endearingly chronicles the count's final days with adulation and warmth. He lovingly refers to the prince as his "precious, tender flower" (Moses & Karlinsky, 41). Gogol laments that he would trade his own life to secure his lover's which hearkens back to the medieval George the Hungarian's suicide and its implications for love transcending death: "Good God! With what joy, with what happiness I would have taken his illness upon myself! And if my death

could restore him to health, with what readiness I would have rushed towards it!" (Moses & Karlinsky, 40). Their affair was not necessarily kept secret. In Alexandra Smirnova's memoir, she writes with a somewhat defensive tone that suggests the need to justify the legitimacy of Gogol and Vielhorsky's relationship: "I learned that Gogol was on terms of intimacy with the young Vielhorsky…I found their intimacy *comme il faut*, most natural and simple" (Moses & Karlinsky, 39). Perhaps the most indicting piece of evidence for Gogol's homosexuality is the tragic manner in which he passes away. Gogol confesses his homosexuality to a priest, who instructs him to pray vigilantly and fast until he is cured of this condition lest he desired a fate of eternal damnation. Gogol's official cause of death was starvation although some would argue that it was suicide. Rozanov would have argued that unfortunate cases like that of Gogol, whose lifetime of repressed sexuality contributed to his death, are concrete examples of the debacles of the Orthodox's church. Demonizing sexuality and creating taboo around it attenuated the overall health of the bodies of the polity and created martyrs out of men, as it had with Gogol.

Homosexual themes in the works of Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy would strike many as being the most unexpected, for both men were morally conservative and critical of the institution of sexuality as a whole with the latter writer most viciously polemicizing even sex in marriage in his incendiary work *Kreutzer Sonata*. Dostoyevsky's early work *Netochka Nezvanova* portrayed the "passionate lesbian infatuation between two adolescent girls" (Moses & Karlinsky, 20). In writing *Notes from the House of the Dead*, Dostoyevsky drew largely from his own personal experiences of imprisonment and exile in Siberia. The narrator of *Notes* encounters a man by the name of Petrov who keenly vies for the narrator's attention. Dumbfounded by the magnetic attraction that comes from Petrov, the narrator fails to comprehend why Petrov "seeks [him] out, plies him with meaningless questions just to be in his presence, and constantly does him favors" (Moses & Karlinsky, 20). Meager explanations alluding to psychological deficiencies belies the relatively robust argument that Petrov had homosexual desires for the narrator. If we were to understand Dostoyevsky as a stand-in for the narrator, the likelihood that he had encountered a figure like Petrov during his time in prison becomes all the more feasible. It is possible that Dostoyevsky's deep ties to spirituality prevented him from seeing Petrov's inspiration as anything more

than an eccentric fellow who desperately desired to "undress [him] at the communal baths and to soap and wash his body while seated at his feet" (Moses & Karlinsky, 20). The engagement that Tolstoy had with homosexuality differs from Dostoyevsky's in the regard that he utilized the phenomena of homosexuality to signal the moral decay of the country, evinced by his negative portrayals of his homosexual characters in *Anna Karenina.*

In the same vein as Dostoyevsky and Gogol, Tolstoy's connection to homosexuality can be traced in his biographical accounts. Entries from his youth suggest that Tolstoy repressed his homosexual proclivities. In an excerpt from *Childhood*, the author does not shy from relating his crush on one of the Ivin boys with whom he bore familial relation with: "[Seryozha's] unusual beauty struck me the first time I saw him. I was irresistibly attracted to him" (Moses & Karlinsky, 42). In a diary entry dated 29 November 1851, the twenty-three-year-old Tolstoy appears to retain his fond appreciation for men. In fact, he appears to be more self-aware of this aspect in his nature. This particular diary entry is saturated with homosexual overtones that are palpable from the very first sentence: "I was never in love with women" (Moses & Karlinsky, 47). Like Pushkin, Tolstoy was well aware of the institution of pederasty and used it to justify his passions for his literary idols and presumably older men he was acquainted with: "I fell in love very often with men, the 1st love was the 2 Pushk[ins], then the 2nd –Sab[urov?], then the 3rd Zyb[in] and Dyak[ov], the 4th Obol[ensky], Blosfeld, Islav[in], then Gauthier and many others" (Moses & Karlinsky, 47). He relates his romance with a certain Dyakov, who was the object of his affections at the time of the entry. Tolstoy writes: "…But I will never forget the night we were driving from P[irogov?], and I wanted to hide under the sleigh blanket and kiss him and cry" (Moses & Karlinsky. 47). Tolstoy notes that thinking of Dyakov inspired sensual feelings that he sublimated both out of his own discomfort at the feeling but also because he may have understood that he was only physically (and not spiritually, which is crucial for him) to men. Proponents arguing for Tolstoy's homosexuality may turn to his private life as well and employ his overt misogyny as indicative of his exasperation with the female gender and subconscious leaning towards the male gender.

The Silver Age of Literature that had its origins in the fin-de-siècle and spanning until the early 20th century produced one of the most powerful and fecund expressions of homoerotic literature. Unlike a number of the Golden Age authors, such as Pushkin, who only used homosexuality as part of their artistic aesthetic that had no real implications on their personal lives, many prominent Silver Age authors were openly bisexual or homosexual. For these authors, homosexuality was not merely a literary trope to convey moral or sociopolitical agendas – it was their way of life, a reflection of their own version of reality in the hands of their readers. Any survey of homosexual literature that fails to mention Mikhail Kuzmin would be one of substandard repute. Kuzmin is one of the most influential Russian writers belonging to the gay community. His 1906 coming-out novel *Wings* was the first books ever published that directly dealt with homosexual themes and characters. The protagonist of the work, Vanya may be understood as a stand-in for the author himself, who struggled with his own sexuality for years. The novel deals with Vanya, a teenage boy perplexed by his emotions for Shtrup, a high society intellectual whose national origins were left unclear. Vanya's affections were brought to a halt when he realizes that Shtrup takes in for a live-in servant his bathhouse attendant (*banschik*), which confirmed to him that Shtrtup fell into the common bathhouse practice of exchanged money for sexual favors from these attendants. Tormented with this knowledge, the work grapples with Vanya's ideological battle within himself that ultimately ends with his acceptance of Shtrup signified by his acquiescence to accompanying Shtrup in his travels, a decision that that liberates him and that he ascribes to "growing wings" (Berry, 244). What must be noted too perhaps are the more stylistic elements of Kuzmin's piece. For example, he designates Shtrup as a man of unclear origins, but he is definitely not purely Russian. In a way, this speaks to the contemporary belief that homosexuality is not a quality of ideal Russian bodies but one inspired by foreign agents. On the other hand, Shtrup's transparency about his sexuality is key, for it suggests that he chooses to reject marginalization; in other words, he refused to be made into an abnormal body. Shtrup saw art as the "means of regeneration through the recovery of true emotional life and deliverance from constricting social and moral conventions" and should beckon the reader to consider Rozanov's solution

of uninhibited sexuality as a part of this consideration between art and life, which were so deeply intertwined in the Silver Age of Literature's homoerotic canon (Malmstad & Bogomolov, 96).

Virtually no other cultural period in Russian history could compare to the mass circulation and proliferation of works centered on homosexual themes as observed during Russia's Silver Age. This was the era of Symbolism and Decadence, and much like the name implies, Decadence implied the self-indulgent nature of literature that was expressed by the profuse production and dissemination of discourse that centered focused upon sexuality, particularly alternative sexuality. Not only was alternative sexuality as a theme widely tolerated in Symbolist circles, these themes were a fact of everyday life. St. Petersburg was home to a number of salons for with a primarily Symbolist milieu, another prominent one being the one established and operated by husband and wife, Dmitry Merezhkovsky and Zinaida Gippius. Both were highly respected within the artistic community and were widely regarded as co-founders of the Symbolist movement. Gippius was hailed as an eccentric woman who donned men's clothing for performances in the salon but also incorporated androgynous pieces into her own wardrobe. Leon Bakst's 1906 portrait of Gippius presents her in men's clothing seated, almost reclining, in a posture that was a far cry from proper women's etiquette at the time. Rozanov was a contemporary of hers who advocated for the divinity of bisexuality and in many respects, Gippius was the living embodiment of such principles of combining masculinity and femininity in her own life and her artistic aesthetic. Vyacheslev Ivanov and his second wife Lidiya Zinovieva-Annibal were respected Symbolists whose shared St. Petersburg home dually functioned as the premier literary salon "the Tower". Notable writers and authors frequented Ivanov's Tower and exchanged ideas and occasionally bed partners. Even Mikhail Kuzmin lodged in the Tower for a period. Ivanov published a book of verse known as *Cors Ardens* that contained a subsection *Eros*. Two poems, "Calling Out for Bacchus" and "Incantation" were allegedly written about and for a young protégé of his, nearly twenty years his junior whom he became acquainted with prior to his marriage to his wife. The boy resisted Ivanov's advances, stating that their relationship was purely professional. Ivanov likely channeled his experience of unrequited love into these poems, for one can make out a tone of plaintive longing in these two compositions. Mild indignation was a palpable

sentiment the poem "Calling Out for Bacchus" communicates: "[…] / Why disturb my heart with mystery? / Why do you hide your night-time face? Take pity on my bitter grief / Appear in any incarnation, / In streaming water or in fire; / Or, like a late-time young visitor / Turn your calling and tired eyes / In this night to me / […]" (Moses & Karlinsky 140-141). The allusion to the Greco-Roman god Bacchus suggests that this was a poem written in the pederastic tradition, much like Pushkin's imitation poems. That possibility that the poems were written about his protégé is made even more plausible in his latter poem, which included the stanza, "The pupils of my eyes are empty, my dark wells are dry" which may have been a play on the word "pupil" to signify his young charge. The Decadent tradition of alternative sexuality may be observed in the latter poem, wherein Ivanov alludes to a ménage à trois between his protégé and his wife: "Come, my son, my brother! One wife awaits the two of us –" (Moses & Karlinsky, 140-141). Ivanov's own wife was no stranger to alternative sexuality. She authored Russia's first lesbian novel *Thirty-Three Freaks* published in 1907 and was widely regarded as one of Russian imitators of Sappho, a female Greek poet hailing from the island of Lesbos and who sensationalized the term "lesbian" to mean a woman engaging with other women, who for Sappho were the younger members within her all-female circles.

Even the most erudite of scholars would vouch that the beginnings of Russian homoerotic literature start with Kuzmin. As this section demonstrates, homosexual themes predate the foundation of the Russian Empire and are remarkably replete in the pre-Imperial and Imperial works of the time. One of the most critical points to extrapolate from this section is that *homosexuality during the Imperial era was not widely regarded as a deviant quality*. The copious amount of discourse as well as the wide dissemination of homoerotic works is suggestive of the relative tolerance that the general bodies of the polity possessed towards these groups. Further, that homosexuality was not a quality restricted to a select few and were found in the cultural contributions of Russia's most influential and authoritative writers such as Tolstoy. Homosexual bodies enjoyed a wide amount of safe space during this era as evinced by the relative tolerance they are met with from the sociocultural standpoint. They are not alienated from the collective and, as suggested by Pushkin's playful letters, their sexual orientation does not affect feelings

of camaraderie. All things considered, the treatment of the homosexual bodies reinforces another key point elucidated in this work which is the notion that *deviance is constructed by society and is not a "fixed" quality*. We will see this demonstrated further in our analysis of the laws regulating and constructing the homosexual body

PROSTITUTES

Few bodies have held more cultural intrigue than those of the female prostitutes. Colleen Lucey is apt to point out that Imperial authors such as Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy were critical figures for envisioning this construct, citing prostitution as a "major question" that stupefied the era. She contends: "Every canonical Russian author of the 19th century discusses prostitution" (Everett-Haynes 2017). As this section will demonstrate, women's bodies have been the arenas for biopolitical control for centuries. Writers have romanticized prostitutes in their well-meaning attempts to save these "fallen women" by lifting their plight to society, but in reality, this accomplishes two things – first, the invitation of official and public gaze onto these women, which engendered crusades against their morality and subsequent regulation of their activity; second, it accomplishes nothing in the sense that their sensationalization of the spiritually pure prostitute does not take into account the reality of why women go into prostitution, which is more closely aligned with exclusion from the workforce structured by the patriarchal government. Prostitution is inextricably linked to the experience of women, so this work will consider experiences of women's bodies in lieu of its analysis of prostitution. That said, we will focus our cultural investigation upon two fictional prostitutes who demonstrate the dilemma of prostitutes' dual demonization and sensationalization and indicate how the intrusive gaze mediates their regulation.

Culture. Literature from the Imperial period depicting prostitutes is replete with paternalistic visions of "saving" these fallen women and reimagining them as innocent victims of systematic oppression which shifts the blame for their condition to the sociopolitical system that failed to protect them rather than onto the women themselves. Dostoyevsky's indignation at this cruel circumstance is echoed in the words of the narrator Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*: "That's the way it should be, they say. Such and such a percentage has to go every year…Where? To the devil, probably, so as to keep

the rest fresh and uninterefered with" (Bernstein L., 45). Of all of the incarnations of fallen women, one unifying theme shared between them is their lack of choice which exonerates them of the stigma otherwise incurred by their profession. Dostoyevsky is not scarce to defend his fictionalized prostitute Sonya Marmeladova's blamelessness. Her alcoholic father who squanders away the little she earns that he does not deserve mercy and says that he should be "crucified" for permitting his daughter to prostitute herself, crying that she deserves no reproach and that God will forgive her of her transgressions:

> "…He shall come and ask: 'Where is the daughter who gave herself for a harsh and consumptive stepmother and the little children of another? Where is the daughter who showed compassion that filthy drunkard, her earthly father, and did not shrink from his beastliness?' And he will say: 'Come unto Me! I have already forgiven thee…" (Dostoyevsky, 20).

Sonya's stepmother, the woman who forces the seventeen-year-old girl to sell herself to make ends meet, also exclaims that the girl is blameless: "She got that yellow ticket because my children were dying of starvation, she sold herself for us!" (Bernstein L., 121). The yellow-ticket, which will be discussed in the later section, is legal certification for prostitutes at the time. Dostoyevsky's persistent defense of Sonya, the moral exemplar of the work, suggests that she is "unspoiled" largely due to the fact of that she had *no choice* but to participate in the sexual workforce. In fact, it is the combined efforts of neighbors who raised awareness of Sonya's illicit activities and helped drive the girl virtually into the streets. This brings us to another important notion, which is contextualizing the importance of the gaze as a means of surveillance and tool to regulate prostitutes' bodies. For this, we shall turn to the works of Vsevolod Garshin whose fictional prostitute Nadezhda Nikolaevna represents yet another attempt at romanticized salvation of fallen women.

Garshin enriches the fallen women salvation arc with his works' polyphonous quality that gives the prostitute a voice in narrating her own story, which had never been done until that point. What readers knew of Sonya was only through the lens of Raskolnikov or Marmeladov, but Garshin "elevates" his prostitute by conveying to readers that she was not merely a literary trope manipulated for didactic and moralistic purposes but rather an actual human being whose abuses (and ultimately death) in the hands of men have caused her to become cynical of the help salvation that they offer. Nadezhda is under "constant

scrutiny" from both the public and the official gaze which serve to regulate and repress her actions. For example, in "Nadezhda Nikolaevna", a man who becomes smitten with her named Nikitin follows Nadezhda and is aghast with horror seeing her seduce a man: "I watch until some scoundrel approaches her. She responds and turns to walk with him . . . and I follow after . . . I walk along hearing nothing, seeing nothing, except two figures" (Garshin, 105). Nikitin trails the two until they return to her apartment and stares fixatedly at the drawn white curtain; on a similar vein, Nadezhda's benefactor Bessonov "traces her to a former apartment" but to no avail, for she has switched residences (Lucey, 10). Nikitin would go on to tell Nadezhda: "Nadezhda Nikolaevna! Don't speak so rudely (*grubo*). Keep behaving as you were when you first arrived" (Garshin, 113). These excerpts demonstrate that surveillance of the prostitute Nadezhda and prostitutes at large evinces visions to regulate prostitutes' bodies. As the reader will recall from the introduction, Alain Corbain reflects that the need to surveil these abnormal bodies conveys the need to "enclose in order to observe, to observe in order to know, to know in order to supervise and control" (Lucey, 19). Surveillance lends itself to regulation which helps to mediate the creation of prostitutes as abnormal bodies. Abnormal bodies are alienated, subject to humiliation and stigmatization, and pushed farther and farther away from the collective body. Garshin tragically illustrates the profound effects of systematic abuse, and he also underscores the manner by which the official gaze disabuses prostitutes' – at least Nadezhda's – beliefs that she holds a place in society when he describes how a police officer witnesses her on the verge of suicide on the embankment of the Neva river and, upon realizing that she is a prostitute, yells: "Get the hell out of here you piece of trash . . . you'll fall in and then I'll have to answer for you!" (Garshin, 110).

Perhaps, one of the most interesting aspects of Garshin's work is the fascinating intersection between literary and visual culture in "Nadezhda Nikolaevna" – an episode that involves a prostitute looking at art depicting a fallen woman. According to Lucey, one strategy of men attempting to reform prostitutes is "showing them, other, more respectable avenues of work and behavior" (Lucey, 10). These efforts constitute the larger goal of creating ideal women's bodies through which social control perpetuated by the sociopolitical body may permeate through. One of Nadezhda's clients presents her

with an image circulated in the *Dragonfly* titled "Two Roads" by Viktor Sil'vestrovich Shpak that depicts by way of contrast the two outcomes of a respectable livelihood marked by maturation into a woman by living out a virtuous life (top row) or by degeneration into a haggard (perhaps by venereal disease like syphilis) by engaging in unvirtuous behavior like prostitution. Lucey carefully observes that although both women "embody feminine beauty" there are differences in their expression of sexuality. She notes: "The upper class woman from the top row looks down at the pavement as if ashamed of her sex appeal, [but] her sister from the lower ranks is proud and uninhibited" (Lucey, 13). At this image, Nadezhda confronts the dismal possibility that her tribulations will follow her well into old age. She protests vehemently against such a fate, declaring, "I won't allow myself to reach that if I can stomach this life I will give it another two or three years. After that, it's off to Ekaterinovka" (Garshin, 104). One particular ramification of this image is the blatant juxtaposition of what an ideal woman and her opposite look like, which marks the rudiments of the state's strategical pitting of women against women. Upper class women look upon prostitutes with disdain and regard them spitefully. Unable to elicit sympathy even from people with whom they share the indubitably challenging experience of womanhood, female prostitutes are further driven from the collective. Dostoyevsky writes of Sonya's evident discomfort at the presence of "proper women" whose leering gazes she is unable to fully meet: "Son[y]a sat down, practically shaking with fright, and glanced timidly at the two ladies. It was obvious that she herself did not understand how she could sit beside them" (Bernstein L., 202). Garshin interestingly incorporates another piece of art in the work, which is the painter Lopatin's fictional portrait of Charlotte Corday, the woman who notoriously assassinated Marat during the French Revolution. Lopatin sees within Nadezhda a vision of the Corday, and it may be imposed upon the reader the possibility that in agreeing to stand in as a model for Lopatin, Nadezhda subverts the premonitional representation of herself as an "old haggard" in her words to a woman of agency in becoming Corday by allowing herself to be painted as her.

That Nadezhda's body served a greater purpose than, in the words of a young client she served, "a safety-valve of social passions" is one that Garshin underscores in shining such an intimate light on his female prostitute. What must be addressed, however, is that Garshin largely undermines his sympathetic

stance with the inclusion of one of the final lines in "Nadezhda Nikolaevna" in the mouth of Lopatin who wonders if Nadezhda's "broken heart" can be "resurrected," as he assumes the role of Nadezhda's confessor after her tragic death at the hands of her jealous benefactor: "I learned everything about her life and was her judge. I forgave everything that needs to be forgiven" (Garshin, 339). The story ends with the characteristic paternalistic overtone that saturates Imperial literature depicting prostitutes. These works reveal the origins of the abolitionist stance that trumpets the blamelessness of these morally pure prostitutes, but such a narrow render fails to account for the population of women that actively *choose* to go into prostitution. Further, another dilemma of destigmatizing impoverished prostitutes forced into their circumstances creates a contrast that begs clarification on the blamelessness of women who go into prostitution to supplant their income. Are these women worthy of redemption, of forgiveness so earnestly pleaded for by Marmeladov. Such questions are mired with complications that may be elucidated with the analysis of laws governing prostitutes' bodies.

Laws. It must be established at the very outset of this analysis that the the patriarchal Imperial structure governs and regulates women's bodies and makes itself manifest in the tripartite force – allegiance to God (head of the politico-ecclesiastical body), to the tsar (head of the political body), and to husbands and fathers (heads of social/familial body). Women are regulated from virtually all levels of the bodies within the Russian polity. They are even oppressed by the cultural body, whose abolitionist faces, such as Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy, created a cult of romantics who went so far as to "marrying whores in order to bring them back to normal life" ("Three Centuries"). One consequence of the burgeoning woman question intertwining with themes of sexuality is the inevitable artistic intrigue into prostitution. The profuse amount of discourse shed the spotlight on these already marginalized groups of women, which brought them into the public and official gaze, which the political body responded to by levying strict regulative measures upon these bodies whom they deemed as "abnormal" and perceived as subverting societal values. One such value that resonates with the gendered experience is that women's sexuality is permissible only in the context of procreation. As we will see throughout this work, the biological aspect of sexuality, reproduction, is manipulated to serve as justification for stigmatization of women and

particularly prostitutes, who would be removed from the sexual workforce if pregnant and literally cannot afford to procreate.

It must be noted that at all levels of regulation, women's bodies are denigrated, but it is the rhetoric of the church that initially portrays women's bodies as symptomatic of illness and impurity. Women's bodies are viciously maligned in a blatantly misogynistic eighteenth-century Orthodox sermon: "What is a woman like on earth? She is a…treasure-house of uncleanliness…an incurable sickness, a temptation for the saved, a whore by day…She is the Devil's weapon, a lustful mindlessness, universal death. 'For,' as a wise man said, 'all evil is small in comparison with woman's evil' (Bisha, 22). This sermon interestingly refers to women as a "treasure that inflames" which captures the national sentiment of disdain intermixed with intrigue that prostitutes inspired. The sermon condemns women as "destroyers of youths" but, frankly, they are the creators of youths as well. Women's value in the family are aptly characterized by two proverbs: "A wife is very dear to a husband twice: the day he marries her and the day he buries her" and "A husband's fist leaves no bruise" (Bisha, 58). Within the home, women are subservient to the patriarchs of the house, who in Russian peasant tradition, frequently beat their wives. The institution of marriage not only entailed procreation, but also was "considered a means by which female sexuality could be controlled" (Bisha, 122). Home life was typically turbulent for women, and many prostitutes cite their choice of the profession as a way of escaping from an abusive and difficult home life; this is a major factor in determining their profession, as was the case with the fictional prostitute Liza in Dostoyevsky's *Notes from the Underground*. The narrator inquires: "Why did you come to Petersburg…[weren't] you comfortable enough in your parents' home? Warmth, freedom, your own corner –" (Bernstein L., 120). To this, Liza responds: "Suppose I tell you that it was worse than here?" (Bernstein L., 120).

To reorient ourselves to prostitutes, allow us to reconsider the caricature "Two Roads" in "Nadezhda Nikolaevna". The image disturbs Nadezhda so profoundly because the caricature underpins what could very well be her reality. The image corresponds to the dominant socio-medical beliefs at the time which posit that prostitutes were born with an innate predilection for "vice and disorderly conduct"

(Bernstein L., 73). The most prolific writer of these pseudoscientific works is the medically trained Veniamin Tarnovskii. His works were regarded as authoritative scientific sources by the tsar and spoke largely to his etiological attempts to explain the social ill of prostitution. In Tarnovskii's view, prostitution could be ascribed to a "special type of female pathology stemming from a genetic disposition and imbalance" (Bernstein L., 127). One of his most controversial but socially accepted views is that prostitutes were "moral cripples" who were fundamentally different "from 'honest' women in their psychological and physical inability to engage in any other labor but commercial sex" (Bernstein L., 127). We can veritably recognize that a visual representation of this stance could be made out in "Two Roads". Tarnovskii believed that prostitution threatened the moral fiber of a society and that combating spread of venereal disease requires a regimen of regulation identification, inspection, and incarceration for prostitutes, he alleged, had "no qualms about infecting clients" (Bernstein L., 127).

On the contrary, a 1910 petition drafted and signed by sixty-three prostitutes signified the very opposite. The petition was read at a Russian Society for the Protection of Women (RSPW) congress that boasted lofty goals of abolishing prostitution as a whole, but in reality, the prostitutes more keenly desired ending the "injustice of a system that incarcerated them for venereal disease" but permitted "syphilitic males" to go about without penalty and infecting more prostitutes, exacerbating the syphilis epidemic that the political body fought hard to contain. The petition reads: "[Men] are allowed to infect us unimpeded and with impunity, and transform us in the future into miserable cripples from whom anyone would turn away in horror…" (Bisha, 140). Again, the reader will call to mind the caricature in "Nadezhda Nikolaevna" wherein the physical and moral disintegration become indistinguishable from the another. The petition continues: "We, you know, are also human beings, and our health is valuable to us…we humbly ask you to discuss this issue and try to arrange things so that sick guests are not allowed to come those of us who are healthy, and that health is required of them, as it is of us. They who participate in this business are no better than we…We earnestly request that you look after us" (Bisha, 140). The final line of the petition, in a heart-wrenching way, entreats the members of the abolitionist group for sympathy in their plight and evinces the prostitutes' desperation in securing more rights and agency in their health,

even while aligning with abolitionists would immediately translate in their safe space decreasing because illegalizing prostitution would make their professional all the more dangerous.

One of the first legislations governing prostitutes' bodies was issued in 1649 by Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich that declared the removal of "idle street women" ("Three Centuries"). During her reign, Catherine the Great signed "The Charter of City Piety" which called for all prostitutes to undergo medical examination and localized their activities only to certain parts of the city. Under Tsar Pavel I, prostitutes were made to wear yellow dresses, which was a practice that did not remain in vogue but did result in the association of the color yellow with prostitution such that the licenses permitting legal sex work came to be called "yellow tickets" (Bernstein L., 2). I argue that prostitutes enjoyed a considerable amount of safe space with regards to their work in the sense that they had spaces in which they were able to perform their "deviant" acts without legal penalty. In fact, these spaces were not fixed in a certain area if these prostitutes did not operate in a brothel but were in possession of the yellow ticket that signified their lack of venereal disease. While having a legal space for their activity offered prostitutes flexibility – such as safety from police raids and medical care for venereal disease free of charge – the system for regulating these bodies was imperfect and created as much problems as it intended to solve. In 1843, Tsar Nicholas I launched the most dramatic efforts to date in regulating prostitutes' bodies wherein appointed medical police committees oversaw the issuance of these yellow tickets that obliged prostitutes to submit to routine "medical examinations' that historians are quick to note were largely superfluous and contributed more so to the humiliating degradation prostitutes than they did to curbing venereal disease outbreak. Examinations were frequently conducted in conditions best described as "decrepit" due to the frequent influx and traffic of the tens of thousands of prostitutes within the vicinities of large cities into these clinics. As a result, medical staff seldom adhered to standard protocols for hygiene, which contributed to mounting rates of venereal disease much to the perplexity of the medical police. In fact, improper incubation of syphilitic patients in St. Petersburg's Kalinkin Hospital in which some prostitutes had less than two cubic meters of air per person in any given floor was cited as the cause for rates of disease transmission in addition to usage of "unsanitary medical instruments and utensils" (Bernstein L., 64).

Such conditions proved to be incredibly uncomfortable and even fatal for prostitutes, and many simply failed to show up for their appointed check-ups for fear of a positive diagnosis revoking their yellow ticket and forcing them out of their profession; consequently, they had to endure treatment in hospitals that functioned best as sites of incarceration for these abnormal bodies. There have been reported cases where prostitutes have bribed medical staff for help in "cauterizing" venereal lesions to pass these medical examinations which speaks to the extent they went so they will go to avoid hospitalization (Bernstein L., 67).

Interestingly, however, when surveyed about the reasons that caused prostitutes to go into the sexual workforce, few actually cited significant impoverishment as the cause rather than desire to maximize their financial yield per time investment. This stance is at variance with the "morally pure" fallen woman that Dostoyevsky and other Imperial authors romanticized in their works; at least 27% of women cited "personal desire" and 15% emphasized that they were "glad/wanted to do so" with regards to entering the sexual workforce in an 1888 survey (Bernstein L., 134). In that survey, only one woman conceded to "extreme need" as the reason driving her decision (Bernstein L., 131). Such results demonstrate the limitations of the sensationalized imaginings of prostitutes as blameless victims of circumstance, for a larger representation of them as women who chose prostitution [become prostitutes] because of a desire to improve their economic condition. In this light, prostitutes claim a sense of agency that the abolitionist-salvationist paradigm deny them for the fact that active participation in this dirty business makes them less "deserving" or sympathy or redemption.

Although there is little doubt there are prostitutes driven to their positions due to poverty and a need to provide like Sonya Marmeladova, one cannot deny the far more significant amount of women who claim that their primary motivations are for accruing more funds over fighting starvation. Garshin's fictionalized prostitute Nadezhda was seldom seen begging for food and appeared to be successful in securing regular clients which suggests she is an active agent in the betterment of her conditions that need not manifest in connotations of morality.

Taken together, analyses of the laws and culture governing prostitutes' bodies suggest that the abolitionist-salvationist stance does not encapsulate the experience of all – or even most – of the prostitutes during the Imperial era. Unlike the "palatable" imaginings of Imperial writers whose attempts to save their blameless fictionalized prostitute evinces a paternalistic approach that bolsters and heightens surveillance and regulation of prostitutes' bodies, the reality is more deeply rooted in the simple and largely lackluster reason that these women needed to earn a living in which the work they put in equals the work they put out. Even the lowest wages of prostitution are better than the highest wage of "honest" but low-paying work with which salvationists earnestly attempted to "reform" prostitutes to performing and indicative of the relative naiveté that these moralists possessed in comprehending the situation of these prostitutes. Bernstein elucidates this stark financial disparity: "Women at the top of the trade could earn upwards 500 roubles a month. Even the poorest prostitute would net 40 roubles a month, more than twice as much as most working women" (Bernstein L., 138). Given such figures, it is no wonder that women were seduced by the siren call of prostitution, but, as we have established, acquiring the yellow ticket comes with its own sets of caveats, which include subjection to the regulation and oppression by political entities that failed to protect the very women they desired to save as evinced by the 1910 prostitutes' petition doleful entreaty for it. Humiliating medical examinations and sexual exploitation from medical-police represent the political bodies' measures to alienate these abnormal groups and make not only prostitutes' bodies all the more vulnerable, but also bodies of lower class women who were wrongfully acquitted for prostitution in the mass medical-police raids of destitute neighborhoods. Nevertheless, women opted for the "gay life of a fallen woman" because of its potential in offering a life much better than the one oppressed by the patriarchal tripartite entity – allegiance to God, the father/husband, and the tsar – that characterizes the Russian polity (Bernstein L., 134).

Just shy of its fiftieth year anniversary, Tsar Nicholas I's decree of levying yellow tickets resulted in 30,700 registered prostitutes and increased with each passing year. Interestingly, the number of brothels in operation demonstrated an inverse relationship, with 206 brothels in St. Petersburg dwindling to a mere 32 by 1909 ("Three centuries"). On a surface level, one may interpret this as the legacy of

regulation and a victory on the part of the state, but in reality, prostitutes were forced to rely on independent activity, renting out private rooms like Dostoyevsky's Sonya and Garshin's Nadezhda, due to the extremely repressive circumstances that these women faced from the political and social body in fulfilling the roles of their profession. They escape the intrusive public gaze in order to escape the regulative measures imposed by the political body. One Russian proverb goes: "A maiden seen is copper, but the unseen girl is gold" (Bisha, 17). This proverb captures the gradual removal of these undesirable bodies from society and contributes to the construction of prostitutes as abnormal bodies, which drives them further and further from the overarching collective.

Chapter 2: Recreating the Body in Soviet Russia

Whatever hopes the so-called abnormal bodies possessed in rejoining the collective burst asunder during the Soviet era, wherein these bodies endured radical erasure of whatever safe space they could claim for themselves. Legal strictures that protected these bodies were abrogated; consequently, the moderate degree of tolerance these bodies enjoyed was whittled down. Saturated with biopolitical overtones, this era witnessed the percolation of the beliefs that deviance and inappropriate behavior intrinsically embedded in abnormal bodies are to be pathologized as illness ready to jeopardize the health of the Russian body politic. Championed during the sanitizing campaign launched by Lenin in the early 1920's, rhetoric on hygiene permeated the minds of citizens everywhere and espoused the dogma that the health of the somatic body reflected the health of the overarching political body (Simpson 2008). After the initial sexual revolution, the attitude towards sex radically changed. The following dogma was being rapidly accepted: The ideal body is not one that is sexually liberated, for sexual energy in the Soviet era was to be reabsorbed and repackaged as workers' energy. This notion that could be tersely captured in the widely known phrase declaimed by a Leningrad woman in 1986: "There is no sex in the USSR!" (paraphrased, Kon, 1).

Although the Soviet era witnessed variation in the degrees of regulation of the sexuality of abnormal bodies, pronatalist discourse dominated the rhetoric concerning the civic duties of women's bodies. Sexuality outside of the context of procreation was largely vilified as amoral and contradictory to the ascetic quality of the Soviet citizen whose sole purpose was to serve the state. Given the fact that our abnormal bodies of interest particularly demonstrated no meaningful reproductive capacity, I argue that they were stigmatized and problematized as, per Lenin's appraisal of prostitutes, "'diseased excrescence'" that had no place in the collective body (Starks, 31). These bodies had no place in the collective because they are unable and/or unwilling to utilize their bodies to replenish the workforce. Themes of demonization and sensationalization of both sexuality and women's bodies raised during the Imperial era recur during this period, but with far more vicissitude regarding the spaces of their safety. In this

discussion, we will observe that the production and reproduction of healthy proletarian bodies complaisant to the demands of the state embody the *idées fixes* of the Soviet state.

Historical Overview

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 dramatically altered the political landscape of Russia, prompting a sociocultural upheaval that aimed to reinvent the values upon which the nation was predicated. Blaming social ills on the systematic oppression engendered by capitalism, the Bolsheviks catalyzed their modernization experiment which endeavored to create bodies suffused with the ideals of communism. The Soviet vision of the ideal body is that it is sanitized, so that the new state leaves behind the "capitalist world plagued by ineradicable dirt, disorder, and decline" (LaPierre 2010). As Starks asserts, creation of the "body Soviet" was an integral component to the Bolshevik vision of creating "socialist utopia," seeking to ensure the success of their platform (Starks, 4). Soviets believed that "ordered lives produced healthy bodies and politically enlightened, productive, and happy populations" that are governable and productive (Starks, 4). One emergent value that the Soviets championed was the value of hygiene, and Soviets utilized hygiene as a biopolitical metric against which bodies were compared. Hygiene and cleanliness, features of the somatic body, were assigned cultural significance and served as biopolitical metrics against which bodies were compared against. The Soviet fixation on hygiene originates from its earliest years, wherein the establishment of hygiene practices was essential for ensuring the survival of the nascent political body. Political leaders strove to create a healthy body which would create, by extension, a healthy body politic.

Shortly after the 1917 October revolution and the subsequent establishment of the new Soviet state, political leaders were pressed for solutions to the war-ravaged nation. Russia faced crippling health problems such as "large scale typhus and cholera epidemics and mass starvation" (Cockerham, 30). It was soon realized that the successful realization of communism was contingent upon a healthy workforce. In 1918, Lenin established the People's Commissariat of Public Health (Narkomzdrav) which localized "control, administration, and planning of the nation's health services" within that particular ministry (Cockerham, 30).The Narkomzdrav enlisted a "shock troop" of state-sponsored medical professionals as

well as grassroots community activists for policing individual bodies to ensure compliance and to levy discipline on bodies who subvert the Soviet vision of creating "clean and incorruptible communist mind and bodies" (Lapierre, 549). Citizens were subject to the official gaze of the physicians and the public gaze of the activists, who were not above turning in noncompliant citizens. The Narkomzdrav also launched a program of a "sanitary enlightenment" that sought to educate and to incentivize citizens to be more reliant on state-sponsored facilities and physicians. Propaganda posters, traveling museums, public lectures, and a bevy of other media were utilized by Soviets to purport their vision of hygiene which designated good health as pro-Soviet and the diseased condition as anti-Soviet. Propaganda posters were particularly effective because they targeted illiterate populations and extended the liberating ideas of communism even to this hard-to-reach population. One popular convention Soviets used to convey their message is creating binaries, typically side-by-side, in order to visually demonstrate what is considered appropriate behavior. For example, in the poster in **Fig. 2a**, appropriate and inappropriate behavior and visually juxtaposed. Abstention from drinking, smoking, and sex were illuminated as "desirable" behaviors against visual contrasts and consequences of partaking in these detrimental behaviors. Under Lenin, dirt and disease were constructed as remnants of capitalism. Filth served as the metaphor for inappropriate behaviors or qualities errant to the state's vision of the ideal. Starks summarizes: "Ideological deviation was medicalized as a perversity that endangered both the individual and the entire social body" (Starks, 24). Abnormal bodies were inherently cast as ill bodies, which contributed to the erasure of their safe spaces.

The early Soviet years also witnessed the emergence of a sexual revolution (1917-1932) that sprung forth from Soviet rejection of traditional mores of the Imperial *bourgeois* society as well as from the increased visibility of sexuality following relaxing of censorship laws that permitted publication of sexually-charged works observed during Russia's Silver Age. Discourse on sexuality multiplied exponentially, and the global audience was astounded to find such progressive attitudes on matters such as divorce, abortions, or gender equality in socialist Russia. Women's bodies became tools of the state and were constructed to be symbols of modernity, as the Soviet platform sought to liberate women from

the capitalist premodern cult of domesticity and integrate them into the workforce. Bolshevik thinker Martyn Liadov argued that "menstruation itself was a response to the exploitative demands of capitalism that demanded women's constant sexual availability" and served to subordinate women to the familial patriarchy (Simpson, 20). The early Soviet years witnessed a dramatic restructuring of family values which bore important implications for how abnormal bodies were treated and manipulated.

The copious discourse on sexuality was not welcomed warmly by all, especially not by ultraconservative leader Lenin who was perplexed by "sexual depravity" of the nation in the 1920s which still soared on the "wings" of sexual liberation evocatively advocated for by Kuzmin and other Decadent writers (Carleton, 40). Bolshevik Alexandra Kollontai would go on to write that "wingless eros" – a condition in which sexuality is not adequately expressed because love "drained energy away from the revolution" – is detrimental for society as a whole and hearkens back to Rozanov's warnings of the dangers of sexual repression (Carleton, 40). Winglessness, as she phrases it, undercuts visions of modernization, for she feared that unexpressed sexuality would make youth indulge in "unhealthy carnality" by "spreading venereal disease" in "denying love its proper place" (Carleton, 40). Kollontai assailed the demonization of sexuality and likens it to innate biological processes of the somatic body such as the need for food and water: "[Sex] must be seen not as something shameful and sinful but as something which is as natural as the other needs of [a] healthy organism, such as hunger or thirst. Such phenomena cannot be judged as moral or immoral" (Carleton, 40). Her stance that frames sexuality as a biological need received vicious backlash, particularly from Lenin who maligned her equation of "satisfying a sexual urge as one would quench thirst simply [as] 'un-Marxist'" (Carleton, 40). Kollontai and other Bolsheviks had every right to worry, for dangerous expressions of sexuality began to present themselves in tandem with the sexual revolution. In 1926, a young woman was abducted and repeatedly raped by 26 inebriated Leningrad youths, over half of which held Komsomol (a political youth organization) membership and were allegedly returning home from a funeral (Kon, 68). Medical reports that ensued reported that the woman contracted venereal disease during the process (Halfin, 145). The Chubarov Alley gang rape served as the rallying cry for the regulation of sexuality, a mission undertaken

by the iron fist of Stalin, whose ultraconservatism evermore contrived to affix into the groping hands of licentious youths the hammer and sickle.

The era of Stalin ushered in a reassertion of censorship and traditional family values that ensnared women back into the cult of domesticity. Russia grappled with serious demographic crises spanning decades, and these included wars on the domestic and international front as well as Stalin's Reign of Terror. Stalin's attempted restructuring of the economy, particularly during collectivization, lead to significant death and emigration. Although the 1920s envisioned to create *ideal* bodies, the 1930s emphasized the creation of *more* ideal bodies with the pronatalist propaganda surreptitiously polarizing women from their political offices into the kitchens from which they were liberated. Repeal of Stalin's repressive laws could not reverse the marriage of motherhood and women's bodies, for close associations of motherhood as the "essential calling of women" saturated the political body's statues until well into the *glasnost* era of the late Soviet period.

PROSTITUTES

Given the nature of censorship during the Soviet era, prostitutes as a literary trope were largely absent from the cultural body. That said, we will include within this investigation analyses on how women's bodies were manipulated and assigned cultural meaning by the sociopolitical body. Rendering the entirety of women's history during the Soviet era would require a separate investigation altogether, so this analysis focuses specifically on conceptualizing women's bodies with relation to the "circulating of risk and protectionism that are essential for legitimating discrimination and violence" as well as advocating repression of women's bodies particularly with regards to "womb politics" which are chiefly biopolitical concerns (Oliviero 2011).

Culture. Ascribing the theme of filth in reference to bodies that are "ideologically deviant" from the sanitizing mission of the political body was common in the Soviet era, but this phenomenon can actually be traced back to the Imperial era. In Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, a woman recollects a time she visited a house, termed Houses of Mercy, that caters to rehabilitating and reforming prostitutes not uncommon who were uncommon houses or prostitutes in large cities. The woman's tone, however, is far

from compassionate: "Alice is in charge of a wonderful asylum for fallen [women]. I went to visit them once. They are disgusting. After that visit, I couldn't stop washing myself" (Bernstein L., 191) There are two key points to this excerpt. The first of which is the woman's use of the term "asylum" which bears connotations of mental illness in association with the deviant quality of prostitution. The reader will recall the tsar-approved stance that venereal disease specialist Veniamin Tarnovskii contends in his pseudo-scientific treatises that attempt to etiologically explain prostitution as having biological determinants. In other words, prostitutes are believed to possess innate genetic predispositions for their abnormal condition that is likened to mental illness here in this excerpt. The second point to extrapolate from this passage is the notion that prostitutes are associated with filth and dirt, which so profoundly offends the woman that she cannot "stop washing herself" as though the filth and *illness* by extension if we are to examine this in in light of the Soviet crusade against dirt) was communicable.

Close association of venereal disease with prostitutes had its rudimentary beginnings in the visual rhetoric of the posters commissioned by the state and disseminated by the Narkomzdrav during its crusade of sanitary enlightenment. Syphilis emerged as the enemy threatening the loins of men from the days of Catherine the Great and posed a public health threat even in early Soviet Russia. Prostitutes were portrayed as inexorable transmitters of syphilis in these posters whose "depraved sexuality" prevented her from showing remorse the havoc she wreaks on the working man's health. In virtually all of these posters, prostitutes were depicted as active agents in promulgating the spread of venereal disease. The prostitutes in **Fig. 2b, 2c, 2d,** and **2f** all gaze directly at men as though touting their sex appeal and shamelessness which is analogous to the bottom panel's depiction of the "proud and uninhibited" prostitute in the caricature "Two Roads" in *Nadezhda Nikolaevna*. Prostitutes are oftentimes depicted alongside other ills attacked by the political body crusades, including its war against smoking in **Fig. 2b and Fig. 2f** and drinking in **Fig. 2c**. The belief that prostitutes are diseased in the innate sense and in their learned behaviors (e.g. smoking, drinking) doubly stigmatizes these women. Thus, creation of binaries in propaganda poster served as powerful didactical tools conveyed by means of a forceful visual message desirable behaviors of the ideal and hygienic Soviet citizen who must fight against undesirable behaviors.

Within this mode of binaries, we can distinguish two types: outcome binaries and dichotomy binaries. Outcome binaries are significant in that they visually render the demise of men caused by sexual intercourse with a diseased prostitute. These typically outline the progression of the disease, as they do in **Fig. 2a, 2b, and 2d**, and paint a poignant image of the man as a victim. Men are portrayed as falling prey to the seductresses' temptation which ultimately leads to their biological demise. **Fig. 2b** demonstrates the progression of syphilis in genitalia which served educational purposes but also served as a "scare tactic" that resembled less of "beware of venereal disease" but far more "beware of prostitutes" (Bernstein L., 114). The reader will recall **Fig. 2a** that juxtaposes appropriate and inappropriate behavior of Soviet citizens. In the bottom left panel which contains three images, a male figure is depicted with his arms around two women wearing in the first image obsequious face makeup. In the second image, he is bedridden and attended to by a spectacled, male physician, so that the spectator assumes that the male in the first panel contracted a venereal disease. The final image of the series shows a dark, hunched over figure who, in the later stages of his illness, is nearing death. Again, these outcome binaries serve well as "scare tactics" that create the construct of prostitutes as domiciles for venereal disease as well as the image of the blameless male victims permanently handicapped because of the indiscretion of prostitutes who, in Tarnovskii's views, have "no qualms about infecting clients" (Bernstein L., 127). These sentiments of men as victims are hyperbolized particularly in the poster **Fig. 2e** wherein a "larger-than-life proletarian" intercedes on the behalf of a wide-eyed man being seduced by a smoking Delilah and entreats viewers to help prostitutes, who are blameless for their conditions because they are widely considered as vestiges of the "shameful legacy of capitalism" (Bernstein L., 114). Socialist thought defended prostitution as only a "*specific* prostitution of the *general* prostitution of the *laborer*" ("Marx's Economic & Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844"). Such sympathetic views lend themselves to comparisons to the abolitionists' stance on prostitutes' blamelessness replete in Imperial literature that wholly negate women's agency in their participation in the sexual workforce. Outcome binaries exacerbate prostitutes' abnormal qualities in that they can singlehandedly orchestrate the physical demise of the male proletarian body, rendering him an unfit worker, which could not be more incongruous to

Soviet ideals of hygiene. **Fig. 2e** implores compassion for these prostitutes, but Bernstein carefully notes that the "larger-than-life" proletarian saves his male comrade over the prostitute, suggesting hesitation to touch her "dirty" body for fear of potential contamination (Bernstein L., 117).

While outcome binaries tend to pit men against female prostitutes, dichotomy binaries pit women against women. In dichotomy binaries, images of "proper" women are juxtaposed with female prostitutes. "Two Roads" may be aptly characterized as a dichotomy binary. Further, in **Fig. 2g**, we notice the contrast in the physical characteristics of the "honest" woman in the foreground and then the "immoral" prostitute in the background rendered as a shadow *behind* the proper woman in terms of their hair – the prostitutes' hair appears unkempt in contrast to the well-groomed plaits in the proper woman's hair. Indeed, the assignment of cultural meaning to biological aspects, even hair, lends itself to the biopolitcal domain. In **Fig. 2f**, we notice barely any aesthetic differences between the prostitute and the proper woman, and the only giveaway is the presence of alcohol near one of them. These two posters assail men's involvement in the spread of the disease. As though the 1910 prostitutes' petition entreating for protection against men who come into brothels indiscriminately affecting women with syphilis was answered, the propaganda posters succeeded to some extent purporting the Soviet mission of gender equality. I argue, however, there are repercussions to these dichotomy binaries: while they do humanize prostitutes to some degree by shifting blame from them to the men who infect them in addition to proper women, they also create the problem of constructing the clear divide between proper women and prostitutes. Tarnovskii asserts the "fundamental" physical and psychological differences between prostitutes and "honest" women (Bernstein L., 127). That prostitutes are so visibly different from "proper women" in visual rhetoric pits women against women. Much like how Sonya felt displaced in the company of two "proper" women, the sympathetic attitude towards prostitutes conveyed by dichotomy posters is fraught with other problematic constructions that veritably undermine the mission of helping these women.

Censorship prevented the dissemination of topics as taboo as prostitution. Yevgeny Dodolev broke the silence when in the period just prior the *glasnost* era of Soviet history, the society witnessed a relaxing of political repression that permitted certain provocative works to slip through the cracks, so to speak. The first publications on prostitution manifested in Soviet periodicals in 1986 in the newspaper *Moskovskij Komsomolets* and elevated prostitution into visibility. His 1986 book which has since been adapted into box-office hit 1989 film directed by Pyotr Todorovskiy *Interdevochka (*or *Intergirl*) sent shock waves through the nation with his sympathetic and even sensationalistic portrayal of prostitution. Tanya, the film's protagonist works as a nurse's aide by day and lives an alternate life as an upscale prostitute by night. Her clientele is comprised of foreign businessmen and she is so captured by one that she moves to Sweden to marry him, a decision in part inspired by her "desire for foreign currency, goods, and luxuries" ("From Vixen"). Since young Soviet women were taken by the prospects of a glamourous life in the West and in attempts to imitate Tanya's "spike-heeled footsteps," many women enlisted themselves in the sexual workforce. In fact, an article published a decade following the film's release in the May 1999 issue of *Kino-Park* criticized the film for glamorizing and encouraging women to enter prostitution. The article, entitled "How *Intergirl* Was Accused of Prostitution," included anecdotes in which "scholars, policemen, and even prostitutes attest[ed] to the fact that [the film] enticed many girls into prostitution" ("From Vixen").

Perhaps the three most striking features of the film lie in the characteristics of Tanya herself. She is portrayed in such a sympathetic light that it seems as though her profession is a justifiable and acceptable line of work. Critically, it must be noted that Tanya bridges the dichotomy binary in that she is a "proper" woman by Soviet terms in that she occupies a space in the workforce. Further, she, as an educated woman, is not necessarily motivated because of financial hardship. Her dual identity is emblematic of the "alternate lives" that abnormal bodies assume as they assume characteristics considered socially acceptable by the collective so that they may "blend in" with them. Further, it must be noted that Tanya already has a job and is not destitute, so she would fall under the "villain" category of prostitutes not worthy of sympathy or a place in society. The beginning of perestroika: doctors, nurses,

teachers were making no money. The director of the film does not color Tanya in such unflattering light and appears to defend her choice as "an understandable way of responding to the inadequacies of the Soviet system" ("From Vixen"). Finally, the film that depicts Tanya entertaining solely foreign businessmen carries more implicit meanings. It suggests that the running theme of this work is that *prostitution and other social ills are engendered by foreign agents and have no origins in Russian society*. The reader will recall that the first brothel in Russia was operated by a foreign woman. Due to the nature of the economic system, most Soviet men simply could not afford to sleep with prostitutes and thus prostitutes' clientele were predominantly foreigners. Soviet political bodies aggrandized the impenetrability of the male proletariat's minds in response to sexual temptation, when the reality was that their abstention was due to economic reasons.

However, Soviet leaders were uncomfortable with the notion that prostitution was caused by economic or societal conditions. Such interpretations undermine the messianic grandeur with which Soviet body presents itself on the global stage. Kon notes that it was "much less dangerous to explain such things by pointing to the [biological] proclivities of the individuals involved" (Kon, 226). The very institution of prostitution – women plying for money – was totally antithetical to the Soviet mission of dismantling capitalism (Kon, 226). Soviet criminologists framed prostitutes as "sensualists" with "enhanced sex drive" in a highly biopolitical fashion that hearkens back to Tarnovskii's biological explanations for prostitutes' career choices. By shifting the blame to innate biological tendencies, Soviet leaders could wash their hands so to speak of having played any role in creating factors that engendered prostitution.

What little was written about the prostitutes conveys a common theme of demonization and sensationalization. The newspaper *Literaturnaya gazeta* conducted a 1989 survey among Moscow schoolchildren and students at technical colleges revealed society's fascination with prostitution. In a list that ranked the "most prestigious and lucrative" careers during the era, it was found the "prostitutes shared ninth to eleventh places with managers and salespersons, ahead of journalists, diplomats, and taxi drivers, not to mention professors and academicians" (Kon, 223). That prostitutes were regarded with

such esteem evince society's mounting fascination of them. By contrast, in light of the initial periodicals about prostitution, reactions varied from sympathy to violent revulsion. Strong responses were registered within the population, some citizens going so far as to say, "Those prostitutes should have gasoline poured over them and be set alight" or "I would exterminate the lot of them" (Kon, 224). These excerpts demonstrate the underlying mission of social hygienists, which is the purification of society through the treatment (whether it be by eradication) of social ills. A survey of 100 Moscow prostitutes conducted during the Soviet era by police official Y.S. Zhikharev reiterated matters that *Interdevochka* raised in an intersection between art and life:

> "87% were under 25, and half were under 18. They were reasonably well educated (9.3% had a university education). More than half had no other jobs but one in four was married and one in five had children. Seventy percent had become prostitutes while minors (9.1% while under the age of 14, 36.4% between 14 and 15, and 21.2% at 16 to 17), and all had already had regular sexual contacts by then. Nine-tenths had started their sex lives voluntarily; for only 12% did that part of life commence with rape" (Kon, 224).

Like Tanya, a majority of prostitutes were educated young women who voluntarily entered the sexual workforce primarily due to economic reasons. It is less clear whether women entered the sexual workforce out of destitution, as a majority of prostitutes varied in economic background as they did in education background. One can posit that since prostitutes were "reasonably well-educated," not all women were driven to prostitution out of financial circumstances. Withal, such a position comes with the caveat that women were economically displaced by the dramatic economic reforms enacted by the Russian political body during the Soviet Union. Working women took a hard hit, and entering the sexual workforce leveled out the playing field and offered financial security in the economically unstable state. One prostitute was particularly frank about this and expressed to a journalist: "Tell me how much you can earn in a factory -- a hundred roubles a month? And we make a hundred and fifty a day. On a good day we can even make a thousand!" (Kon, 223).

Pivoting our discussion to women's bodies as a whole, the Soviet modernization mission engendered the cultural construct of the New Soviet Woman. This iron virgin is the Soviet symbol of modernity, liberated from the chains of capitalism and elevated to visibility. Socialist Realism emerged as an artistic mode that extolled the Soviet state's contributions to the nation. One goal of the sexual

revolution was to elevate women to the same status as men. This vision that is physically manifested in the *female* sculptor Vera Mukhina's sculpture for the 1937 World's Fair in Paris, *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman*, wherein man and woman both bear a hammer and sickle, symbols of Communism, and are equal in stature. Women's bodies were used in propaganda to illustrate the state's successful realization of its goals. Depictions of women in propaganda posters were replete and women were most often depicted in positions of them with an arm elevated in stride almost as though to convey the massive strides in gender equality afforded to them by the Soviet state as in **Fig. 2l and Fig. 2m.** which is also reflected in Mukhina's sculpture. Socialist Realist literature expounded the agency of these women and created a new literary trope of Soviet heroines that became the standard mode of women's representation during the era. A more critical analysis of the problematics of this construction suggests that although the state colored women in far more positive light than premodern works had, the motives for this social change are not primarily fueled by the desire to promote sexual equality. This work argues that the elevation of women was a mode of social control utilized by the political body to incentivize women to swear allegiance to the Communist party such that their bodies may be integrated into the party to fuel the collective Soviet modernizing machine.

It was Lenin who said that women were "little worms which, unseen, slowly but surely, rot and corrode" the men in their lives (Starks, 31). That women were ascribed to organisms that are literally entrenched in dirt suggested that women were filthy, thus standing apart from the sanitized and enlightened collective body, and in need of purification on socialist terms. The Bolsheviks did not balk at this challenge of cleansing women's bodies. This denigrating stance on women emanating from the head of the political body carried powerful implications on the safe space that women's bodies really occupied in the Soviet era. One critical point to emphasize in the Soviet reimagining of women's bodies is that the Soviets have effectively reconfigured the infrastructure of tripartite patriarchal force that governed and regulated women's bodies (**Fig. 2a)**. Women's bodies were no longer subject to regulation from the ecclesiastical body, for the Soviet body was areligious. In fact, religion in the visual rhetoric of propaganda posters was closely associated with filth. Women's bodies were also liberated from regulation

from the father/husband as a result of the sexual revolution and progressive legislation that permitted divorce and even abortions in the early Soviet years. What resulted is a disproportionate parceling out of regulative power that funneled virtually all regulation of women's bodies underneath the overarching political body, the Soviet body.

The demonization of sensationalization of prostitutes and women's bodies is a complex narrative that oscillates between conflicting narratives of both protection and oppression. Lenin likened prostitutes and women to excrement and parasites, yet lauded women as equal comrades deserving of "emancipation" from "domestic slavery" and censured prostitution as exploitative "trade in female flesh" ("Capitalism and Female Labour"). The question becomes, why were these bodies elevated and sensationalized? The answer may be embedded within the nuances of Lenin's discourse on women. In his 1918 speech at the First All-Russia Congress of Working Women, Lenin declares: "There can be no socialist revolution unless very many working women take a big part in it" ("Capitalism and Female Labour"). Taking this notion of the "working woman," one must ask, what are acceptable types of work for women? Prostitution was women's work regarded as an expression of the vestigial premodern capitalist society and was thus proscribed by the political body. Withal, ideal women's bodies were portrayed as productive, working bodies. In retrospect, there is nothing that Soviet women can do that Soviet men cannot do, a stance championed and glamorized by gender equality discourse; however, there is one thing that the Soviet man cannot do, and that is produce *more* bodies.

Laws. In our analysis of laws governing prostitutes and women's bodies, it is imperative to introduce the notion of womb politics. Miller writes: "The womb is a paradigmatic space for biopolitics; therefore (re)productive politics play a major role in the attainment of rights as citizens" (Stapleton & Byers, 3). In other words, reproductive capacity is a quality of the ideal woman's body and Soviet pronatalist discourse emphasized that creating more bodies is the working woman's civic duty to the state. Politicizing sexuality is a key biopolitical tactic that Soviets employed primarily in its intrusion into the somatic experience of motherhood and maternity. And as we will see, governmental regulation emanating from the political body trespasses into the womb.

Soviets seldom mention prostitution in official legislation because acknowledgement of its existence would highlight breakdowns in social control. Following the 1917 February Revolution, criminal codes prohibiting prostitution were abolished, but that accomplished little by way of creating more safe space for prostitutes. Lenin's demonizing rhetoric on prostitutes helped create an atmosphere of subjugation for these bodies. In one instance, he brazenly demanded to "take out and shoot [the] hundreds of prostitutes who are all causing the soldiers to drink" in Nizhny Novgorod ("Lenin to G.F. Fyodorov"). Women suspected of prostitution were sent to labor dispensary camps that treated these women of venereal disease and attempted to re-educate them in a trade to instill in them "proper" expressions of work, not unlike attempts by well-meaning abolitionists spearheading the House of Mercy during the Imperial era. Qualms regarding the blamelessness of prostitutes and whether they deserved redemption or repression existed well into the Soviet era and is best illustrated in the differential response to venereal disease in Soviet naval fleet.

Commanders of the naval fleet in Sevastopol in 1927 were horrified to discover that sailors in the Black Sea fleet possessed the "highest levels of venereal infection of any naval fleet in the world" (Hearne 2017). Attributing this shocking statistic to sailors' promiscuity and frequent carousals with local prostitutes, naval high command and Sevastopol city authorities commissioned the opening of a labor dispensary that would alleviate the financial burdens prostitutes faced as well as mitigate venereal disease spread. The dispensary was overwhelmingly successful at curbing the spread of venereal disease, but was faced with the all too common dilemma of underfunding. In 1925, nearly 75% of labor dispensaries commissioned by the Ministry of Health were entirely financially dependent on the central Commissariat, who "often could not provide the necessary funding" to keep the dispensaries operating (Hearne 2017). Newspaper coverage of the incident was highlighted in a 1927 article in the newspaper *Krasnyi Chernomorets.* With the risk of the dispensary's termination, Sevastopol city authorities garnered the support of employees in one political department to pledge over half of their salaries to the dispensary and entreated other departments follow suit. As Hearne notes in her essay, the enterprise between the political and social (military) body indicates the notion that "the eradication of venereal diseases and prostitution

[w]as a 'struggle' that involved the whole of society. City residents had a societal responsibility to help reform economically vulnerable prostitutes into workers" (Hearne 2017). Although surveillance was not a key feature in this scenario, the political and social gaze helped raise the economic plight of prostitutes to visibility, which in turn elicited regulation of their bodies and activities which were largely welcomed given the beneficent treatment they received in these dispensaries. **Fig. 2i** is a still from the 1926 film "A Prostitute, Killed by Life" (*Prostitutka, Ubitaia Zhizn'iu*) directed by Oleg Frelikh that depicted a prostitute named Liuba whose reassimilation into the working collective body was mediated by her entrance into the dispensary, which she "becomes a vocal advocate for" throughout the film (Hearne 2017).

The Sevastopol situation may be regarded as a best-case scenario when dealing with attempts to regulate prostitutes' bodies. Naval authorities in the Black Sea took a far more inimical approach by dividing prostitutes into two camps – victim or villain – which decided whether these women would be granted access to the dispensary. Their qualifier for a victim was akin to Dostoyevskian moralistic sympathies and this camp was constituted of single, unemployed, and homeless women who were products of circumstance left over from the "filthy" bourgeois society. Prostitutes framed as villains, however, were camps from "'petty-bourgeois masses' who apparently engaged in both 'free and paid casual sex'" (Hearne 2017). Prostitutes that fell into this camp were not even candidates for the dispensary and were subject to discrimination and censure by the naval authorities who railed against their moral impropriety and blamed them for their "malicious" spreading of venereal disease which "deliberate damaged the socialist cause" (Hearne 2017). Published only one year after the Sevastopol article in 1928 and in the same newspaper, an article implored city residents for assistance in "rooting out" these "malicious prostitutes" who represented a so-called "black spot" in Soviet society. Inflammatory language abounded in the article, which encouraged citizens report these women to authorities. The Sevastopol district committee advocated for the "eviction of these "malicious prostitutes" from the city as well as the "liquidation of the brothels" in which they worked (Hearne 2017).

Three key notions may be extrapolated from the contradictory approaches in dealing with prostitutes. First, the entrepreneurship between the political and social body made it such that individuals played an active role in the creation of a healthy, collective body. Not only were citizens charged with a civic duty of keeping their own bodies pristine, they must ensure that other bodies are healthy as well such as to prevent contamination of others "for the good of the new socialist society" (Hearne 2017). Second, we see that even killing God, which is an apt description of the state of the ecclesiastical body in the Soviet years, could not dampen the moralistic overtones in rhetoric regarding prostitutes. These moral tendencies are tinged with health connotations ("black spot") that speak to social hygienists' aims to eradicate abnormality disguised as metaphors for filth that needs cleansing in what may be likened to social eugenics, for suspected prostitutes were literally expunged during Stalin's Great Terror. Finally, we see that even casual sex is assailed as a quality of "malicious" prostitutes which conveys the Soviet conservative stance on sexuality. We see similar invectives in the Narkomzdrav sanitary enlightenment poster **Fig. 2c** which warns: "Casual sex: the main source of the spread of venereal disease" (Bernstein L., 118). Soviet disapprobation for casual sex speaks to the war waged against unproductive sexuality. Contrary to Kollontai's "wingless eros" theory, many political leaders believed that sexuality should be expressed sparingly, for sexual energy could be channeled elsewhere such as work. Casual sex was unproductive, and usually not reproductive either. Both qualities are antithetical to Soviet values and are married together within the prostitutes' body and incidentally during the reign of Stalin, prostitutes were classified as "class enemies". In these contradictory approaches we witness oscillating levels of "risk and protectionism" which legitimize biopolitical stigmatization and alienation of these groups. Although it is subtle, we also see in the naval fleets' contradictory approaches the problematics of the creation of binaries when assaying who is deserving of what.

Although no legislation permitted or prohibited prostitution up until the late Soviet years, these women were at risk for prosecution for a bevy of laws that aimed to curb venereal disease. Article 150 of the 1926 Family Code criminalized transmission of venereal disease and Article 132 mandated that couples reveal their sexual health status upon registering for marriage. Further, a decree passed in 1927

permitted "forceful examination and treatment" of individuals diagnosed with venereal disease should they refuse treatment (Hearne 2017). In response to Dodolev's articles that brought prostitution in the Soviet Union to public visibility, an amendment was added in 1987 to the Code of Administrative Offences that fined exposed prostitutes 100 roubles and similar incarnations of this fine exist in modern legislation today (Johnson, 33). The levying of this law reiterates the theme of the gaze in that raising something to public visibility often results in regulation of it, as observed by the strictures regulating prostitutes' bodies co-occuring with literary discourse bringing prostitutes into focus. Apart from this amendment, very little by way of legal strictures impeded prostitutes. By no means, however, was their work considered tolerable. Prostitutes were not only absent in the cultural body, but they were largely invisible in the legal body as well. The lack of protection for *these* women amidst the profuse passage of laws in favor of honest-working women created a peculiar legal dichotomous binary and marked the reality of the situation, which is the total erasure of the safe space for prostitutes.

Shifting our focus to Soviet manipulation of "womb politics" in women's bodies as a whole, we will first consider, to quote Lilya Kaganovsky, how the Soviet man was unmade to analyze how the political body came to be the sole regulator of women's bodies (Kaganovsky, 1). As we have mentioned, the tripartite patriarchal force that regulated women's bodies was restructured during the Soviet era to disenfranchise the ecclesiastical body to centralize power towards the political body. Now that the Soviets have killed off God, they moved to run out dad. The pronatalist rhetoric that emerged most visibly after the Stalin era created a new trope of modernization – the bespectacled male doctor. Donning a spotless white coat, the doctor is just as recognizable a trope as the dirty female prostitute to whom he served as a foil (**Fig. 2a, 2h, 2j, and 2k)**. The medical doctors operated under the state as conduits of the sanitization mission and could thus be considered as extensions of the political body. This work posits that the political body subsumed the regulative power of the familial patriarch, the father, by its insertion of male doctors into the nuclear family relationship. In the 1920s, the Narkomzdrav created maternal health campaigns that regulated women's bodies by subjecting mothers to mandatory consultations with male doctors who urged hygienic practices and, more often than not, urged women to procreate more. The ideal

woman was a procreative one, and this system of consultation served both as a means to surveil and regulate women's bodies but also functioned as a covenant between the political body and the somatic (female) body which indirectly usurped the role of fathers. Birth fathers were left at a disadvantaged state during the era. The creation of the New Soviet Woman made women to be autonomous agents of power who often left their families and repressive husbands to devote themselves entirely to working for state. In Aleksandr Nekrosov's Socialist Realist story *Marya the Bolshevik*, the newly liberated Marya stands her ground against her barbaric husband whose barbaric mannerisms were contrasted with her rational composure:

> "'I will kill you. I will rip your soul out!'
> But Marya was a sly one. She'd begin to make much of him just for the fun of it, as if she were frightened. 'Prokofi Mitrich! Prokofi Mitrich! What is it?'
> 'I will cut your head off!'
> 'I've just cooked some porridge. You want some?'" ("Marya the Bolshevik")

Marya's husband is infantilized as a pinching, tantrum-throwing brute and is derogatorily referred to as "Goat" throughout the work. He threatens to cut Marya's skirt short should she attend the Bolshevik meetings that began to assemble in the provincial town. Enlightened by socialist ideology, she begins to gradually resist her husband's abuse. As he prepares to beat her, she retorts: "Just touch me. I will break all the pots on your goat's head…no, darling, things aren't what they used to be" ("Marya"). This quote suggests the liberating promise of the Soviet platform which waxed enthusiastic about gender equality. This work also highlights the political body's eradication of the ecclesiastical body's power. Marya informs her husband of her desire to join the Bolshevik party and is met with derision. He berates: ""Aren't you ashamed of yourself? Where is your conscience? Remember, God will not forgive you the way you misbehave yourself!" ("Marya"). At this, Marya roars with laughter and retorts: "God? What God? When did you invent Him?" ("Marya"). The story concludes with Marya abandoning her husband and her egress from the provincial town following her promotion to high ranks within the Bolshevik party, which moved other women to leave their husbands to follow in her steps. What this work clearly demonstrates is the emancipating power the state offered its women to entice them to join the Soviet cause. Her and the other women's defiance to the patriarchal power of their husbands suggest the

liberating power of the state and the covenant between the political body the New Soviet Women's bodies. In removing the familial patriarch from the picture, the state assumes full regulatory power of women's bodies. Marya's husband laments: "She belongs to the government [now]" ("Marya"). We will see, however, that the political body does not necessarily hold up its end of the deal with its narrow conception of how women's bodies were to be used.

One stipulation this work asserts is that in championing women's liberation, the Soviet body was genuinely concerned with bolstering gender equality than it was recruiting and subsequently regulating women's bodies to serve its own political ends, which is the creation of *more* bodies. In purporting laws and entities that govern motherhood, the political body secures its grandest vision: continuous replenishment of the workforce with generations of healthy, productive, complaisant bodies inculcated with the redeeming ideals of socialism. The means to that end involved securing sole regulation of women's bodies that veritably acquired more reproductive rights that alleviated them of centuries of repression. The Family Code of 1918 permitted divorce and the Decree on Abortion of 1920 circulated by the Narkomzdrav legalized abortion and made it free and "without any charge in Soviet hospitals" where "conditions are assured of minimizing the harm of the operation" ("Decree on Abortion" 1920). On a surface level, the political body appears concerned with women's rights, but doctors behind this decree were more concerned about "botched abortions" that "harmed women" and rendered them incapable of reproducing future generations of socialists (Starks, 138). Propaganda that underscored the nation's "dangerously low population growth" relative to Western countries circulated in tandem with pronatalist propaganda. As far as the Soviets were concerned, a large population base was indicative of a healthy and functioning body politic, and the entrepreneurship between women's bodies and male doctors (functioning as stand-ins for the political body) is observed as a powerful mode of regulation and is rendered visually in sanitary enlightenment poster **Fig. 2k** which juxtaposed the squalid conditions of the folk healer's home with the modernized state hospital**.** Expectant mothers were advised to avoid going to the midwife, who the state assailed with associations of filth and were claimed to "torture" women as evinced by the exhausted appearance of the woman giving birth under the midwife's care. Women were

instead advised to entrust the male doctor and involve in matters from childbirth to childrearing. Consultations served to regulate women's bodies, for these mandatory check-ups ensured that their infants were up to Soviet standards of health. These consultations were recommended "no less than three days of giving birth" (Starks, 155). Male doctors levy the official gaze that compares infant bodies against physiological metrics set by the state. Surveillance via the public gaze emanating from the social body also mediates regulation of women's bodies. For instance, one article relates an incident wherein a female worker notified authorities of a certain woman in her building who had given birth two weeks prior and had yet to receive a consultation. This particular case demonstrates that citizens play an active role in securing the health of individual members of the collective body, which bolsters the health of the overall collective. The woman who turned the noncompliant mother into authorities felt that as a "cultured" worker, she "urgently" insisted that a consultation take place at once (Starks, 155). The invasiveness of the male doctor and by extension the political body in women's matters could not be overstated and is best captured in the following exchange between an agitated mother and a female Bolshevik member.

> "'It was enough that they spoiled my husband. He forgot his faith, but I will not give them my children to spoil…They are my kids…I will do as I like.' A young female Komsomol member, representing the new order, rebuked her: 'That is nonsense, Stepanovna. Your children are not your own. Children belong to the society of workers'" (Starks, 139).

As this excerpt demonstrates, the purpose of women's bodies is to create offspring whose bodies will replenish the workforce and realize Soviet visions of socialism and modernity. Although the Soviets did not create abnormal bodies out of women's bodies, the binary they created between women's bodies and prostitutes' bodies cannot be overlooked. In constructing the image of the ideal New Soviet Woman as one who is *productive* and a participant in honest lines of work and *reproductive*, for whom motherhood is a civic duty, prostitutes are inherently castigated as abnormal bodies for they forfeit their place in the collective by refusing to rent out their wombs to the political body, so to speak, to birth more bodies to be inculcated with socialist virtues that so vehemently repress them.

HOMOSEXUALS

Perhaps enjoying one of the widest breadth of safe space, homosexuals' safe spaces were largely erased during the Soviet era. Owing in part to Stalin's conservative legislation criminalizing homosexuality and the "sexophobia" of the Soviet Union following the 1917 Revolution, homosexual bodies began to be reviled and targeted by the state as vestiges of the capitalist past. Homosexual culture was largely stifled throughout the era as most people suspected of homosexuality feared for their lives. Culture. In stark contrast to the copious amount of circulation and moderate readership that homosexual authors enjoyed, censorship in the years following the late 1920s prevented circulation of literature in the homoerotic tradition. Homosexual writes who rose to prominence in the Silver Age of Literature such as Kuzmin gradually faded into obscurity, and the canon of homoerotic literature ceased to exist following Stalin's criminalization of sexuality. Even the most influential of homosexual artists were unable to withstand the prodigious repression meted out by the Soviets. Nikolai Klyuev and Sergei Esenin were one of the most recognizable Decadent poets during the period and lived together as lovers. The unremitting persecution of homosexuals that would crescendo in the years after the ultraconservative Lenin took power drove Esenin to suicide in 1925 and sent Klyuev into a gulag camp in 1933, where he would toil in hard labor until his death five years later. Perhaps the one of most visible incarcerations of this kind is the one of internationally acclaimed Soviet filmmaker Sergei Paradjanov whose film The Color of Pomegranates appears on the list of "greatest films ever made" of top film critics to this day. By the 1970s, gay culture had been effectively driven underground. Leningrad poet Gennady Trifonov was accused of privately circulating homoerotic poems and manuscripts and was punished with four years of hard labor from the years 1976 to 1980 (Kon, 25). Fiction writer Yevgeny Kharitonov was allegedly "harassed by the authorities" although his work was never disseminated to more than a few people. The vicious stigmatization of homosexual bodies forced a large number of them to remove themselves from the collective before Soviet authorities purged them first. Of the homosexual Russian emigres to the West, the most influential were Georgy Adamovich, Anatoly Stieger, and Marina Tsvetaeva who wrote poignantly but critically about her relationship to her homeland in her poem "Homesickness": "My

homeland cared so little for me / any clever sleuth / may search my soul-- / he will find no birthmark" ("'Homesickness' by Marina Tsvetaeva" tr. Schmidt).

One point to be emphasized is that notwithstanding the violence that homosexual bodies faced, varying degrees of tolerance blunted the difficulties of their existence. For example, Kharitonov's straight contemporaries respected the writer immensely even though they "disapproved of his open treatment of homosexuality" ("Russian Gay Literature"). The fascinating case of Paradjanov and his history of criminalization with indictments of homosexuality also represent instances of tolerance with which homosexual artists were received during Soviet times. Prior to his scandalous 1973 indictment, Paradjanov had actually been sentenced to a five-year-long prison sentence for engaging in homosexual acts with a military officer but was released three months into his sentence ("*Vsya pravda o sudimostyakh Sergeya Paradzhanova*" 2008). That this was overlooked for a majority of his career supports the notion that the Soviet masses bore some tolerance for homosexuality. Paradjanov's arrest in 1973 over charges of "propagation of pornography" and "rape of a Communist party member" did not tarnish his reputation or career significantly ("*Osuzhden za iznasilovanie chlena KPSS*" 2004). His straight filmmaker contemporary Andrew Tarkovsky wrote a letter to Soviet authorities that implored them for some leniency: "In the last ten years Sergei Paradjanov has made only two films: Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors and The Colour of Pomegranates. They have influenced cinema first in Ukraine, second in this country as a whole, and third in the world at large. Artistically, there are few people in the entire world who could replace Paradjanov. He is guilty – guilty of his solitude. We are guilty of not thinking of him daily and of failing to discover the significance of a master" ("Sergey Paradzhanov"). Among those who advocated for Parajanov's release were "an eclectic group of artists, filmmakers and activists" who were variegated in both background and international prestige with names such as Yves Saint Laurent, Françoise Sagan, Jean-Luc Godard, François Truffaut, Luis Buñuel, Federico Fellini, Michelangelo Antonioni, and Mikhail Vartanov demonstrating solidarity on Parajanov's behalf ("Sergey Paradzhanov"). The support that homosexuals receive from their social relationships is reminiscent to the

feelings of camaraderie that Pushkin evokes in the descriptions of his homosexual friends in his personal letters, evincing that homosexual bodies' still occupied some safe space in Soviet society.

Laws. When the Bolsheviks took over in 1917, they abrogated the entirety of the Criminal Code of the Russian Empire, and the criminal codes subsequently propagated in 1922 and amended in 1926 made no mention of homosexuality (Kon, 70). Like prostitution, homosexuality was not illegal but certainly not permissible either. According to Soviet physician and sexologist Mikhail Stern, homosexuality was not painted just as an illness, but it was characterized as "the most sickening of perversions" (Stern, 215). Perhaps what made homosexuality so damning is its close associations to the capitalist past, for homosexuality was a vice of "upper-class exploiters" (Kon, 24). Kon elucidates that "because the most visible homosexuals of the prerevolutionary decades belonged to royalty or aristocracy (the grand dukes, Meshchersky) or were politically ultraconservative," Soviet leaders were predispositioned to the notion that homosexual bodies needed to be regulated harshly to purify them of the traces of their "Decadent past" (Kon, 24).

No de facto legislation criminalizing homosexuals existed until Stalin's regime, and with the absence of laws governing prostitutes' bodies, the Soviet Union presented itself as a paragon of modernity and sexual progressiveness. In the Congress of the World Leave for Sexual Reform that took place in Copenhagen in 1928, the Soviet Union was highlighted as "an example of progressivism" to committee representatives that other countries should strive to model (Kon, 70-71). This feint of modernity was perceptible only by the abnormal bodies so vehemently targeted during the era. Two particular trials that involved homosexuals were covered up and underplayed by the Soviet government to tout their idealized visions of the nation on the global stage. One trial involved a group of Baltic Fleet sailors who "rented out a large apartment in which to receive their gay lovers and friends" and the other involved a lesbian couple wherein one of women changed her name and donned men's clothing in public so that she and her lover could "be seen as spouses" (Kon, 24). Again, we see this theme of alienated bodies adopting characteristics of the collective to be able to blend in.

As mentioned earlier, the Soviets were responsible for the construction of disease as an enemy of the state during the years of the healthcare revolution that positioned health/hygiene as the penultimate values of citizens besides socialism. Therefore, it stood that the positions held Soviet medical experts were just as legitimate as laws. As reflected in the 1930 encyclopedia article written by medical expert Mark Sereisky, homosexuality was pathologized as an illness that was "difficult" and perhaps even "impossible to cure" (Kon, 71). Sereisky writes:

> "While recognizing the incorrectness of homosexual development, society does not and cannot blame those who bear such traits…In emphasizing the significance of sources that give rise to such an anomaly, our society combines prophylactic and other therapeutic measures with all the necessary conditions for making the conflicts that afflict homosexuals as painless as possible and for resolving their typical estrangement from society within the collective" (italics mine, Kon, 71)

This excerpt hones in on a notion that this work attempts to expound, which is that abnormal bodies are separated from the collective, dismembering it, and are thus subject to regulative measures to "correct" the abnormality so that they be reaffixed into the collective body. Sereisky cites that one "radical cure" that may permanently treat homosexuality would be "transplanting testicles from heterosexual men to homosexual men" which had been raised by other scientists in the past, and one common misconception that straight citizens possessed and seriously suggested to their homosexual friends as per lesbian writer Laurie Essig's reminiscences (Essig, 2).

Stalin's recriminalization of homosexuality in 1934 created waves through the nation, for it totally eradicated the legal safe space that homosexual bodies possessed. Article 121 indicted men accused of men laying with men (*muzhelozhstvo)* with five-year prison sentences. Abnormal bodies were coerced into prisons, where homosexual culture would arguably flourish within the confines that were one of the few "safe spaces" these abnormal bodies could occupy. The irony of the situation is that imprisoning homosexuals often carved out a life of perpetual abuse for them. Prison culture created the *opushchennye* (roughly translated to "degraded") who subjected himself to the fulfilling the sexual appetites of other prisoners and were subject to ritualized rape for matters as trivial as "losing cards," "an insult," or even simply for being physically attractive ("Russian Gay History"). Although homosexuality was decriminalized again in the years after Stalin's rule, the profundity of its effects created an

irreversible construction of homosexuals as abnormal bodies as evinced by the mounting violence these bodies endured. Further, even homosexuals themselves began to believe that their sexuality was an illness too, speaking to the pervasive effects that Soviet health propaganda had on its public. A letter received by Michael Stern written by a homosexual youth expressed that "his sickness made him feel nothing but contempt for himself" and that "he believed that his homosexuality [was] an illness and he was beginning to fear that it might prove incurable" (Stern, 216). This young student's concerns reflected those of Sereisky's in believing that homosexuality was an illness immune to treatment. The repercussions of such a construction, which suggests that nothing can alleviate these homosexual bodies of their abnormality, play out in insidious ways with operations that aim to eradicate these abnormal bodies for the betterment of the health of the collective body.

The question becomes, then, what are ways that abnormal bodies cope with their alienation from society? This work posits that abnormal bodies create their own safe spaces within the abnormal groups. In other words, they turn to one another to be able to live in a society which so profoundly rejects them as its own citizens. Although not necessarily novel institutions, the creation of these "support groups" comprised of abnormal bodies and their advocates signify initial attempts at harm reduction. In 1984, a group of Leningrad men identifying as homosexual came together to form the "first organization of gay men" ("Russian Gay History"). This organization quickly caught the leering official gaze from the KGB, the official Soviet police, which harassed the group until it disbanded ("Russian Gay History"). Such organizations flourished only after the glasnost era wherein the Moscow Gay and Lesbian Alliance came into the fray with the female president Yevgeniya Debryanskaya. *Tema*, the "first officially registered gay newspaper" of the Soviet period, also began to publish regularly. Such strides were accompanied with unspeakable acts of violence against homosexual bodies, reinforcing their abnormality, which will only intensify in the years to come.

Chapter 3: Bridging the Soviet Body with the Perfecting Body in Post-Soviet Era

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992 ushered in dramatic changes in virtually all levels of the Russian body politic. Today, the Russian Federation is considered one of the most industrialized and modernized nations of the world which may be seen as a fulfillment of the Soviet modernizing mission. Having achieved this ultimate vision, what becomes apparent in contemporary times is this desire to portray the best possible vision of itself on the global stage. While this is not unique to Russia, what *is* unique is the extent the body politic will go to materialize this goal. This section contends that the post-Soviet ideal body is a *perfecting* body, one that polices abnormal bodies such as to either reintegrate them into the collective or eradicate them altogether. Their program for dealing with abnormal bodies is universally applicable between body to body evinced by the shared experiences of prostitutes, homosexuals, and intravenous drug users. The methodological approach to dealing with abnormal bodies, which I have dubbed as the surgical approach, is introduced in this chapter so as to illustrate that the construction of abnormal bodies in Russian history is not a novel phenomenon and that HIV-positive individuals are simply the state's most recent and arguably the most stigmatized construct.

Historical Overview

Under Boris Yeltsin, the socialist enterprise came to a close and was replaced with the very institution it fought so hard to erase– a capitalist market economy. Yeltsin's "shock therapy", in reference to his economic reforms that transformed the former Soviet economy to a "centrally planned economy to free-market mechanisms" during his regime, initially wreaked havoc on the Russian economy and its people:

> "Inflation had reduced the value of Russia's currency. Millions of middle class Russians have lost their life savings…abrupt cuts to subsidies meant millions had not been paid in months. The average Russian consumed 40% less in 1992 than in 1991…and approximately 39-49% of people lived in poverty by mid-1993…by the mid-1990's, the economy was depressed… [and Russia was thrust into a] financial crash…more severe than that suffered by the United States in the

> Great Depression of the 1930s [in terms of GDP]" ("Transition to a Market Economy"; Klein, 244-245).

It should not come as a surprise that these shocks to the economic system co-occurred with psychological and physiological shocks to bodily systems (Tompson 2007). The early years of the post-Soviet era witnessed a mortality crisis and a dramatic upshot in prevalence of both infectious and non-infectious diseases. During Yeltsin's term, the GDP for health funding plummeted to 1% in 1995 and raised slightly only to 2.2% in 1997 and is indicative of the notion that healthcare was not a national priority evinced by consistent underfunding of the healthcare sector. Around the same time, we see the most dramatic upsurges of rates of STIs in the post-Soviet era. From the years 1989 to 1997, the rate of syphilis rose by as high as 40 times…and [also by 1997], it was more than 50 times greater than the rate in United States or Europe (Powell, 131). Further, the prevalence of gonorrhea was 173.5 times per 100,000 people. To borrow Igor Kon's phrasing, the sexual beast has broken loose, and the body is assailed (Kon, 107).

This work stipulates that post-Soviet conceptions of the body are mired in uncertainties for Russia's tumultuous sociopolitical history prevented formulation of firm concepts of national identity. As there is a limited amount of research on Russia's conceptions of self, this work relies on personal interviews conducted with college students native to Russia but studying abroad in the United States that aimed to capture what an ideal body looked like in the post-Soviet era (questions listed in Appendix). When queried on what constitutes an ideal body, four out of the five students gave physical characteristics such as "supermodel skinny" or "physically fit" and while that may be a narrow interpretation of the term "body" on the interviewees' parts, it suggests the physiological editing (a biopolitcal domain) that a legacy of both Soviet and post-Soviet leaders endorsed. For example, as innocuous as it is, current Russian president Vladimir Putin's yearly calendar trumpets behaviors and aphorisms that aim to capture both his personal beliefs and, by extension, the beliefs of his supporters. In his April 2016 spread, the president is photographed mid-exercise with the caption alongside it reading, "A love for sport is established in childhood, in a family. A love for sport is inconsistent with tobacco, with alcohol, and with drugs" (Chance 2016; **Fig. 3a**). Just in these two sentences, Putin captures the essence of decades of

Soviet propaganda, which cherished the value of good health and the experience of motherhood. This rhetoric that trumpets health and delineates what constitutes unhealthy behaviors is certainly on the same vein as the posters commissioned during the sanitary enlightenment period, but instead of creating binaries out of contrasting bodies, ideal behaviors are practiced by the exemplar of political patriarchal power. Although this interpretation may admittedly be a stretch, analyzing the connotation of "supermodel skinny" denotes certain notions of visibility. Supermodels make careers out of being looked at and scrutinized, and thus must maintain qualities of physical aesthetic perfection so that they may be looked favorably upon by the external world. This attainment of perfection, I argue, is the overarching goal of the Russian body politic today and is a value that is borne out of the social eugenics that Soviet social hygienists accomplished in their treatment/eradication of abnormal bodies. When queried about the image that Russia desired to convey to the world, one student responded: "I think that Russia wants to present itself as this *perfect* nation and does this by *ignoring* and *hiding* or even *lying* about all the ugliness that goes on in our borders" (italics mine). The main underpinning of this student's stance is that "ugliness" – which may be understood as any entity or behavior that mangles the image of perfection – is edited or covered up so as to project a positive national image. Another student offers that the "ability to thrive and be better" is crucial for creating Russia's desired image of itself and "keeping th[is] image amongst its people" is one concern of the political body. Perfection is admittedly an esoteric term that requires clarification. *Perfection as this work will explore is the absence, or at least the invisibility, of abnormal bodies.* This raises a few key questions: What does perfection, this utopic ideal, look like? Who does the editing and against what values? What is the result of this construct? We will grapple with these questions later on in this chapter, but first it is imperative to analyze our abnormal bodies of interest and navigate through thematic recurrences and overlaps that unify their experiences as severed members of the collective body. For this, we will use our model of the tripartite patriarchal force and apply its implications more broadly to homosexuals and to intravenous drug users, which this section introduces.

HOMOSEXUALS

When the Soviet Union opened its borders to the world in 1992, foreigners came flocking in with "Western" ideals that were thought to have corrupted the once morally pure collective body. Homosexuality was erroneously constructed as a foreign agent, so not only was it widely perceived to be a mental illness, it was a symbol of the West which meant that it had no place in Russian society. In 1993, the Russian Federation issued a Criminal Code that did not include Article 121, the legislation that criminalized homosexuality. Censorship relaxed and culture began to move from the underground and prisons onto literature once again. LGBT plays and film festivals began to be shown, and the safe space for these groups began to reappear. As we have keenly observed in the past, one consequence of increased visibility is heightened regulation, which is precisely the grounds which Russia's infamous 2013 "Gay Propaganda Laws" were predicated upon. The legislation directly states that "the promotion of homosexuality has sharply increased in modern-day Russia" which in turn led to the portrayal of "homosexuality as a normal behavior" which was "particularly dangerous for children and young people" as it would have injured their "moral and spiritual wellbeing" ("Russia: The Anti-Propaganda Law" 2014). Just at the very outset of this legislation, we can observe one key thing, which is the reformation of the tripartite patriarchal force. The considerations to the "moral and spiritual" state of children suggests that in order to regulate bodies beyond women's bodies, the standalone political body must employ the other players of regulation. As such, President Putin effectively resurrects God and the ecclesiastical body to suffuse this legislation against homosexuality with earthly sanctions, but also of divine sanctions as well, which had not been observed since the era of the tsars. One other key thing to note is the legislation's "paternalistic" tone evinced by a concern for the protection of children. Similar tones of concern for children can be observed in the rhetoric employed by male doctors acting as stand-ins for the political body during the Soviet era who were considered founts of knowledge in the realm of childrearing. This legislation also welcomed dad back home, enfranchising the familial patriarch once again with its inclusion of the clause that prohibited "discrediting the traditional family model" ("Anti-Propaganda Law"). In other words, it prevented any public mention of matters such as domestic violence that would portray the heteronormative relationship in an unflattering light. Women's bodies were

directly affected because of this. In January 2017, a shocking legislation legalized wife beating so long as the assault does not produce injuries that warrant hospitalization. One woman laments: "My husband tried to strangle me. He left me unconscious and thought he'd killed me…He told me that he has the right to do whatever he wants because he's the master" (Stallard 2018). Under this law, the safety of women's bodies come beneath the jurisdiction of the political and familial patriarchs. This interplay between homosexual and women's bodies suggests that the experiences of abnormal bodies can be largely interposed on one another.

One of the most dangerous aspects of this legislation is that it explicitly prohibits "social approval" of homosexuality which blatantly states that homosexual bodies have no place in society ("Anti-Propaganda Law"). With this statue, the political body beckons the participation of individual members of the social body in the surveillance and regulation of those suspected of homosexuality. The violence endured by homosexuals since the passage of this laws is harrowing. That year, a 23-year-old man in Volgograd confessed to his drinking friends his real sexuality, who then "beat him, shoved beer bottles in his anus, and crushed his head with a stone" until he died (Khazan 2013). When questioned about the motivation for such a gruesome murder, they simply replied that he "offended their patriotic feelings" (Sharma 2014). To demonstrate the fascinating interface between prostitutes' and women's bodies and homosexuals, let us consider the religion-infused invectives and abuse against homosexual bodies particularly in the 2014 BBC documentary *Hunted in Russia* and 2014 VICE documentary *Young and Gay in Putin's Russia*. While the Soviet theme of hygiene was used to stigmatize primarily prostitutes' and women's bodies, we see the reiteration of this metaphor operating in the homophobic language in both documentaries. The documentary *Hunted in Russia* depicts the efforts of gay vigilante groups who "hunt" homosexuals, and the close association between hygiene and morality is established in the beginning when Timor, the leader of one such group states that hunting is a duty to his family: "Having a wife and child changes the way you think. You begin to think about the purity of this world" (*Hunted in Russia*). In planning and subsequently executing an intimidation technique at an LGBT film

festival, Timor employs the Soviet metaphor for filth as inappropriate behaviors or qualities domiciled in abnormal bodies:

> "I came up with an idea yesterday, we're going to buy soap and rope and put them into gift bags. Then we present the bags to the guests at the festival. Each bag will have a small card saying: "Kill yourself and cleanse the earth of your wickedness…Filth like them should not exist. It would be ideal if instead of making us push them out of Russia, they could just take their own wretched lives themselves" (*Hunted in Russia)*

This excerpt suggests that he believes that he plays an integral and necessary role in perfecting the face of the collective by purging homosexual "filth." His participation in the creation of an ideal body in many ways legitimates his own role in the collective. Homosexuals are routinely targeted by vigilante groups that isolate the suspected individual and videotape offensive and oftentimes violent physical and verbal assault of their victim. This videotape is later released online, which cements his homosexual identity and puts him at risk for more violence, job termination, and alienation from the social body. One intimidation ritual involves urine being poured upon individuals, a practice that is claimed to "cure" and "cleanse" victims of their homosexuality. One particular leaked videotape depicted a young boy suspected of homosexuality in a bathtub with his agitators filming him and subsequently pouring urine on him, one of them saying, "Here, we will cure you from homosexuality," and another one adding, "This is our holy water" (*Young and Gay in Putin's Russia).* This practice is strikingly similar to the holy practice of baptism and may thus be regarded as a "bastardized" form of the ritual; similarly, members of the vigilante groups dogmatically hold that homosexuals are all "pedophiles," a view shared by several key figures in the Orthodox Church. Such repressive actions drive homosexual bodies further from the collective and serve to reduce the safe space they had secured in the early years of the era.

Because of their abject alienation from society, homosexual bodies formed strong in-group alignments that manifested in the harm reduction techniques they have adopted, one technique being the creation of their own safe spaces by way of support groups. In the 2016 documentary *Kisses from Moscow,* a student belonging to a homosexual support group at a university named Philip shares that it is

not disownment or physical abuse that he finds most difficult about negotiating with his sexuality, but rather loneliness: "What this community that Andre created meant to me is fighting this loneliness" (*Kisses from Moscow*). Andrei Tarkhov, the founder of this circle reveals the very simple mission of the group, which is to create solidarity and a community of their own: "[Here], people can share their feelings, be themselves, share their experiences, discuss views...just a bit of networking and friends, it's not about dating at all; it's about having a feeling of being together and having support. We have sincerity evenings where people create a support group environment where people share their coming out experiences and try to understand and try to have some introspection." (*Kisses from Moscow*). Written in response to the law that the work was named after, Masha Gessen's book *Gay Propaganda* is a collection of stories written by and for a homosexual audience in hopes of "communicating to the people who felt most alone that they're not alone" and that in a society that vehemently asserts that they do not have a right to exist, she sought to create a "testament to the fact that, yes, they do exist, and they should exist" (Sharma 2014).

PROSTITUTES

Much like homosexual bodies, prostitutes increased in visibility and foreign *and* native clientele when the Soviet Union opened its doors in 1992. Former Soviet party leaders in the new capitalist market assembled hefty bank accounts through corruption "rather than through labor" which created the "spirit and conditions for which prostitution could thrive" ("From Vixen to Victim: The Sensationalization and Normalization of Prostitution in Post-Soviet Russia"). These "new Russians" saw sexuality as a "direct manifestation of economic power, and wealth became associated with sexual pleasure" and rotated between "call girls" at "expensive night clubs" in what seems to be a total reversal of Soviet ascetic values ("From Vixen"). On the other hand, the economic shocks affected women disproportionately, which made prospects of entering the sexual workforce all the more enticing. Towards the end of the millennium in 1998, the sex trade was "booming" and the heightened visibility of prostitutes resulted in legislation to regulate these bodies as manifested by Article 6.11 of the Russian Federation's

Administrative Code which criminalized prostitution in hopes of driving sex workers underground. However, this was unsuccessful in curbing the "sexual beast," and the extent of the unbridled proliferation of sexuality in contemporary Russia as of 2017 is best captured in two fascinating phenomena noted by Eurasian specialist Paul A. Goble: "Russians search online for porn three times as often as they do for Putin" and "Russia now has more prostitutes than doctors, farmers and firemen combined" (Goble 2017). Given the sheer amount of shared experiences of women's bodies in the sex trade, it is interesting to note that prostitutes seldom turn to one another for harm reduction, but rather turn to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in matters such as healthcare and support. This hearkens back to prostitutes' reliance on *institutions* rather than people such as the Houses of Mercy during the Imperial era or the state-sponsored labor dispensaries during the Soviet era. NGOs had conflicting approaches in how to best assist these women which can be best analyzed in the recurring theme of demonization and sensationalization of prostitutes' bodies that can be applied to women's bodies as a whole.

NGOs advocating for prostitutes can be subdivided into two categories – abolitionist and regulationists. Abolitionists have been advocates for prostitutes since the Imperial era and highlight the "blamelessness" of their actions, for they are subjected to prostitution against their will, and cite that prostitution is fundamentally "sexual exploitation" and a "human rights violation similar to rape" ("From Vixen"). Abolitionists hyperbolize the sympathetic plight of prostitutes with dramatic descriptions that sensationalize their victim status. Juliette Engels is the American director of Angel Coalition, an NGO which subscribes to abolitionist ideology and aims to serve human trafficking victims. She drew ire from the regulationist camp when she made a statement in 2005 regarding her take on a Russian prostitute who had been stationed in Athens's desire to return to Greece even after she had been "rescued":

> People are so emotionally and physically dependent on their pimps, it is very hard to separate them, even though the pimp is going to take them right to death. They are just hypnotically attached. It is very common in such situations, which is why they cannot have access to telephones because they will be calling the very pimps and traffickers who enslaved them. They have to get past that" ("From Vixen")

Engel's didactical message does not take into account the possibility that the woman desired to return to Greece out of her own free will, which belies her own agency in the matter. The abolitionist tendency to

diminish women's agency can also be made out by sensationalizing them and capitalizing on the image of prostitutes as helpless victims. In his 1998 report patronizingly titled, "Traffickers' New Cargo: Naïve Slavic Women," *New York Times* reporter Michael Specter described with vividly the "inhuman horrors of the girls' enslavement and adding that "'few ever testify' for fear of being killed" ("From Vixen"). The dramatic accounts take a sadistically sensual tone in Victor Malarek's book *The Natashas: The New Global Sex Trade* whose report on a Russian woman named Marika trafficked to Tel Aviv is replete with double entendre such as in his description of her traveling on cambelback with her Bedouin traffickers' "long curved daggers dangling from their waists" ("From Vixen"). Within the report, descriptions of her performing sexual acts on these men scintillate with sexual intrigue: "This fat, sweaty pig is reaching his climax and he begins to murmur, 'Oh, Natasha! Natasha!' […] Natasha was my nightmare. Marika was my salvation" ("From Vixen"). Malarek's report so graphically describes his prostitute's experiences of being sexually dominated by these men that it creates this idea of women's bodies as sites to be conquered. Moreover, the abolitionist stance suggests that women are not active agents of power and require rescue and correction.

As a point of departure into how the abolitionist stance affected women's bodies overall, one may turn to the Pussy Riot's infamous 2012 demonstration wherein the women donned ski masks and performed their obscenity-laden song "Punk Prayer" in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Savior that criticized the intimate relationship between the Orthodox Church and President Putin. We will investigate how women's bodies as sites of resistance played out in the post-Soviet stage. Pussy Riot's invective between the political and ecclesiastical bodies resulted in the imprisonment of the women, and what followed was a barrage of invectives from members of both bodies that exuded paternalistic and sensuously sadistic tones not unlike the excerpts of abolitionist works described earlier. A senior Orthodox leader offered the most beneficent response and said that he would offer them *bliny* and honey wine alongside a forgiveness ceremony and a "fatherly pinch…to bring them back to their senses" to match (Bernstein A., 2013). A fully adult male's remedy of "pinching" the "girls" seems utterly inappropriate, for it infantilizes these women and relegates their powerful demonstration as childish

horseplay. By sharp contrast, the demonization and sensationalization (evinced by sexual undertones) of the appropriate punishments of these women were shockingly violent. The social body on the internet suggested punishments from "fatherly spankings" and orders to "strip them naked and tie them to the whipping post" to "spank, flog, whip, and birch them" (Bernstein A., 2013). No matter where they fell on the political spectrum, influential men from the political spectrum offered their own creative takes on disciplining these women's bodies. Conservative intellectual Egor Kholmogorov was particularly imaginative: ""If I was working for this church, I would first call the TV crews and then undress them, cover them with feathers and honey, shave their heads, and kick them out to the freezing cold in front of the cameras" (Bernstein A., 2013). Boris Nemtsov is a liberal-democratic politician and offered: "If I could get my way, I would spank these girls and let them go" (Bernstein A., 2013). On the polar end of the spectrum, leader of the Communist party Gennadii Ziuganov similarly prescribed a "good spanking" that would set them on their way. Putin also weighed on the demonstration, calling the women "witches" and highlighting in a biopolitical fashion that aligned sexuality with moral character the fact that one of the members engaged in "group sex" (Bernstein A., 2013). What the Pussy Riot demonstration elucidates is that in the post-Soviet era, women's bodies were regulated from all of the bodies within the polity with the reinstatement of all the players in the tripartite patriarchal force.

To reorient ourselves to prostitutes' bodies, the tendency to diminish women's agency is a running theme in the abolitionist stance and is problematic because not only does it disenfranchise women, it undermines the simple reality of the situation, which is that a majority of women who go into prostitution *choose* to enlist themselves in the sexual workforce there for economic reasons. Regulationists recognize this and seek to legalize prostitution because it would afford prostitutes more safe space as it mitigated dependence on pimps and would create protection from systematic violence from unsavory policemen dating back to the Imperial era. Silver Rose is an NGO that subscribes to regulationist ideology and advocates for legislation to reduce the occupational risk that prostitutes face that drives their work underground. In 2012, Putin signed the Foreign Agent Law, a decree that virtually ousted all of the NGOs in Russia by forcing them to register as "foreign agents" and undergo heavy

regulation if they accept funding from the West. Since nearly all NGOs had some foreign backing, a large majority were forced to shut down their operations and leaving those that they served evermore vulnerable. The Ministry of Justice in 2013 refusal to register Silver Rose suggests the political body's indifference to and neglect of prostitutes' bodies. Neglect and silence emerges as key ways to suppress and repress the interests of our abnormal bodies.

INTRAVENOUS DRUG USERS (IDUs)

Although intravenous drug use emerged in Russia after the Iron Curtain fell, mentions of drug use exist in Imperial literature such as in Gogol's *Nevsky Prospekt* wherein an artist by the name of Piskarev becomes infatuated with a young woman but when he follows her home, he is horrified to learn that she is a prostitute and takes opium because he is unable to cope with her true identity. The similarities between the experiences of prostitutes and intravenous drug users are vast and share many aspects, serving as a testament to the methodological nature of the creation of abnormal bodies. Situated directly against the "northern route" of the Afghan opium trade and with Afghanistan – producer of 90% of the world's heroin – drugs began to trickle into Russia at an alarming rate (Pivovarchuk 2015). In 2010, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released a report on heroin consumption worldwide with Russia topping the list at number one in absolute numbers (Pivovarchuk 2015). The official gaze levied laws to limit drug trafficking in several articles of Chapter 25 of the Criminal Code such as Article 228 enacted in 1996 which prohibited the "acquisition, storage, transportation, making or processing of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances or analogous [substances]" ("The Criminal Code of the Russian Federation"). Non-prescription sale of codeine was banned in 2012, and a decree in 2014 permitted forced rehabilitation of known drug users and over 20,000 such rehabilitations were carried out in the span of a year (Pivovarchuk 2015). Yet despite all of this, drug use continued to surge throughout Russia and at every tier of society, evinced by the 2013 news report of a Russian surgeon who allegedly slipped into his white coat five grams of heroin that he had surgically removed from a drug mule's stomach (Wells 2013).

The Russian Federation founded the Federal Drug Control Agency (FKSN) in 2003 which was initially founded to organize drug education programs targeting the youth, but has since emerged to be

"one of the largest drug police agencies" in the world (Pape, 104). Funds allocated from the government are funneled into "law enforcement measure rather than drug prevention" and because FKSN is unchecked, drug users become vulnerable to their repressive and often violent jurisprudence (Pape, 106). Other state institutions include drug rehabilitation programs in state-run clinics that are "underfunded, poorly equipped, and ineffective" and according to drug addiction specialist Mendelevich (2006), "only one out of ten people in need of drug treatment receives such services" (Pape, 107). Sinister stories of maltreatment in these clinics are well known among IDUs, and one shares his personal experience at one with a BBC reporter in 2013: "Staff beat up patients to find out where they get their drugs. Then they raid those flats, confiscate the drugs and hand some over to the police. They keep the rest for themselves" (Coomarasamy, 2013). Furthermore, the therapies offered by these rehabilitation programs could be described as parochial and unscientific at best. FKSN president Viktor Ivanov contends: "There are no chemical drugs that treat alcohol or drug addiction. … By substituting one type of drug by another, we do not cure this person" (Pivovarchuk 2015). Treatments at rehabilitation centers often offer exclusively "cold turkey" approaches that often lead to unbearably painful withdrawal symptoms which make these centers less appealing to drug users seeking help. Some "treatments" may be considered as borderline human rights abuses. Yekaterinburg mayor Yevgeny Roizman became a media sensation with his violent abusive approach masking as "tough love" as per his proponents, who are quick to overlook his "kidnapping [of] addicts, beating them, and chaining them to their beds while they go through withdrawal" (Gilderman 2013). In public interviews, he assails drug users with dehumanizing invectives: "They're not humans, they turn into animals, they walk around smiling and dribbling…actually, they turn into plants, not animals. Plants" (Coomarasamy 2013). Andrei Delfinov, a writer for the Andrei Rylkov Foundation, notes that Roizman's supporters are quick to turn the other cheek to these abuses, his "willingness to break laws in order to achieve his goals," and even to his criminal past, opting to highlight his physical appearance or limn him with positive descriptors as Ksenia Sokolova's article "On the Side of Roizman" had done: "[Roizman] is "a warrior, a poet, a champion, a rescuer, a hero, a deputy, the father of three girls" (*"Royzman boretsya s chudovishchami, kotorykh porozhdayet sam";* Coomarasamy 2013**).**

Violence propagated by the political body, supported by the social body, all contribute to the increasing vulnerability of IDUs.

Interestingly, the very institutions that are supposed to help IDUs may contribute to increasing their visibility and therefore their vulnerability. Rehabilitation centers require those seeking admission to officially register as drug users with the state, and seldom is this information treated with confidentiality. The repercussions of their identities being exposed are vast, and include "job loss, exclusion from educational institutions, as well as administrative restrictions, such as the prohibition on obtaining a driver's license" (Pape, 107). Removal from the registry even after successful rehabilitation requires a five-year-long surveillance period that involves monthly check-ups at a state clinic, and according to one drug user, "once on the list, always on the list" (Pape, 107). Here, we see several parallels in experiences between our abnormal bodies of interest. During the Imperial era, registration of prostitutes and the issuance of the "yellow ticket" fundamentally branded them and prevented them from entering into jobs outside of the sex trade. Further, prostitutes also endured mandatory check-ups at clinics for venereal diseases. The policing efforts of the medical police and also from individual members of the social body as we saw in *Crime and Punishment* during the Imperial period and then of the male consultation doctors and hygiene-minding community members during the Soviet period and even vigilante groups targeting homosexuals may be likened to the efforts of the FKSN police in prosecuting IDUs. Antagonistic NGOs such as *A City without Drugs* make it their mission to assist the FKSN in identifying and turning in drug users and even "calls on the city's population to inform authorities on drug trade activities via an anonymous hotline" (Pape, 108). The association of IDUs with crime has tainted the already negative public opinion of them, and according to Orlova 2009, the social body came to think of IDUs as not "deserving of help from society and supports repressive strategies rather than prevention, treatment, or harm-reduction methods" (Pape, 108).

On the note of harm-reduction techniques, one interesting finding is that are virtually none available to IDUs. Needle exchange programs and opioid substitution treatments are not incorporated into legislation, and in fact, methadone – considered the "golden standard" of heroin addiction treatment – was

banned in 2012 (Gilderman). In fact, Ivanov trumpeted that "medical success associated with methadone is a 'myth" (Pivovarchuk). That the head of the most prominent state institution focused on advocating for drugs discounts the plethora of studies demonstrating the efficacy of such substitution treatments is particularly alarming. Harm reduction via sympathetic NGOs constituted a majority of support for drug users and were organized largely on a community-based level. A 2016 documentary *Left Out in the Cold: Living with HIV in Russia* interviewed social worker Maksim Malyshev, a member from the Andrey Rylkov Foundation, who runs a needle exchange program from a van that he had reconverted in Moscow. Russian sympathy for IUDs is scarce, and it is a *foreign* entity that attempted to destigmatize these abnormal bodies. Photojournalist Emanuele Satolli recently photographed IDUs injecting a "flesh-eating" drug known as *krokodil* for TIME magazine. His evocative images are grisly and jarring but paint drug users in a sympathetic, human light and marks one of the first significant, positive portrayals in Russian history. Apart from policing drug users, members of the social body contribute to the stigmatization of IDUs. The political body's blatant antagonism of IDUs is manifested in the notion that not only does it consistently underfund institutions that do not effectively aid them and remove agencies that did, it does not even enact measures that for them that are scientifically proven to work.

The sheer amount of overlap between our abnormal bodies of interest suggests that there is a methodological approach to the construction of abnormal bodies. The underlying goal that govern their treatment is the desire to correct whatever behavior or quality offensive to societal values that these bodies possess such that they do not mar the state's idealized perfection of itself. Enterprise between the political, social, and cultural bodies work together to ameliorate the abnormality of these bodies either by measures to eradicate the abnormalities or eradicate the bodies that they are domiciled in altogether. Eradication of the abnormalities warrants reintegration into the collective body, but to what extent are these abnormal bodies considered as part of the collective or even deserving of membership? I will now move to introduce a theoretical framework that may be useful in this analysis of the Russian HIV/AIDS that delineates the means by which abnormal bodies are dealt with. As this is an investigation that stresses the significance of integrating the cultural context into considerations of this disease, I will utilize this

framework to analyze one of the most influential pieces of culture produced in the early Soviet era, Yevgeny Zamyatin's dystopian novel *We*.

Dismantling utopia in Yevgeny Zamyatin's We

Foucault elucidated that one biopolitical tactic is to utilize individual bodies as "apparatuses of discipline" ("Biopolitics: An Overview"). The political body doles out discipline intended for a "multiplicity of men" that "can and must be dissolved into individual bodies that can be kept under surveillance, trained, used, and…punished" ("Biopolitics: An Overview"; Foucault 1976). One particular question this work considers is what makes the Russian experience of social control unique relative to other nations. I assert that the Russian political body demonstrates far more social control over its constituents' bodies, overstepping almost, and intervening and power permeating deeply within and through the bodies themselves such that states are not what regulate the people, but it is *people* who regulate people. Self-regulation becomes a key factor in ensuring that people remain and do what is considered to be appropriate collective behavior. What distinguishes the Russian experience from the American experience is the ubiquitous element of surveillance. Surveillance is one key theme in the work of Zamyatin's *We* and these themes from the novel offer theoretical elements useful for this investigation.

Written during the early Soviet years, *We* relates the experience of a man named D-503 whose reverential presuppositions about the collective body are undone when he becomes involved with a woman by the name of I-330. In this dystopian future, virtually all aspects of life are tightly regulated by the overarching political body, the One State, and entities known as the Guardians who function by policing individuals to ensure that rules are being complied. To bolster the collective vision, whatever traces of individuality have been stripped from its citizens. The One State prohibited original names and instead designated a single letter with a collection of numbers as substitutes; further, the state even mandated an appearance of "nobly spherical, smooth-shaven heads" (Ginsburg, 15) of its citizens. In this

society, the guiding values are collectivism and modernization, and an enterprise between the rule-creating One State and the rule-enforcing Guardians creates the association of the collective and productive citizenry as "moral". So closely intertwined are citizens with the social body and the political body that each body operates simultaneously with the other. As Michael D. Amey notes: "This assimilation of the individual into the social body encourages numbers to accept…that 'resistance is futile.' At the same time, numbers are to be so completely invested in the social body that they will view any attack on it, any difference of opinion or behavior, as a threat to their personal well-being" (Amey, 25). D-503 initially lauds the collective, and in doing so, he ascribes anything undermining collective identity – individuality – as a pathology: *"*"We walked along, a single million-headed body, and within each of us was the meek joyfulness which, probably, constitutes the life of molecules, atoms and phagocytes. [...] We is from God, I is from the Devil" *(*Zamyatin, 129-30*)".* D-503 frequently extols the value of wholeness in relation to the collective: "To the right and left, through the walls of glass, I seem to be seeing myself, my room, my clothes, my movements - but repeated a thousand times over. This is invigorating: one sees oneself as one enormous mighty whole" (Zamyatin, 46-7). In this manner individual numbers are encouraged to identify with the collective. The success of this assimilation is further evinced by D-503 's happy explanation to I-330 that "nobody is one, but one of. We are so alike" (Zamyatin, 24). Individuality, freedom from the repressive social control of the One State, is regarded as primal and "primitive" (Zamyatin, 35). This excerpt explicitly demonstrates the value of the collective and that maintaining the collective is not only the preoccupation of the state but also that of its citizens.). The One State's vision of utopia is one wherein all aspects of individuality and freedoms are abolished in place of the value of a cohesive collective society. The surgical approach is expedient in the analysis of the manner in which the political body in *We* exerted social control over its citizens and how it regulates abnormal bodies. We will analyze it in the context of the three steps associated with this approach.

Isolation. One of the first key steps in creating abnormal bodies is the identification and establishment that whatever behavior or quality those bodies demonstrate is deviant. This is also the

initial step in creating abnormal bodies under the moral crusade theory. Moral crusades are most directly associated with this step. In *We*, the qualities being crusaded against are individuality and freedom from regulation by the One State. One question when thinking about this step to bear in mind is: "Against what and whose values are bodies being compared against?" This society values collective identity and those at the helm of the power are those who hold the seats of power in the political and social body, respectively, which include the Benefactor and the Guardians. Individuality is constructed to be amoral, antigovernment, and biopoliticized as an illness. For example, dreams are not only illegal in the One State but are also regarded as a "psychic disease". Dreams may carry implications of disease because the content of dreams cannot be surveilled and regulated. The ideal body is one completely regulated by the state, one that does not even object the state's right to impose its rules upon bodies: "In my relationship to The One State I have the right to receive punishment, and this right I shall never relinquish. No number among us should ever renounce, or should dare to renounce this sole - and hence the most precious - right of his" *(*Zamyatin, 1). This excerpt demonstrates the result of profuse social control – extreme sympathy to whatever the state does to its abnormal bodies. For instance, D-503 does not hesitate to defend murder of abnormal bodies as demonstrated by his cavalier attitude towards an execution by gassing of a man captured by the state: "[The Gas Bell] is no longer torture of a tiny helpless animal. It serves a noble end: it safeguards the security of the One State" (Zamyatin, 80)" This man was charged for not possessing a number, indicating that he may have come from beyond the Green Wall, representing the physical spatial divide between the One State and its Other abnormal-bodied population. Those residing past the Green Wall are regarded as primal, lawless, and backwards, as they are most closely related to the ancestral population, whose daily lives and bodies are not regulated with as much scrutiny as the bodies in the One State.

D-503's attitude towards murder and execution of deviant bodies hearkens back to the notion that deviance is not a fixed characteristic, and virtually any quality or act may be regarded as acceptable or unacceptable (e.g. lawful or unlawful) depending on whose values are being enforced. One reason that D-

503 cites that the ancestral population is so primitive and "savage" is because they approached killing with paradoxical logic (Zamyatin, 13). He writes of this discrepancy with pedagogical bitterness:

"Try as I may, I cannot understand it. After all, no matter how limited their intelligence, they should have understood that such a way of life was truly mass murder – even if slow murder. The state forbade the killing of a single individual, but not the partial killing of millions day by day. To kill one individual, that is to diminish the total sum of human lives by fifty years, was criminal. But to diminish the sum of human lives by fifty million years not considered criminal. Isn't that absurd? Today any ten-year old will solve this mathematical-moral problem in half a minute. They, with all their Kants taken together, could not solve it…" (Zamyatin, 23).

It would not be a far stretch to put forth the possibility that the initial prototypes of the One State appealed to the morality of its citizens by citing such paradoxes as diagnostic of present social ills within the ancient society. It must be noted that in the One State, killing and murder of abnormal bodies are not only permitted but encouraged; the execution of abnormal bodies is made to be a public spectacle. In demonstrating the lethal consequences of abnormality, the political body demonstrates that upholding the value of the collective is a cause worth dying for and also reinforces the political body's own power. This, as well as compliance and even approbation of the political body's abject subjugation from the social body pushes abnormal bodies further and further away from the collective body. D-503 writes that even in his last moments, he shall "piously and gratefully kiss the punishing hand of the Benefactor" and yield to the will of the One State even if it costs him his life (Zamyatin, 114).

The Two-Hundred Year War that precipitated in the creation of the One State may have been predicated on rectifying social ills. Dismantling the ancestral polity required mobilization towards a common goal, which may be interpreted as the complete eradication of individuality. Two biological aspects of individuality – hunger and sexuality – are most vehemently crusaded against by State forebears. The One State effectively politicized these biological aspects against the value of collective society. Conquering these biological urges became imperative if the state is to regulate every aspect of life of its citizenry. In his records relating how hunger was done away with, D-503 callously relates the devastation this vision had on the world population: ""Our forebears succeeded, at heavy cost, in

conquering Hunger; I am speaking between the city and the village. The primitive peasants, prompted perhaps by religious prejudice, stubbornly clung to their 'bread.' But…our present food, a petroleum product, was developed. True, only 0.2 of the earth's population survived the war…And those two tenths survived to *taste the heights of bliss in the shining palace of the One State*" (italics mine, Zamyatin, 21). This excerpt illustrates the biopolitical undertones in the political body's agenda. The biological sensation of taste was *politicized* such that even the innate biological aspects of the somatic body are assigned political contexts. The value of the collective body being expressed and reflected is executed by replacing a taste for nourishment with a taste of the "heights of bliss…[in] the One State" is a function more palatable to the political body.

Having conquered hunger, the One State moved to conquer sexuality. D-503 maligns the ancestral population's lack of regulation in this biological domain: "And wasn't it absurd that the state (it dared call itself a state!) could leave sexual life without any semblance of control? As often and as much as anyone might wish…like animals" (Zamyatin, 32). Politicizing sexuality emerges as one of the primary biopolitical tactics employed by an enterprise between the social and political body to create and reinforce subjugation of abnormal bodies. In the society of the One State, the legal space for sex was limited to the acquisition of a "pink coupon" and reception of a certificate that permitted the "lower[ing] of shades" in their glass homes, which marks virtually the only time that bodies are not surveilled. The transactional nature of sexuality is underscored further by the manner in which the political body regulates the somatic body. The political body in *We* governs the frequency and duration of sexual activities, representing perhaps the extreme case of social control over its citizens' bodies. D-503 describes vividly the extent of the political body's involvement in regulating sexuality: "Since then it has only been a matter of *technology*. You are carefully examined in the laboratories of the Sexual Department; the exact content of sexual hormones in your blood is determined, and you are provided with an appropriate Table of sexual days. After that, you declare that on your sexual days you wish to use number so-and-so, and you receive your book of [pink] coupons" (Zamyatin, 22). Sexuality resembles less an act of intimacy between two

individuals than it does a vestigial consequence alluding to the uninhibited and unregulated sexual lives of the ancestral population. D-503's record of sexuality bears significant implications, marking one of the earliest mentions in the cultural body linking the regulation and politicization of sexuality with modernity. As this work uncovers, modernity is a political preoccupation that extends over centuries of Russian history. Following the period of the Mongol yoke in Russia, the nation was thrust headlong into a modernization project since the reforms of Peter the Great, which aimed to industrialize the culturally and technologically backwards nation. The tone in D-503's report suggests that unregulated sexuality is indicative of backwardness and proclivities to primal biological urges. The strides made towards perfect bodies under the official gaze of the political body were facilitated through "technology" of "laboratories" allegedly staffed with "[the] best and most experienced physicians" (Zamyatin, 79). One must note, too, the biopoliticized aspect of modernity with regards to physical features of the somatic body. D-503 is perturbed by the "shaggy paws" in reference to the hair on the back of his hands that he ascribes as a "relic of a savage epoch" (Zamyatin, 22). The abnormal and unregulated bodies of the ancestors are so alienated even in the memories of society that their descendants past the Green Wall not only occupy a space physically removed from the collective body, they are not remotely considered to be people at all but rather "savages" that require the citizen-making regulation and surveillance of the One State.

Correction. Like bending in a spine that was out of alignment, the correction of abnormal bodies aims to recreate societal homogeneity and reestablish a whole, functioning collective. This step of the surgical approach beckons questions such as how will these social ills be treated and whose therapeutics will be prescribed? For example, since religiosity was a guiding value during the Imperial era, a leading voice such as the rule creating Church would say that the treatment of social ills may be achieved by turning to God. This work understands that the correction of abnormal bodies is primarily achieved through enforcement of rules and levying of laws that govern abnormal bodies. Correcting the abnormal quality also clarifies whatever question of who holds the power because it is the overarching political

body that often functions as the center promulgating sanctions against abnormal bodies later enforced by policing entities like, for example, the Guardians in *We*. Even in this fictional literary work, we can appreciate the importance of the cultural context in understanding how abnormal bodies are created. Journalism represents a curious intersection between the political and cultural body wherein the works produced by the cultural body are more or less a reflection of society's understanding of politics. In the very first report in *We*, the political body called for the creation of cultural works that extolled its legacy in the state newspaper: "Everyone who feels capable of doing so must compose tracts, odes, manifestoes, poems, or other works extolling the beauty and the grandeur of the One State" (Zamyatin, 2). Newspapers become the primary mode of communication between the social body and the political body, relaying laws and creating imperatives such as the one in the first report: "You will subjugate the unknown beings on other planets, who may still be living in the primitive condition of freedom…" (Zamyatin, 1). The public nature of newspapers may serve as a corrective force in that newspapers make no secret of the state's stance on particular issues, in this case, the dilemma of dealing with bodies that demonstrate behaviors that run contrarian to the state's collective ideals.

The world in *We* is replete with laws that govern virtually all aspects of individual life such that even not sleeping during one's designated sleep time is illegal. Not relinquishing newborns to the state is also prohibited according to the One State's Maternal and Paternal Norms. D-503 describes an edict termed as *Les Sexualis that* proclaimed that "each number has a right to any other number, as to a sexual commodity" (Zamyatin, 14). Everyday life is determined by the Table of Hours which dictates where a body must be and what it must do, and all of this is tightly systematized by multiple tiers of surveillance and regulation. Laws are invaluable for setting the parameters of what is legal and illegal, but they cannot operate autonomously. There must be entities or measures in place that ensure that these laws are actually being complied to. Here, it is imperative to incorporate the theme of the gaze into our discussion. So inculcated D-503 is in the state's vision of the collective body that he submits himself to near-constant surveillance that ensures he is compliant with the laws of the state. He describes his transparency in this

regard in one of his earlier records: "At home, I stepped hurriedly into the office, handed in my pink coupon, and received the certificate permitting me to lower the shades. This right is granted only on sexual days. At all other times we live behind our transparent walls that seem woven of gleaming air – we are always visible, always washed in light. We have nothing to conceal from one another" (Zamyatin, 18). The very existence of the Guardians, however, suggests that there *are* things worth concealing, which are individual subversive thoughts. Michael D. Amey notes: "Observation plays an increasingly significant role century society as a means of regulation" (Amey, 22). He also astutely observes that the citizens within the One State and the Guardians "continually spy on each other" (Amey, 25). The official gaze seeks to isolate the abnormal body, removing it from the public gaze for fear of infecting the other functioning parts. To allude to the surgical approach, the very presence of an "ill" and "abnormal" body part threatens the function of the entire system, the metaphorical collective. Because of this, official gaze seeks to further separate the abnormal bodies from the functioning collective. Zamyatin makes note of the image of the body as the sum of its parts. These sentiments harmonize with the principles of Gestalt, who famously posited that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Such Gestaltian sentiments are expressed by D-503 who understands that possessing individuality or deviating from the rules of the One State clearly marked him as an abnormal body, one that should be severed from the collective body to ensure the health of the collective. After becoming more intimate with I-330, his ties to the vision of the collective become weaker and he proprioceptively feels this isolating subjection: "Properly speaking, I presented an unnatural sight. Imagine a finger lopped off a man, off his hand - a human finger, all hunched up and bent over, hopping and dashing over the glass sidewalk all by its lonesome. I was that finger. And the strangest, most unnatural thing of all was that this finger had no desire whatsoever to be on the hand, to be with the other digits" (Zamyatin, 42) This excerpt hones in on the notion of the fragmented body with parts being excised when deemed abnormal. The scrutiny of the official gaze by the political body results in a meting out of governmental regulation by way of creating laws. These laws govern abnormal bodies but require also self-regulation by way of the public gaze from the social body and interactions between individual to individual maintains the compliance of these laws.

In *We*, the corrective measure for individuality is subjection to the Operation, which lobotomizes and eradicates the very value being crusaded against. This decree was initially published in the state newspaper and is as follows:

"REJOICE!

For henceforth you shall be perfect! Until this day, your own creations – machines – were more perfect than you.

HOW?

Every spark of a dynamo is a spark of the purest reason; each movement of a piston is a flawless syllogism. But are you not possessors of the same unerring reason? The philosophy of cranes, presses, and pumps, is as perfect and clear as a compass-drawn circle. Is your philosophy less compass-drawn? The beauty of a mechanism is in its rhythm – as steady and precise as that of a pendulum. But you, nurtured from earliest infancy on the Taylor system – have you not become pendulum precise? Except for one thing: Machines have no imagination. Have you ever seen the face of a pump cylinder break into a distant, foolish, dreamy smile while it works? Have you ever heard of cranes relentlessly turning from side to side and sighing at night, during the hours designated for rest?

NO!

And you? Blush with shame! The Guardians have noticed more and more such smiles and sighs of late. And –hide your eyes –historians of the One State ask for retirement so they need not record disgraceful events. But this is not your fault – *you are sick*. The name of this sickness is

IMAGINATION

It is a worm that gnaws out black lines on the forehead. It is a *fever* that drives you to *escape ever farther*, even if this 'farther' begins where happiness ends. This is the last barricade on our way to happiness. Rejoice then, this barricade has already been blown up. The road is open. The latest discovery of State Science is the location of the center of imagination – a miserable little nodule in the brain in the area of the *pons Varolii*. Triple X-ray cautery of this nodule – and you are cured of imagination

FOREVER

You are perfect. You are machinelike. The road to one hundred per[cent] happiness is free. Hurry, then, everyone – old and young – hurry to submit to the Great Operation. Hurry to the auditoriums, where the Great Operation is being performed. Long live the Great Operation! Long live the One State! Long live the Benefactor!" (italics mine, Zamyatin, 80)"

This decree explicitly states that the state aims to create perfect bodies and according to the values of the One State, the idealized body is a machine, a machine of the state. The "shaggy paws" or the hair in the back of the hand that troubles D-503 so profusely is a constant reminder of his primate ancestry. While

the decree uses the term "imagination" as the root of evil, it may be understood that imagination is an expression of individuality, which more aptly encompasses what the One State aims to do away with. The decree goes on to pathologize imagination/individuality as an abnormal quality as suggested by frequent use of terms such as "sick" or "fever" that denotes the necessity of a treatment that eradicates the quality to obtain the perfect "machinelike" body envisioned by the state. Even biological domains such as sleep which are already so tightly regulated by the state are used as "leverage" against citizens to remind them of their imperfect bodies. It is particularly interesting how the decree also highlights the separation of abnormal entities from the collective body by phrasing imagination as a "fever that drives [one] to escape ever farther, even if this 'farther' begins where happiness…" (Zamyatin, 80). For those who are at the helm of MEPHI, the rebel faction that leads the insurrection against the state, "where happiness ends" is where individuality begins.

Reinsertion and bodies of resistance: subverting the surgical approach. After the abnormal body part is corrected, it is poised for reinsertion back into the body. When approaching the question of reinsertion, the key questions that emerge are what are the redemptive forces that permit re-entry into the body and the metaphysical body? To what extent was the abnormal quality considered remedied? In what ways are abnormal qualities more or less severe in some bodies than others? What stakes do these bodies have in the collective body? In the world of *We*, the Operation was later deemed to be compulsory and required of all citizens. Those that did not subject to it were executed, and in many ways, the correction was either the Operation which guaranteed admission (or in D-503's case, re-admission) into the collective body or execution, which eradicated the abnormal body altogether as was the fate of I-330, the man without a number, and other conspirators against the state. This brings our discussion to our abnormal bodies and the notion of bodies as sites of resistance. It is critical to analyze how abnormal bodies respond to the treatments doled out by the surgical approach because their experiences speak to the profound effects *and* limitations of social control.

One of the most immediate results of the surgical approach is that abnormal bodies are forced to hide their identities in order to enjoy the same rights and privileges as other members of the collective. When I-330 is introduced, she performs a piano piece for a full auditorium suggesting that although she is the face of the rebellion against collective identity, she complies with the rules in order to save her own skin, so to speak. She does not, however, abandon her alternate lifestyle and is cognizant of the fact that the state oversteps its boundaries by regulating biological expressions of individuality such as sexuality. In response, she does not refrain from engaging in otherwise dangerous and illegal sex outside of the state's provisos for sexual conduct. Her sentiments are not unique; other bodies demonstrate resistance against the visions of the political body although they are not necessarily abnormal. For instance, D-503's former lover O-90 launches her own resistance against the state by resolving to bear a child with D-503 in spite of this being completely illegal. It is likely that she also recognizes that the political body oversteps its boundaries by trespassing into the personal and individual domain of the somatic body, hence her open willingness to face maximum punishment just so she can *feel emotions* resembling "the dreamy smiles" that the One State maligned in its Great Operation decree. O-90 ardently entreats D-503 to bear a child with her:

"'You seem to be anxious for the Benefactor's Machine?'

'And her words, like a stream over the dam: 'It doesn't matter! But I will feel, I'll feel it within me. And then, if only for a few days…To see, to see just once the little crease, here – like that one, on the table. Only one day!'" (Zamyatin, 112).

One other result of the surgical approach is the vast space between abnormal bodies and the collective body. Abnormal bodies are forced to navigate between legal, safe spaces where their behaviors are not errant and illegal spaces where they can more or less freely practice their deviant behaviors without consequence if they are not met with the repressive official or public gaze. Safe space is limited for abnormal groups, but within these groups, the reader will come to notice that there are varying spaces and some groups have more flexibility/room than other groups in terms of tolerance. I-330 creates her own safe space in the Ancient House, which is the only structure that is not made of glass and cannot be

surveilled. She is forced to create this space because the political and social body have forced her to repress her biological, sexual urges and to compartmentalize these urges within the prescripts of her allotted sexual days from the One State. Abject alienation of abnormal bodies and their expulsion from the collective is best illustrated by D-503, who begins to domicile the abnormal qualities of individuality and freedom from regulation within his own body. After consorting with I-330 in the Ancient House, he describes an "alien body" emerging in his brain, which may be interpreted as the burgeoning doubt against his presuppositions about collective society (Zamyatin, 33). When he engages in illicit sexual relations with I-330 in the Ancient House, he essentially forges a new identity, one wielding an abnormal body. This introspective gaze within himself forces him to realize that he is no longer the same "perfect" and "healthy" body trumpeting the ideals of a collective state: "I became glass. I saw – within myself. There were two of me. The former one, D-503, number D-503, and the other…Before, he had just barely shown his hairy paws from within the shell; now all of him broke out, the shell cracked; a moment, and it would fly to pieces…" (Zamyatin, 56). Abnormal bodied D-503 notices that he himself no longer feels like he is not part of the collective: "…In time, to this familiar, caressing music [of a ticking metronome], I mechanically counted to fifty along with everyone else: fifty prescribed chewing movements for each bite. And, mechanically, in time to the ticking, I descended and marked off my name in the book of departures – like everyone else. But *I felt and lived apart from everyone*, alone, behind a soft wall that muted outside sounds. And here, behind this wall – my world…" (italics mine, Zamyatin, 102). One thing of particular interest, however, is the fact that collective identity is a value shared even by those who crusaded against the value of collectivism from the One State. When describing the abnormal bodies living beyond the Wall, she describes them as "the half we have lost" (Zamyatin, 163). She understands that the abnormal bodies must rejoin the collective to become stronger, that isolated body part must be reinserted, even without correction or treatment. She acknowledges these differences by referring to the bodies differentially, in the context of single differing elements: "H_2 and O[!] And in order to get H_2O – streams, oceans, waterfalls, waves, storms – the two halves must unite" (ibid). This excerpt demonstrates

the almost universal value of collectivism as a marker for a stable and functioning polity, a value not excluded in I-330's vision of utopia.

Extreme social control is predicated on creating deviance, creating abnormal bodies in which the political body can effectively mobilize a crusade against to correct that deviance to project visions of social control and a functioning polity. The political body this and other biopolitcal tactics to advance whatever values the overarching political body promotes. One common value transcending these political bodies is the value of collectivism, which is diagnostic of a healthy and functioning society in that achieving collectivism suggests that all of the operant bodies within a polity or civil society (political, social, cultural) are functioning properly. The surgical approach is an expedient framework for understanding how the political body creates and responds to abnormal bodies. As demonstrated by an analysis of the biopolitical tactics and body politics at play in Zamyatin's *We*, this framework offers rich potential for contextualizing the differing experiences and interactions of each body politic with respect to the other. Although it is unlikely that each experience of abnormal bodies can easily be delineated into the three steps outlined by the surgical approach, it is nevertheless a robust model for analyzing the creation and treatment of abnormal bodies.

Application of the Surgical Approach: Construction of Abnormal Bodies in the HIV/AIDS Epidemic

This work has belabored the experiences of our abnormal bodies of interest because these bodies so happen to be the ones most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. Being both a homosexual *and* HIV+ would put an individual so far out of orbit from the collective that the distance to reintegrate them back into the collective is one that the political body is not wont to travail nor justify. In other words, these bodies are *doubly stigmatized* and are thus tormented by perfecting bodies, which poses a particular problem in developing measures that prevent or improve their condition because as noted by Gregory Gilderman, "the people most affected are also the country's most reviled" (Gilderman). Unique to the creation of abnormal bodies of HIV+ individuals, however, is the fact that the Soviet Union and Russian Federation

created the public's working knowledge of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Unlike homosexuals, prostitutes, or drug users, who have existed in society for quite a time, HIV/AIDS was a novel disease and the political body used this fact to manipulate society's understanding of the disease through stringent censorship that virtually erased the epidemic from its written history. This created a culture of silence around the epidemic.

Isolation. As stated earlier, the most critical step in isolation is the creation of stigma by identifying and establishing that a certain "abnormal" quality or behavior within certain bodies threatens the moral fiber of society (as per the moral crusade theory), and is thus injurious to keep in the collective for the sake of maintaining the health and proper functioning of the other bodies. Political bodies have employed the creation of a registry as a tactic to surveil and regulate abnormal bodies from prostitutes to IDUs, and HIV+ individuals are no different case. On New Year's Day of 2017, a national registry of HIV+ individuals was created for the intended purpose of scheduled and efficient dispensation of antiretroviral medication, one of the only treatments that has been empirically shown to reduce the aggressive rate of disease spread throughout the body and significantly prolong life expectancy. While registration is not compulsory, Health Ministry spokesman Oleg Salagai adds the caveat that antiretroviral medication is "not order[ed]…without having in mind a certain patient" (Tamkin 2017). What Salagai means to say is that registration is inevitable for the choice to register is a matter of life or death, because access to medication is what keeps some HIV+ bodies alive. Although the goals of registration are often altruistic and well-meaning, history has repeatedly demonstrated that registration is often accompanied with heightened surveillance, regulation, and repression of abnormal bodies that compromise their safe spaces and their safety overall. Registration literally isolates which bodies are abnormal and inherently increases their vulnerability, clarifying bodies' Otherness in the process.

Another way of thinking about isolation is perhaps not the isolation of bodies from the collective, but rather the collective from those bodies. This is best demonstrated by the phenomenon of censorship so quintessential to the HIV+ bodies' experience. The political body contrives to keep abnormal bodies from out of the view of the collective body, which will be designated for this discussion as the public. The public is unaware that there was any abnormality at all because of the invisibility of these groups, which marks an interesting point of departure from our previous analyses of our abnormal bodies of interest. Whereas these groups first had to gain visibility to be regulated, HIV+ bodies were repressed and obstructed from public view. Celleste Wallander posits that the politicians' reluctance to mention HIV/AIDS stemmed from the fact that "the epidemic does not fit with their image of Russia as a strong and independent country" (Pape, 73). This position speaks to the perfecting nature of the post-Soviet era, wherein realization of perfection and ideal fulfillment is at the forefront of every major political decision. Censorship is not a novel phenomenon in regulating abnormal bodies, but what is unique about it in the

context of HIV/AIDS is the sheer amount of it and how so much culture on HIV/AIDS was suppressed and written out by the political body. As the reader will recall, no one is certain of when the disease was first diagnosed in the Soviet Union, because previous cases have allegedly been expunged. Censorship created a culture of silence and mystery surrounding the HIV/AIDS epidemic which in recent years has been dubbed as the "silent" epidemic. That it has emerged as the one of the most leading causes of death among Russians should intrinsically place the disease in more critical dialogues; however, the converse has been observed. President Vladimir Putin had publicly mentioned HIV/AIDS in public speeches only once in May 2003 until 2005, which can be contrasted with his frequent mentions of Russia's demographic and health decline (Pape, 106). Another example of censorship is similarly illustrated in the ARF poster incident. In 2012, the Andrei Rylkov Foundation, abbreviated ARF, circulated a poster in its website which proclaimed: "Beware! Fatal danger! The syringe of a drug addict is the source of AIDS!" **(Fig. 3b)** The ARF, a health advocacy group which promotes awareness within the IDU community of potential health risks may be putting themselves at risk for, has made a name for itself in recent news in 2010 when one representative from ARF criticized the Russian authorities' excessive antagonism towards IUDs which dissuaded them from seeking medical services they need, resulting in and perhaps explaining spikes in HIV rates within that particular group (Aslund; Stachowiak & Peryshkina). Following the dissemination of the poster, the Federal Drug Control Service of the Moscow Department effectively shut down the organization's website, which suggests that even in contemporary times, dialogue regarding HIV/AIDS is heavily regulated by the central political entity and is reminiscent of the Soviet response to the disease and its mission to control and manipulate public opinion with regards to the disease. For example, the strong "incentive to cover up AIDS cases and deaths" could have explained the aforementioned "feigned ignorance" that Soviet leaders employed during the early diagnoses (Feshbach, 12). Rather than accepting that HIV/AIDS was indeed on its way to becoming an epidemic due to shortcomings of the healthcare system and in part influenced by political outcomes, Soviet leaders would continue to shift blame away from themselves which becomes important to our argument later.

Isolation of abnormal bodies inherently involves the creation of stigma around them. HIV/AIDS-related stigma operates primarily on public anxieties of these groups perpetuated by the AIDS myths largely orchestrated by the political body. These AIDS myths exacerbate the public's fear of HIV+ individuals whom they already are uncertain about, for censorship had driven these bodies to obscurity and thus limited public knowledge about them or the disease itself. One common AIDS myth is the belief that everyday contact can cause transmission HIV, even by touch. Perhaps more sinister is the belief that people who live a "normal" life are immune from the disease, which is particularly harmful because not only does it assume that HIV/AIDS is a "bad person's disease" that is domiciled only in our abnormal bodies of interest (One newspaper report was titled "AIDS is the disease of junkies, prostitutes, and militants"), but it also assumes that heterosexual individuals have no chance of acquiring it (Pape, 97). But with the increasing trends of HIV/AIDS diagnosed in heterosexual populations, such presuppositions are dangerous and utterly false and also "aggravate strategies of avoidance and neglect in Russian society" (Pape, 97). One notorious AIDS myth purported by the Soviet police force KGB is that the HIV/AIDS epidemic was brought into Russia by way of Western bioterrorism. Operation INFEKTION was a Soviet disinformation campaign that chalked up the claim that the AIDS virus was "manufactured by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the Pentagon at Fort Detrick, Maryland" (Feshbech, 14). Political and medical authorities underscored and constantly defend the stance that HIV/AIDS is a disease of the West and for a long time, many Russians subscribed to this belief, and they are not entirely wrong. The first aristocratic brothel in Imperial Russia was allegedly founded and operated by a German woman from Dresden who employed only "foreign girls" (Three Centuries of the Russian Prostitution"). Furthermore, prostitution intensified in magnitude only after the post-Soviet Union's borders became more porous to foreign entry. The same was observed for intravenous drug users, as incidences of drug use only began to skyrocket after the use only began to skyrocket after the rapid influx of foreign entities when the Iron Curtain fell. Although homosexuality existed in Russia even before pre-Christian times, many believe that it is a phenomenon that was also ushered in after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Even renowned LGBT rights activist and openly gay Masha Gessen appears to be incognizant of the fact that

homosexuality existed in Russia prior to external influence from the West. When she was asked if there were openly gay or lesbian individuals in Russia before Western influence, she answered: "No, there weren't…I turned gay in America. I was a nice Soviet fourteen-year-old when I left, and I came back a lesbian" (Sharma 2014). Although Gessen may have been offering her personal anecdotes of her coming out story and drawing from her own familiarity with LGBT history, it does not belie the fact that she disregards the rich history of frank, open homosexuality in all tiers of Russian society during the Imperial era. Further, her seemingly innocuous comment of turning "gay in America" consequently fuels nationalistic and xenophobic attitudes of foreign agents as corrupting influences, contributing to the false notion that Russia can wash its hands clean from having any part in engendering the HIV/AIDS epidemic by proclaiming it a foreign disease. HIV+ people, then, are inherently not Russian and have no stake in the collective. What becomes apparent is that HIV+ bodies negate centuries of ideals, each period's vision of perfection. Rozanov was critical of "mixing" in the organic sense, associating it with decomposition which was a public and cultural anxiety at the time, and this attitude influenced his racialist discourse which asserts that the ideal body is an ethnically "pure" one untainted by racial mixing. That the first incidences of HIV/AIDS were contracted abroad and resulted in initial outbreaks within Russia's borders contributed to stigmatization of HIV+ individuals who intermixed with foreign bodies, which would have been reprehensible to Rozanov, to only endanger the health of other "pure" citizens now afflicted with a disease that would corrupt their progeny, which runs against the Soviet ideals of healthy (e.g. disease-free), productive, and reproductive bodies. The crux of this argument is, the incredible amount of stigmatization that HIV+ individuals endure is predicated upon centuries of conceptions of the body and what an ideal body looks like. Because HIV+ bodies are so aberrant to these ideals and the pre-Soviet period is fixated on ideal fulfillment, these bodies face significant obstacles in negotiating that they deserve a place in society.

Correction. Interestingly, the correction of HIV+ bodies *is* isolation. The correction aspect of the surgical approach often invokes laws as well as coercive institutions to reform and treat whatever abnormal quality or behavior that set apart the former members of the collective. Apart from treating the

somatic body in the physiological sense, the political body orchestrated various other political measures with the intention of correcting these individuals. In 1987, the Soviet Union issued its first anti-AIDS decree entitled "Concerning measures to prevent infection with the AIDS virus" that mandated HIV testing for "15 population groups, including blood donors, Soviet citizens who had been abroad for a stay of longer than one month, foreigners in the Soviet Union on a long-term stay, as well as members of 'high risk groups', as defined as 'recipients of multiple blood transfusions,' drug users, homosexual men and prostitutes" (Pape, 72). Within the next two years, over 17 million people were tested and the number of foreigners infected outnumbered Soviet citizens infected by threefold, which contributed evermore to anti-foreign sentiments. Laws became more stringent against foreigners who, by an amendment to the decree, were required to submit to testing and if found positive, were "deported to their country of origin" (Pape, 72). Isolation of individuals became key in making them invisible to the public gaze. The wording in the 1987 decree did not eliminate the possibility of lifelong quarantine, which was a reality for several HIV+ individuals. In fact, the children and mothers involved in the initial outbreaks at Elista, Volgograd, and Rostov-on-Don were quarantined at a hospital for a period of time. HIV+ individuals and those suspected of HIV/AIDS were subject to imprisonment often on trumped up charges or personal vendettas against their abnormality (most were foreigners, prostitutes, and homosexuals). HIV+ people also faced *de facto* imprisonment at "sanatoria", a practice still in place today (Balabanova *et al.*, 2007). Perhaps the most important thing to note in those and contemporary institutions are the unabashed human rights violations that occur within them. Medical confidentiality is seldom upheld, and several cases have been reported where physicians call the families of those admitted into these institutions to inform them of their new dependent's health status. Such breaches of medical confidentiality should not be taken lightly given that exposure of their abnormal status puts these groups at risk for not only termination from their jobs and social ostracism, but also potentially to violence if these groups also bear HIV/AIDS along with another abnormal identity.

Reinsertion. Reinsertion of the corrected abnormal body into the collective body arguably does not occur because even the palliative forces of modern medicine cannot fully redeem HIV+ individuals.

On the note of redemption, much like the victim-villain debates in the experiences of prostitutes, some HIV+ are considered to be more deserving of sympathy and therefore aid than others. "Victim" HIV+ bodies were those who were infected by their mothers or through "contaminated blood transfusions" and are thus blameless for their condition (Pape, 93). "Villain" HIV+ individuals were those who were considered to have acquired the disease from their own personal decisions and are thus responsible for their actions. Members of those camps include, unsurprisingly, our abnormal bodies of interests and are believed to not be worthy of saving. Prostitutes demonstrate little in-group solidarity, which may lead one to believe that pitting one against another contributes to this lack of safety between woman to woman because not only do they distrust society as a whole, they cannot even lean on the same bodies sharing the same amount of distance and distrust for the collective. What becomes apparent in this analysis is the fact that it appears as though the collective body does not even want the abnormal body back. As seen with any somatic surgery, there is always a chance for rejection. Survey populations evince the degree to which the public believes that HIV+ individuals have no stake in the collective. 72% of respondents stated they would not help a relative or friend if he or she was diagnosed with HIV, while 65% declared that their attitude toward that person would become negative. Personal interviews offer a human element to these figures, and the common theme of social alienation undergirds the experiences of HIV+ individuals. One interviewee reveals: "People start to step away from you" (Pape, 95). Other responses include, "People react with fear", or, "They treat you like outcasts" (Pape, 95). HIV+ bodies are so dramatically removed from the collective body, which has devastating consequences for their access to adequate healthcare. Many cite fear of stigmatization as one of the key factors in deciding whether seek treatment or not. In the documentary *Left Out in the Cold: Living with HIV in Russia,* a man by the name of Aleksandr Romanov who had acquired HIV/AIDS in prison through what he believes was sharing a contaminated needle relates his difficulties seeking treatment for his condition and tersely captures public health professionals' biggest fears: "I stopped asking for medical attention when I saw the subject was taboo" (*Left Out in the Cold)*. His feelings of helplessness were palpable in his multiple acquiescences of feeling that "no one could help" him (*Left Out in the Cold)*. The enterprise between all of the bodies with

the polity helped to create and cement the notion that HIV+ bodies are undeserving of help and creates significant barriers to healthcare. This is particularly dangerous because individuals begin to internalize the notion that they have no right to exist and contributes to their willingness to seek treatment for their condition and even more gravely, that they no longer fear HIV/AIDS. Attitudes of individuals with a positive diagnosis could be best described as cavalier or one of resignation, as if to say: "How much more can I be reviled from how I already am?" Rovanov describes his approach to his diagnosis as a "philosophical" journey: "Let it fall where it is destined to fall' and that was how I had fallen" (*Left Out in the Cold)*. A police official in 1987 asked a circle of prostitutes, "Are you afraid of getting AIDS?", to which a mere and shocking 42% "answering in the affirmative" (*The Sexual Revolution in Russia,* 227). In more recent years, a man named Vladislav Ivanov of Rostov-on-Don was diagnosed as HIV+ in 2017 who recalls being "calm" when he heard this because he was unconvinced that HIV/AIDS was real, a belief espoused by a TV program he had seen that denied its existence (Cain). Because of this, he goes on to have unprotected sex with a man who disclosed his HIV+ status without reservations and to this day, still does not wear condoms because he "[does] not like them" and because of his belief that "Condoms can't protect you from HIV" (Cain). The nonchalance of Romanov (having contracted HIV from intravenous drug use in prison), the prostitutes, and Ivanov convey the chilling notion that these groups do not fear HIV/AIDS, which to some not receiving treatment may spell out as a death sentence, and conveys the notion that these groups do not fear death because they are already dead to society. Whether the prostitutes were ignorant of the debilitating nature of the disease is unclear, but certainly for Ivanov, the case can be made that general public's knowledge of HIV/AIDS and how it is transmitted is severely lacking which can be explained by the suppression of discourse surrounding it, demonstrating the disastrous shortcomings on the political body's part in reducing harm for these groups.

The most immediate danger of individuals internalizing the notion that they have no right to exist may contribute to their cessation of treatments that would lead to their own demises, if they even risk exposing their HIV+ status to seek it, which as of 2017 is no longer a premonition but a reality. Masha Yakoblova is the founder of the Candle Foundation, one of the few NGOs operating in St. Petersburg that

advocate for HIV+ individuals. When asked why people refuse to seek treatment, her answer was simple: "Because of shame. Because of shame, because of [fear], people don't want to go to testing because of [fear] and people become scared not of HIV but of people…" (*Left Out in the Cold)*. Stigmatization is worst for those who are HIV+ *and* another abnormal body, and she divulged: "You are almost not a human being" (*Left Out in the Cold)*. This excerpt suggests the effective erasure of certain groups of people aberrant to the political body's desired vision of itself. What are the implications of removing these groups so far from the collective that they become completely *invisible*? The extreme censorship of HIV/AIDS begat total erasure of HIV+ individuals' safe spaces and arguably their places in the collective body. As we will demonstrate, this type of extreme censorship begetting total erasure is not a novel theme in Russian history.

Conclusion

The crux of this work is to investigate the creation of ideal bodies, because by extension, the creation of the ideal body simultaneously creates its inverse, the abnormal body. The creation of abnormal bodies utilizing biopolitical strategies such as surveillance by means of the public and official gaze and the politicization of sexuality is facilitated by an ongoing adjustment between the political, cultural, and social bodies. The ecclesiastical body, the Russian Orthodox Church and its heads, plays an important

role in the construction as well but is considered its own entity apart from the three aforementioned bodies because it was not a cogent force during the Soviet era. This work argues that ideal bodies serve not only as diagnostics of a functioning and healthy society, but also as an important characteristic of collective national identity. At this point, it must be stated that ideal fulfillment and attainment of perfection are also visions of nations with political ideologies that are poles apart, but what *is* unique to Russia is the lengths to which the state goes to *discipline* and *edit* individual bodies in ways that meet particular frameworks that are acceptable to the projected goals of a group. Further, the extent to which the state utilizes biopolitical tactics to mold the ideal citizen makes Russia stand apart, for not only has it politicized aspects of sexuality such as reproduction throughout its history, but the functions of the somatic body also came under the jurisdiction of the political body. During the Soviet era, the respected and government-backed poet Aleksei Gastev published a schedule in 1921 that dictated how much time should be allotted for each activities such as sleep and even identified specific foods and the quantity and weight of how much a person should consume and drink per day (**Fig. C1)**. Schedules were rendered visually as well in poster as demonstrated in **Fig. C2**: this 1927 poster heralded "8 Hours for Leisure – 8 Hours for Sleep – 8 Hours for Work," thereby demonstrating that every hour of every day, even leisure and necessary physiological functions such as sleep, are controlled by the political body (Starks, 114-115). Whether life imitates art or art imitates life, but the reader would be right to recall the striking similarity between these schedules, on the one hand, and, on the other, the Table of Hours in Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* that serves to surveil and regulate bodies in order to bring them under political subjection.

This investigation proposes the surgical approach as a potential framework for analyzing how the state deals with abnormal bodies. Abnormal bodies are *edited* to correct them of their abnormalities so that they may be reintegrated into the collective body. Biopolitics, as Yehonatan Alsheh points out in her 2014 essay, answers such questions as "How is it decided which lives are worth living – worthy of optimization – and which are not, or even which are in need of extermination, so that worthy life will be optimized?" (Alsheh, 27). This quotation highlights that the optimization of bodies is a biopolitical concern, and this work has demonstrated that the surgical approach offers a methodological framework for how abnormal bodies are created and "treated" so that these bodies became manageable and

emblematic of a positive, national image. The reader will recall the surgical approach's principal aim of creating bodily wholeness by isolating and rectifying abnormal, and thus diseased, parts. Abnormality, possessing qualities or behaviors errant to those of the sociopolitical body, is purportedly contagious and harmful to the collective which justifies the regulation and necessary correction of abnormal bodies. Correction of abnormality through surgery denotes a kind of bodily *editing*. The basic underpinnings of the surgical approach in this investigation are that by correcting abnormal bodies, and what results is a distinct manipulation of the national body that may be seen as a *censorship* of entities that undermine positive reflection of it that is seen both in *We* and throughout Russian history.

The possibility that the creation of abnormal bodies is one that may be approached methodologically is made plausible by the sheer similarities in experiences between all of our abnormal bodies in question. The compromise of their safe space throughout history emerges as a key theme uniting the experiences of our bodies, and I argue that the erasure of safe space drives these groups farther from the collective and from the public gaze such that Russia can portray the most perfected version of itself to the global stage. Censorship of abnormal bodies and making these groups *invisible* to promote a positive national image suggest that the state engages in varying degrees of social eugenics projects that aim to perfect the collective national body by editing abnormal bodies to cure them of their abnormality with the aim of reintegrating them back into the collective; however, what emerges is that, in the case of Russia, the surgical approach does not necessarily correct these bodies with the principal aim of reinsertion, but rather correction entails alienating these groups so far from the collective that they no longer consider themselves to be a part of it. With these abnormal bodies "out of the picture" and erased from public view, the state does not need to acknowledge the existence of these abnormal bodies, for acknowledging them suggests breakdowns in social control. Further, their existence suggests that society has the conditions that *permit* these bodies to exist, which paints the nation in a negative light. The state's constant reassertions that abnormal bodies are not inherently Russian as they do they have stakes in the Russian collective identity capitalize on blaming foreign agents for the existence of these bodies. During the Soviet Union, the political leadership classified HIV/AIDS as a problem of the West "which is unnatural for our society" (Feshbach, 7). In this respect, HIV+ bodies may be seen as the most recent bodies constructed as abnormal and to have their safe space and representation largely erased, but the

erasure of people is not a novel technique. What makes the Russian experience of HIV/AIDS so unique is the sublimation of HIV+ bodies' cultural and social representation via strict censorship, and such erasure may be likened to the social eugenics projects championed by the Soviets that manipulate and regulate public opinion by the literal erasure of people from history. **Fig. C3** demonstrates visually the gradual erasure of men who fell out of favor with Stalin, who were edited out of the images one-by-one when they expressed views aberrant to national views that were offensive enough for Stalin to believe that they could not continue to exist within the collective.

Abnormal bodies and their construction are a focus of this work because stigma created around them have direct health consequences for those who are also HIV+ individuals. Quantitative analyses assaying the effects of stigma in health-seeking behaviors within the HIV+ community reveal "low implementation of HIV-related health behaviors, including suboptimal antiretroviral adherence… because they feel that they do not deserve care**"** (Earnshaw et al., 2014). HIV+ bodies are directly affected by the culture of stigma compounded by centuries of repression endured by groups most vulnerable to it. To consider solely the numerical figures of the epidemic paints an incomplete picture, for the conditions that facilitated its alarming spread predate the disease itself. An investigation like this present study that analyzes the HIV/AIDS epidemic in a cultural context offers certain nuances that cannot be obtained from simple factual knowledge; culture is deeply tied to national identity and an understanding of personal identity and thus its effects, too, are pervasive and significant enough to suggest that this research is both imperative and necessary

Appendix

A. Interview Questions

1. *What in your opinion, is an ideal body by Russian standards? What defines Russianness? What are his/her characteristics, beliefs? What qualities make a person, a человек?*
2. *What image does Russia want to convey to the world? How concerned is the government with upholding this national image?*

B, Figures
Chapter 1

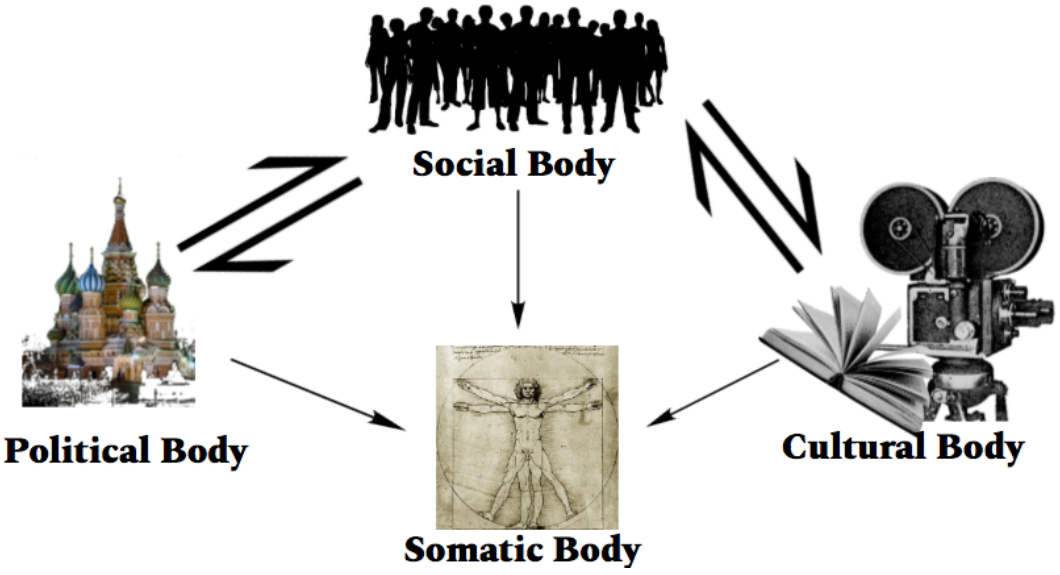

Fig. 1a: Body Politics and Interaction of the Polity

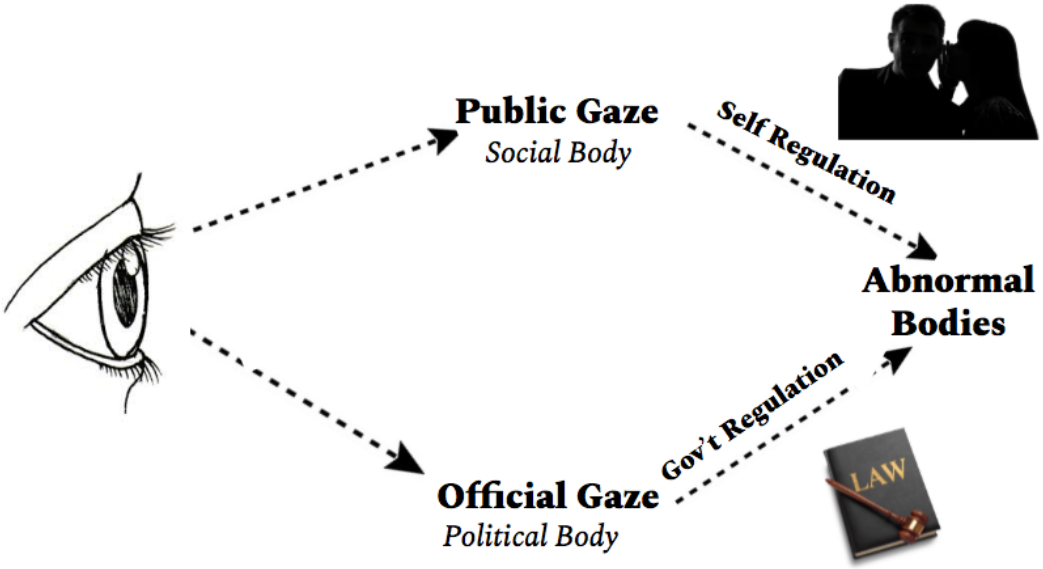

Fig 1b: Surveillance by Means of the Gaze

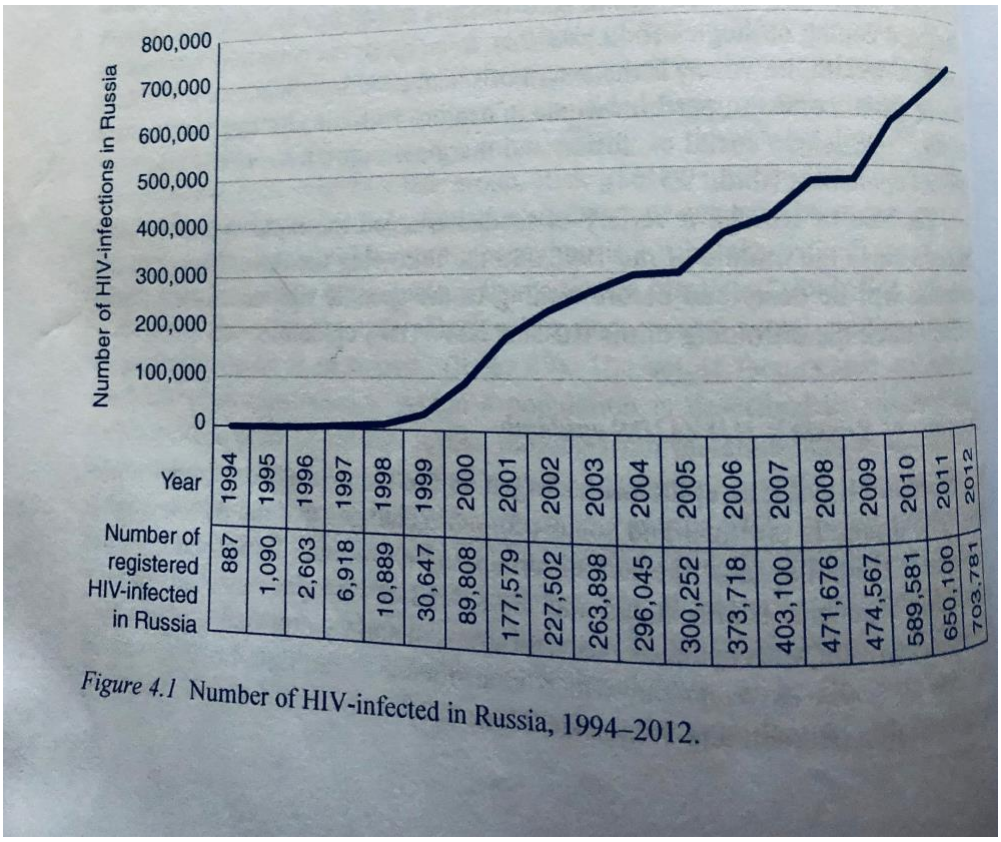

Figure 4.1 Number of HIV-infected in Russia, 1994–2012.

Fig. 1c: Number of HIV-infected in Russia (Pape)

Chapter 2

Fig. 2a: "The Workers of the USSR Do Not Have the Right to Poison Their Strength Body and Mind, Which Are Needed fo the Collective Work of the Socialist Construction of the Proletarian State" (Starks, 114-115)

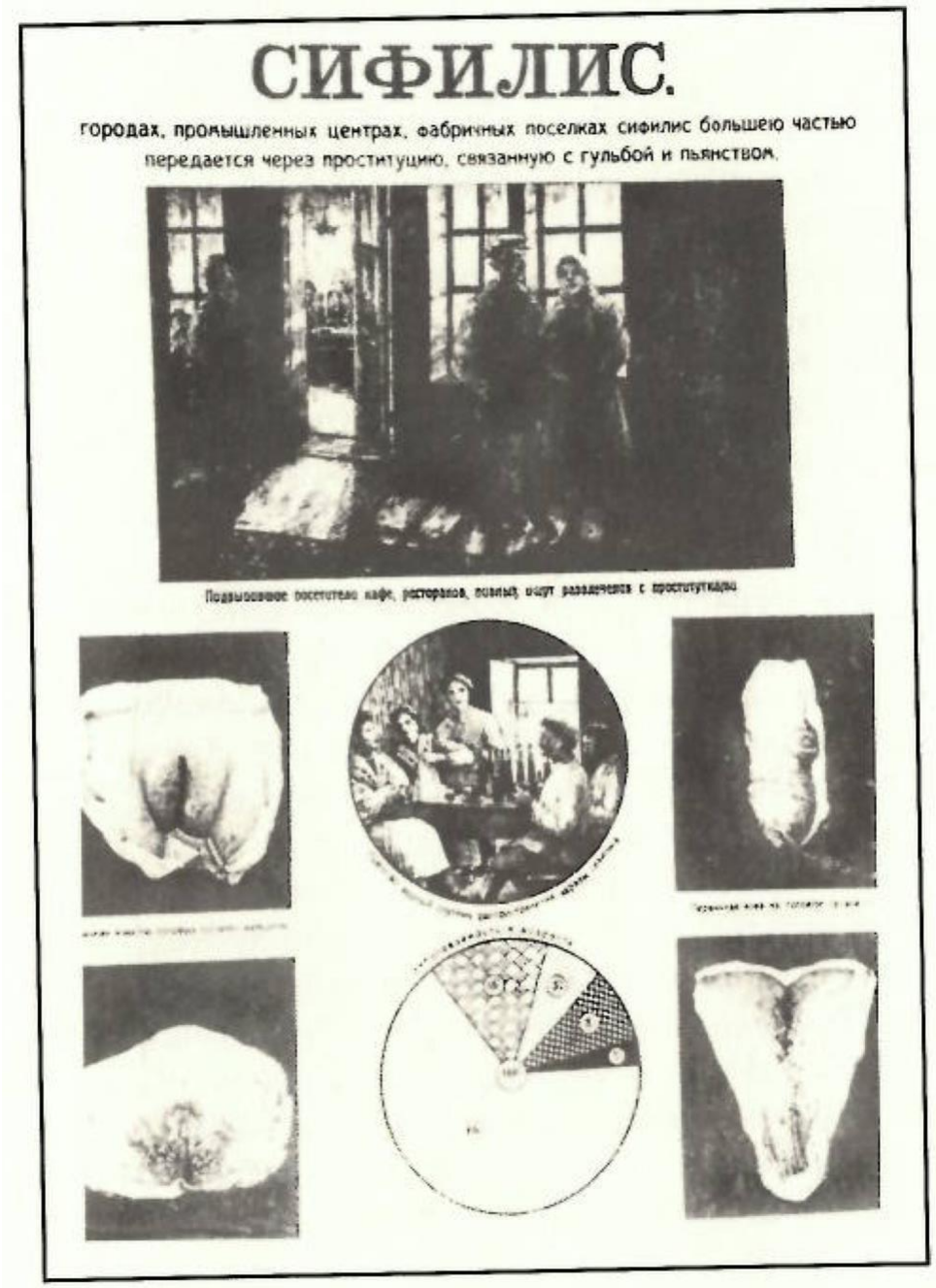

Fig. 2b: "Syphilis. In cities, industrial centers, and factory settlements, syphilis is primarily transmitted through prostitution, connected to carousing and drunkenness. Drunken visitors to cafes, restaurants, and bars look for entertainment with prostitutes. Drunkenness is the loyal traveling companion of the spread of the syphilis infection" (Bernstein. L., 114)

Fig. 2c: "Casual sex: the main source of the spread of venereal disease!" (Bernstein L., 118)

Fig. 2d: "Syphilis is one of the most common reasons for diseases of the brain and spinal cord / Beware of syphilis!" (Bernstein L., 119)

Fig. 2e: "Let us step up the fight against the fight against prostitution – the shameful legacy of capitalism / Let us help girls and women get qualifications [for work] / Let us expand the building of boarding houses and workshops for the unemployed, clinics and venereal dispensaries / Let us strike at debauchers!" (Bernstein L., 115)

Fig. 2f: "By entering into an extramarital sexual relationship you endanger the health of your family" (Bernstein L., 120)

Figure 2g: Article 150 severely punishes those who infect someone with venereal disease" (Bernstein L., 120)

Fig. 2h: Syphilis is curable / In the very beginning of the disease syphilis is cured quickly / Neglected syphilis is cured slowly, through long and careful treatment / The consequences of untreated syphilis: madness, paralysis, deformity, stillborn children, idiot children" (Bernstein L., 82)

Fig. 2i: Movie still from 1926 film "A Prostitute, Killed by Life" (Hearnes 2017)

Fig. 2j: "Only a physician can diagnose an illness and determine the proper treatment" (Bernstein L., 154)

Fig. 2k: "Give birth in a hospital / The folk healer ruins your health" (Bernstein L., 153)

Fig. 2l"March 8: Third Year of the Five-Year Plan" (*Chatterjee, 132*)

Fig 2m."Long live the 8th of March, International, Communist, Women's Day" (*Chatterjee, 137*)

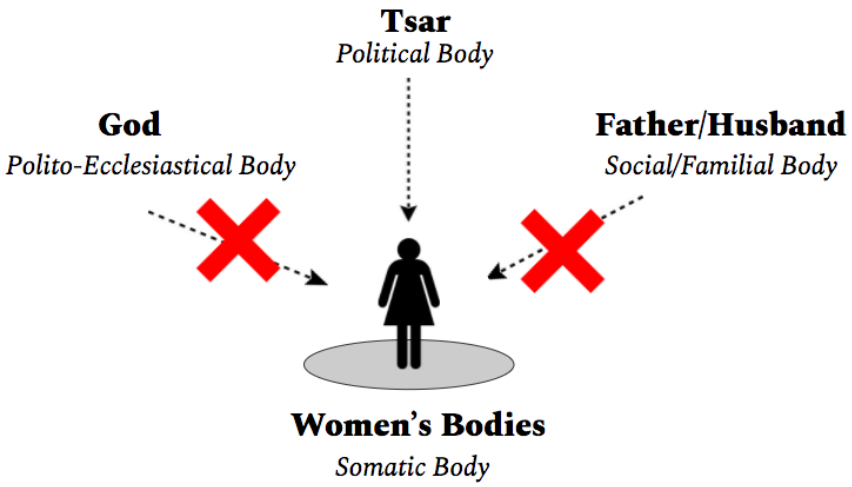

Fig. 2n: Soviet restructuring of the tripartite patriarchal force

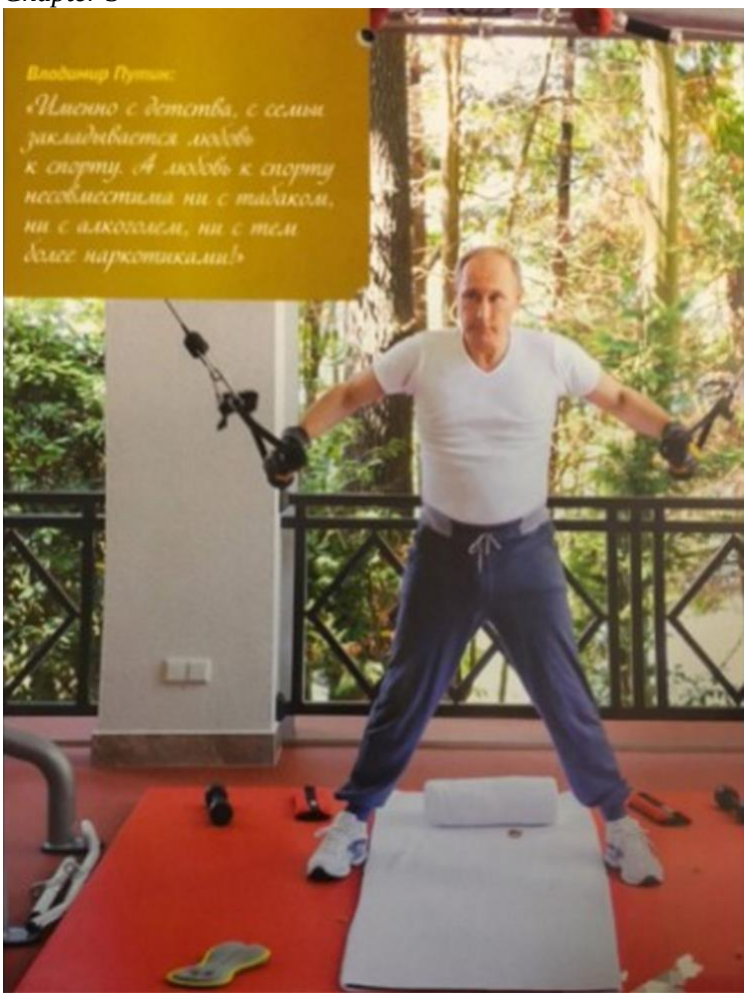

Fig. 3a: April 2016 cover of Vladimir Putin calendar (Chance, CNN)

Fig. 3b: "Beware! Fatal danger! The syringe of a drug addict is the source of AIDS!" (Andrei Rylkov Foundation, 2012).

Conclusion

III. 15 Spring Days in 1921
A. Organism's Activity:

	per day	*total*
Mental labor	9 hrs. 32 min.	143 hrs.
Physical labor	1 hr. 28 min.	22 hrs.
Hiking	1 hr. 30 min.	22½ hrs.
Sleep	5 hrs.	75½ hrs.
Unaccounted	– hr. – min.	– hr.
Domestic labor	6 hrs. 30 min.	97½ hrs.
	24 hrs.15 min.	360 hrs.

B. Quantity of Food:

Black bread	8½ lbs.
Onion	4 lbs.
Potatoes	4 lbs.
Nuts	2 lbs.
Dried apples in water	1 lb.
Water	18 lbs.[11]

Fig. C1: Aleksei Gastev's 1921 Schedule (Starks, 166)

Fig C2: "8 Hours for Leisure – 8 Hours for Sleep – 8 Hours for Work" (Starks, 114-115)

Fig C3: Stalin's erasure of dissidents during the Great Terror. "The original photo (top left) was taken at the Fifteenth Leningrad Regional Party Conference in 1924 or 1925. It shows Nikolai Antipov (left), Joseph Stalin, Sergei Kirov (right), and Nikolai Shvernik (far right)" (Miltimore 2016).

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