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Language of Carnival:

How Language and the Carnivalesque Challenge Hegemony

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

Does the phenomenon of carnivalesque challenge hegemony and inspire social change? Mikhail Bakhtin coined the term "carnivalesque" to describe the concept of Carnival. During Carnival, social norms were overturned and ignored in favor of a chaotic atmosphere, briefly breaking down the boundaries between class, gender, and other hegemonic perspectives. Modern Carnivals, such as the Rio Carnival, still contain a semblance of the carnivalesque, as well as other holidays that celebrate the grotesque and macabre, like that of the Day of the Dead. The LGBT Pride Parade can also be seen as a modern Carnival, for it focuses heavily on sexual and gender identities that have been suppressed in most of the world. When celebrating these carnivalesque events, one can dress up and change their identity to something less tolerated in an oppressive hegemony. For example, some participants may cross-dress or act in less traditional ways, while others will dress in ways that mock the social standards of royalty or religion. Many of these identities challenged the status quo of society and slowly became accepted. This thesis explores the role the carnivalesque has in celebrating alternative identities and its use as a rhetorical tool for inspiring social change, as well as examine how Carnival uses dialogic language. The methods of exploring this topic include reading Bakhtin's texts on language and rhetoric, analyzing other sources that also explore language and carnivalesque elements, and considering the history of Carnival and its influence on people and society.

Foreword

Mikhail Bakhtin was known to be a critic of rhetoric, calling it "too confrontational and monologic" when compared to literary texts. Yet despite his criticisms, his concepts of dialogue and the carnivalesque have been used in rhetorical settings by others; feminist scholars such as Julia Kristeva have studied the dialogic concept, while the carnivalesque has been used to explore the body by scholars such as Mary Russo. Carnival itself can be seen as a rhetorical tool, and when looking at its history and seeing marginalized groups using it as a way to find their own voices, it is no surprise that the concept of Carnival has continued to exist in the modern era. Festivals such as the Rio Carnival, Mardi Gras, and possibly even the LGBT pride parade and the Day of the Dead are all examples of Carnival living on to this day. Here, an argument will be proposed to explore how Carnival has been used as a rhetorical tool to challenge hegemony, and how language and the carnivalesque continue to support marginalized groups.

Carnival has been historically seen as a time when social boundaries have been suspended. It is during this time that the general populace enjoys expressing themselves in unlimited ways. Although some have made the argument has been made Carnivals was used as hegemony's way of controlling people by allowing them to express themselves and letting out their frustrations over their living situations, Carnivals planted seeds of change in people's minds, even if change occurs over a considerable amount of time. The purpose of this text is to examine Carnival and how it is used as a rhetorical tool for change.

In order to better understand Carnival, it is crucial to see how language is used in Carnival. Bakhtin believed that language was ever evolving and could be used everywhere. This

is true as well for Carnival. When one examines the language of Carnival, as well as how language is defined, one can understand how language plays an important role in Carnival being used as a rhetorical tool for change.

Finally, it is essential to look at Carnival from outside perspectives, in both literature and film. Carnival has had a great influence on writers such as William Shakespeare, and directors such as Pier Paolo Pasolini have incorporated carnivalesque themes into their films. Even in times when carnivalesque elements were attempted to be reformed, Carnival survived through plays and literature. Films that were not directly influenced by Carnival also retained some carnivalesque elements. By looking at these works, one will get a better understanding of how influential Carnival is on both past and contemporary society.

Introduction

Mikhail Bakhtin's works were largely influenced by the environment in which he lived in. During the Soviet Union, it was not uncommon for people to be arrested or exiled for having beliefs that went against the government's leanings. Many of these exiled people included academics who continued to teach despite the suppression of their viewpoints. Bakhtin held theology lectures at Petersburg University during a time when religion was repressed, and as such he was considered a "corrupter" of the youth. He was exiled to Kazakhstan, where he lived for six years before returning back home. His previous standing in the intellectual-academic community was stripped away from him, and he could no longer freely publish books under his own name (Bizzell and Herzberg 1206).

Texts that focused on subjects such as Marxism and Freud (the latter whose works were banned in the Soviet Union) had to be published under the names of Bakhtin's friends. So much of his work was published under various pseudonyms that academics still debate on which of the books that are credited to Bakhtin were actually written by him. The few books that were published under his legal name include *Problems of Dostoevsky's Arts* (later retitled *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*), a subject that was considered safe enough for Bakhtin to write without facing consequences from the Soviet government, due its overall non-political nature.

Another major work Bakhtin had written was *The Dialogic Imagination*, a series of essays that introduce the concepts of dialogue and heteroglossia. These concepts would later be studied by future scholars and many works would be influenced by the dialogic concept. However, the book that would have a great influence over the concepts explored in this paper is

Rabelais and His World, Bakhtin's dissertation that was almost never published. It is here that Bakhtin thoroughly examines Carnival and its importance.

After the examination of Bakhtin's life, it is clear why he had taken an interest in Carnival. Carnival, at least the traditional type that was held before religious holidays, was not celebrated in the Soviet Union. The overturning of boundaries would disrupt the ideals of the Soviet Union. Chaotic celebrations encouraged the public to ignore the restrictions assigned upon them. Such festivals that allowed the breaking of rules and boundaries would no doubt attract those who lived in an oppressive society.

Language

Language is a component of Carnival and of culture in general. In *The Dialogic Imagination*, Bakhtin explains the importance of dialogue by examining how the dialectics of an object are surrounded by social dialogue. Dialogue, he says, has the power to shape style, and the expressive layers of dialogue has largely been ignored. Bakhtin claims that the word, or *slovo,* is born during the dialogic interaction with an alien word that is already found in an object (279). In other words, language is created when voices interact with each other. This claim falls into Bakhtin's ideas of how language is not monologic, and that dialogue helps bring voices together. The voices know each other, and thus there are two voices, two world views, and two languages. Dialogism is also viewed as the interpretation between text, reader, and self, making it a natural discourse that differentiates itself from authoritative discourse.

Dialogue brings understanding among people who speak in different languages, or who need to listen to one another. Language itself is a hybridization and a dialogized interrelation of speech, a system that consists of multiple voices (358). Therefore, it would make sense to allow these voices to speak out and be heard. The very concept of the monologue is an antithesis to language and what it stands for, and when language becomes redefined, the perspective of language changes, or "the one who had been unmasked may become the one who strips away the mask" (420). The metaphor here displays the idea of language evolving and its impact on those who use that language.

Heteroglossia, which literally means "different languages," is another essential concept in language. Heteroglossia allows different voices to become one unitary language, and it continues

to widen as long as language is alive. Utterances participate in heteroglossia (272), for heteroglossia is the natural environment of utterances, and allows new forms of language to be created. Heteroglossia is a double-voiced multi-language, and is not isolated rhetoric. As Bakhtin states, the multiple voices wash over a culture's awareness of itself (368), making both language and culture evolve, for language and culture cannot exist without the other. As such, heteroglossia is viewed as the complete opposite of monologic rhetoric and it cannot be controlled by a single person or state.

Utterances are mentioned alongside heteroglossia, but what exactly are utterances? According to Bakhtin's essay "The Problem of Speech Genres," utterances are the "real unit of speech communication" and they are what makes up speech genres (71). Human activity helps utterances form into language, and speech genres are formed from individual utterances (60). Language is connected to human activity and should not be separated from human condition, for utterances help people understand language (Bizzell and Herzberg 1206). Therefore, utterances are the building blocks of language.

Bakhtin further states that our individual utterances are composed of other people's words (89). In a sense, nothing we say is original; almost every sentence we phrase was inspired by someone else. However, this unoriginality is not a negative detail. Although the speech or rhetoric we make is ultimately formed through the use of other utterances, those utterances are reworked into our own style. The sentences we say depend on how our utterances are interpreted. Every utterance is a response to preceding utterances, thus creating dialogue (91). It is important to keep this idea in mind because the formation of dialogue and language depends on utterances despite the unoriginality, for this sameness can be molded into something different and less monotone.

During the examination of Bakhtin's texts on language and how it is shaped through interpretation, a major word is found throughout his works in the original Russian language: *slovo*, which is often translated directly as "word," but it has a more fluid meaning in Russian. Depending on the context, the word may be interpreted as "speech," "text," or even "faith." Due to this fluidity, the meaning of *slovo* may be lost when translated into English. In order to understand what Bakhtin is saying in his work, it is essential to look at the text in its original language and determine the context of the words and phrases being used.

Let us examine this passage from *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, as translated by Caryl Emerson:

> For the main object of his representation is the word itself, and specifically the *fully signifying* word. Dostoevsky's works are a word about a word addressed to a word. The represented word comes together with the representing word on one level and on equal terms. They penetrate one another, overlap one another at various dialogic angles. As a result of this encounter, new aspects and new functions of the word are revealed and brought to the fore (266).

In this translation, *slovo* is translated as "word", and the text suggests that the context is based on the written word in Dostoevsky's books. Let us then examine the original Russian text:

> Ведь главным предметом его изображения является само слово, притом именно полнозначное слово. Произведения Достоевского — это слово о слове, обращенное к слову. Изображаемое слово сходится со словом изображающим на одном уровне и на равных правах. Они проникают друг в друга, накладываются друг на друга под разными диалогическими углами. В результате этой встречи

раскрываются и выстзшают на первый план новые стороны и новые функции слова (297).

When translated anew, the passage reads:

> You see, the main subject of his image is *slovo* itself, and what's more is that it is a namely full-valued *slovo*. The works of Dostoevsky – that is *slovo* of *slovo*, addressed to *slovo*. The depicted *slovo* converges with *slovo* depicted on the same level and on equal rights. They permeate each other, superimpose each other under different dialogic angles. As a result, this meeting has opened up and showcased the new sides and new functions of *slovo*.

In this statement, Bakhtin is referring to Dostoevsky's written works, and so it can be assumed that *slovo* refers to the written word. However, Bakhtin mention the "dialogic angles" and also discusses the concept of "polyphony," or multiple voices, in many sections of his book. He uses Dostoevsky's characters to explain how each person represents their own voice, that self is an individual concept. Bakhtin's focus on voice and individual self are proof that *slovo* in this context does not simply mean "word," but also means "speech" and may even be referred to as "voice." The translated quotation can now be seen as referring to how voices "overlap one another at various dialogic angles" and form new functions, an idea that falls in line with the general concept of Bakhtin's works.

There are more texts in which the fluidity of *slovo* must be reviewed. Another text translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, this time from *The Dialogic Imagination*, reads:

> The word is born in a dialogue as a living rejoinder within it; the word is shaped in dialogic interaction with an alien word that is already in the object. A word forms a

concept of its own object in a dialogic way. But this does not exhaust the internal dialogism of the word. It encounters an alien word not only in the object itself: every word is directed toward an answer and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates. The word in living conversation is directly, blatantly, oriented toward a future answer-word: it provokes an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction. Forming itself in an atmosphere of the already spoken, the word is at the same time determined by that which has not yet been said but which is needed and in fact anticipated by the answering word. Such is the situation with any living dialogue. The orientation towards an answer is open, blatant and concrete (279-280).

The original text:

Слово рождается в диалоге, как его живая реплика, формируется в диалогическом взаимодействии с чужим словом в предмете. Конципирование словом своего предмета —диалогично. Но этим не исчерпывается внутренняя диалогичность слова. Не только в предмете встречается оно с чужим словом. Всякое слово направлено на ответ и не может избежать глубокого влияния предвосхищаемого ответного слова. Живое разговорное слово непосредственно и грубо установлено на будущее слово-ответ: оно провоцирует ответ, предвосхищает его и строится в направлении к нему. Слагаясь в атмосфере уже сказанного, слово в то же время определяется еще не сказанным, но вынуждаемым и уже предвосхищаемым ответным словом. Так — во всяком

живом диалоге. Все риторические формы, монологические по своему композиционному построению, установлены на слушателя и на его ответ.

It should be noted that these quotations are taken from an essay called “Discourse in the Novel.” The original title of this essay is “Слово в романе” (*Slovo v romane*). *Slovo* appears in the title, once again showing the fluidity of the word’s meaning. In this context, it does not mean “word,” “speech,” or “voice,” but instead it means “discourse.” With this fact in mind, one can interpret the quote as talking about discourse, but it can also fall into the context of speech since Bakhtin states that the “word is born in a dialogue.” Furthermore, the statement that the word “provokes an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction” can be interpreted as meaning either discourse or speech.

These few translations of Bakhtin’s works are added here to show the fluidity of certain words and how their meaning can change when translated to other languages. From these examples, one can see that *slovo* has different meanings based on context. When examining Carnival itself, we should keep in mind that Carnival has its own *slovo*, which can either be speech or discourse. Carnival is a fluid phenomenon, and this fluidity extends to its language. It would incorrect to assume that *slovo* has the same meaning throughout its usage.

Jacques Derrida

Bakhtin's writings on language are not the only texts that will be used to explore the way language is used. Jacques Derrida, a philosopher who is best known for developing the concept of deconstruction, has written a book exploring the way language is formed and explaining why speech is the central form of language, not writing. *Of Grammatology,* translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, will be used as a supplement to Bakhtin's works. The chapter that will be the main focus is "Genesis and Structure of the Essay on the Origin of Languages", which discusses the origin of language while critiquing Jean-Jacques Rousseau's essay on language. Derrida brings up the term "auto-affection," which is another term for "self-experience" or "self-awareness." Derrida states that:

> Auto-affection is a universal structure of experience. All living things are capable of auto-affection. And only a being capable of symbolizing, that is to say of auto-affecting, may let itself be affected by the other in general. Auto-affection is the condition of an experience in general. This possibility —another name for 'life'—is a general structure articulated by the history of life, and leading to complex and hierarchical operations (165).

How does this passage relate to Bakhtin's works? For one thing, there is similarity between auto-affection and the creation of utterances. As Bakhtin stated, utterances are created from human activity, and language is formed from this activity. Auto-affection is a universal structure that forms the operations of life, and it can be assumed that language is a part of this formation since

language also a part of life. A further look into Derrida's writings also shows a strong likeliness between his work and Bakhtin's work:

> One must understand speech in terms of this diagram as its system requires that it be heard and understood immediately by whoever emits it. It produces a signifier which seems not to fall into the world, outside the ideality of the signified, but to remain sheltered—even at the moment that it attains the audio phonic system of the other—within the pure interiority of auto-affection. It does not fall into the exteriority of space, into what one calls the world, which is nothing but the outside of speech. Within so-called "living" speech, the spatial exteriority of the signifier seems absolutely reduced (166).

Speech is heard and understood immediately and it is not separate from the human condition, and it does not fall into "space" and disappears. Bakhtin would most likely agree with this notion, as he held similar beliefs on that style and utterances could not be separated from language or from people in general. Speech, style, and utterances all work together to create culture. To remove any of them would be removing the parts that make up culture. Derrida further states:

> Conversation is, then, a communication between two absolute origins that, if one may venture the formula, auto-affect reciprocally, repeating as immediate echo the auto-affection produced by the other. Immediacy is here the myth of consciousness. Speech and the consciousness of speech—that is to say consciousness simply as self-presence—are the phenomenon of an auto-affection lived as suppression of différance. That phenomenon, that presumed suppression of différance, that lived reduction of the opacity of the signifier, are the origin of what is called presence. That which is not subjected to the process of différance is present. The present is that from which we

> believe we are able to think time, effacing the inverse necessity: to think the present from time as différance (166).

In this statement, Derrida expresses how speech contributes to the phenomenon of "presence," which is similar to the viewpoint Bakhtin had on language and culture making each other evolve. Derrida also mentions "différance," a concept that describes the relationship between meaning and text. Derrida uses "différance" to explain how writing and speech are not separate and that writing a fallen version of speech, an idea that Bakhtin might have agreed with. Derrida then says about speech:

> And speech always presents itself as the best expression of liberty. It is by itself language at liberty and the liberty of language, the freedom of a speech which need not borrow its signifiers from the exteriority of the world, and which, therefore, seems incapable of being dispossessed. Do the most imprisoned and deprived beings not make use of that interior spontaneity which is speech? What is true of the citizen is in the first place true of those naked beings exposed to the power of others: the newborn. "Your first gifts are fetters, your first treatment, torture. Their voice alone is free; why should they not raise it in complaint (168)?

Derrida claims that speech is the best expression of liberty and that only a person's voice is truly free. In comparison, Bakhtin claimed that heteroglossia is the natural form of language and cannot be controlled by one person or state. Here one can see the similarities between the two ideas on speech and language. Later, Derrida discusses the changing of words, an idea that may be connected with *slovo*:

> Duclos announces the Rousseauist themes most precisely when he holds forth thus: 'What we call society, and what our ancestors would merely have called a coterie,

> decides the nature of language and manners [*moeurs*] today. When a word has been for a time in use in these social circles, its pronunciation softens.' Duclos finds equally intolerable similar mutilations inflicted upon words, their corruptions, and above all their abridgements; one must on no account shorten [*couper*] words: This nonchalance in pronunciation, which is not incompatible with an impatience in expression, makes us corrupt even the nature of words, by chopping them up in such a way that the meaning is no longer recognizable. Today, for example, one pronounces the proverb as, in spite of him and his teeth [*ses dens*], rather than in spite of him and his helpers [*ses aidans*]. We have more of these words shortened or corrupted by usage than one would credit (169).

While "word" used here could be applied to the written word, it is obvious that Derrida is using "word" to also mean "speech," in a similar manner to Bakhtin's usage of *slovo*. Derrida notes that language loses its meaning through cultural changes, and one cannot help but wonder what Bakhtin's response would have been to this statement. As language and culture are intertwined, perhaps the argument could be made that it is, in fact, language that changes culture. Derrida then goes on to say about language being corrupted by politics:

> Deterioration in the language and in pronunciation is thus inseparable from political corruption. The political model that inspires Duclos is Athenian or Roman democracy. The language is the property of the people. Each derives its unity from the other. For if language has a body and a system, they inhere in the people assembled and "bodily" united: "It is a people in a body that makes a language...A people is thus the absolute master of the spoken language, and it is an empire they possess unawares." To dispossess the people of their mastery of the language and thus of their self-mastery,

> one must suspend the spoken element in language. Writing is the very process of the dispersal of peoples unified as bodies and the beginning of their enslavement: "The body of a nation alone has authority over the spoken language, and the writers have the right over the written language: The people, Varro said, are not masters of writing as they are of speech" (169-170).

This passage is something that Derrida and Bakhtin definitely have in common; language is what unites people, and political corruption has the power to take that away. Bakhtin himself saw it during the Soviet Union, and this concept will be explored again once we move onto examining Carnival, its history, and how language is performed in the carnival. Derrida then brings up another important point about language, this time focusing on its alterations:

> You will be surprised to find that I reckon the study of languages among the useless lumber of education…If the study of languages were merely the study of words, that is, of the symbols by which language expresses itself, then this might be a suitable study for children; but languages, as they change the symbols, also modify the ideas which the symbols express. Minds are formed by language, thoughts take their color from its ideas. Reason alone is common to all. Every language has its own form, a difference which may be partly cause and partly effect of difference in national character; this conjecture appears to be confirmed by the fact that in every nation under the sun speech follows the changes of manners, and is preserved or altered along with them (170).

Language is not merely words; it has different forms that help shape the mind. This concept that will be explored again when discussing Carnival, Carnival is also a form of language that shapes the minds of its participants. Derrida's text is a necessary supplementary to the works of Bakhtin,

for it explores similar concepts and provides more analysis on language and how it affects the culture around it. From this section we have learned the origin of language, the importance of language in society, and how language has various forms.

Carnival

This exploration will now move onto Carnival itself, as Carnivals were festivals that were celebrated before the Christian holiday Lent. They consisted of parades, feasts, and parties. The carnivalesque was introduced in *The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, but is explored in its entirety in *Rabelais and His World* (translated by Helene Iswolsky). In this text, Bakhtin states how the authoritative word does not allow other forms of speech to interfere with it. Dialogue opposes the authoritative word, and this is compared to how Carnival opposes official culture. During Carnival time, hierarchy is halted and the authoritative word becomes irrelevant (10). The words of the people are now heard instead.

During the Medieval period, mock rhetoric and humorous Latin literature was widespread. Parodies of prayer, dialogue, and debate were tolerated during carnival times (15). Also tolerated were abuses, curses, and profanities, what is regarded as the "unofficial elements of speech." Bakhtin claimed that these elements are also the elements of freedom, for they liberate from the norms of "established idiom" (188). In a carnivalesque setting, such elements are not restricted, as they would normally would be.

Dialogue thrives in a carnivalesque setting because the differences between superiors and inferiors are halted at this time (246). The carnivalesque crowd is the way of the people and it exists outside of the "coercive socioeconomic and political organization" that are normative in society (255). The carnivalesque provided the human consciousness with a new perspective for the world (274). This perspective could only be viewed during Carnival, hence why so much importance was placed on the celebration.

As stated in the editor's preface for *The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, the carnivalized language-violence does not allow authority to be established, and dogmatism is weakened in the genre of the serio-comical (xxxviii). The Carnival world establishes a life-creating and transforming power, and part of it is tied to Socratic dialogue. Bakhtin did not consider Socratic dialogue as a rhetorical genre (109), but as something that is part of the folk-carnivalistic base (110). In other words, it is not traditional rhetoric, but something that forms naturally in Carnival.

The goal of early Socratic dialogue was to allow people to seek the truth together, while monologism claims to already know the truth, and Bakhtin believed that the Socratic dialogue was important in shaping the novel. Along with this, he stressed the importance of Menippean satire. Menippean satire is a seriocomic genre that mocks contemporary ideas in prose and verse. It was first developed by the Greek satirist Menippus of Gadara in the early 3rd century BC, and many other forms of satire were imitated by others (Britannica). These mockeries are tied in with the performances of Carnival, in which "inappropriate" performances were allowed and prevalent during this time of celebration.

There is also "banquet dialogue," another important aspect of Carnival. Banquets and excessive eating and drinking were always been a part of Carnival, for food and drink were symbols of life. These dialogues, Bakhtin says, could not be translated into a verbal language, but only into "artistic images" (Bakhtin 122). It is here that one can see the similarities between past Carnivals and "modern" Carnivals. The language of contemporary Carnivals is also translated into "artistic images" with decorations and costumes adorning the festivals.

There is no difference between an actor and a spectator in Carnival, and all are equal during these festivities. Carnival allowed people to express themselves and united the profane

with the sacred. Parodies on sacred texts were common during the Carnival times, and there was a heavy focus on reproduction. That which had been forbidden by the Church and by the general society were celebrated in Carnival, and the days of Carnival allowed people to release their forbidden feelings. As Bakhtin states, Carnivals were not performed, but lived in (131). They were the natural states of the people who wanted to express themselves.

Dualism in focused heavily Carnival. Images of birth and death, young and old, wisdom and stupidity, and so forth characterized the Carnival life. Fire was also used as a symbol for death and renewal, for fire not only destroyed life, but it was also believed that life was reborn from fire. This can be seen in Roman Carnivals in the form of a ritual where people carry lighted candles and tried to snuff each other's candles out while shouting "Death to thee!" (126). While no attempts at death were actually made, the act of snuffing out the candles were meant to symbolize life and death.

Another element that is essential in Carnival is laughter. Laughter was used to ridicule those who are higher-up, usually in regards to gods, the sun, and even actual hierarchical authorities. Laughter itself symbolizes death and rebirth and reproduction, because laughter was a reaction to the crises of life (127). Laughter is a form of language that takes away the power of the higher-up, even if the time is brief. Everything is subject to laughter and parody because, again, everyone participates in Carnival. The participants experience a double life, something that still exists in many modern festivals, celebrations, and parades. Costumes and face paints help "disguise" the participants as restrictive barriers are swept away and all are united. The LGBT community, for instance, has its own version of Carnival with the pride parades, where people may perform as drag queens or wear bright clothing to symbolize the breaking of societal

restrictions against their way of life. The clothing choices of these participants are forms of laughter and parody against the social hegemony, the exact definition that Bakhtin had stated.

In *Rabelais and His World*, it is stated, once again, that the authoritarian word does not allow other types of speech to interfere with it. Therefore, Carnival is about revolution and freedom. Fear, as it is used to restrict the general populace, is removed from Carnival through laughter and parodies of the Church's forms. There is no room for fear, only for festive laughter and the freedom of the participants, for festive laughter is both triumphant and mocking (11). It allows those who lived in fear to leave their anxieties behind.

The kitchen is one of the most common symbols found in Carnival. After all, the kitchen is how the banquets are created, and it is said that frank truth can only be said in a banquet atmosphere (285). The banquet is also where laughter, foolishness, improprieties, curses, parodies, and travesties were present, and from these other forms of truth could be heard (94). The kitchen and banquet often turn into a mock battleground where utensils are used as weapons (22). Once more, this type of act ties in with the symbolism of death and renewal, as well as mocking and parodying a serious subject matter. Seriousness was the tone of doomed authority, an authority that was more preoccupied with restrictions and put less value on freedom, and therefore it had no place in Carnival.

In a way, Carnival's purpose is to push the everyday reality to the limits of the fantastic, to the point where the fantastic then becomes a reality. The favorable outcome of this push is for the status quo to change. Within this change is viewing what many consider grotesque in a different perspective. Bakhtin laments how the idea of the grotesque is no longer part of the academic because of its degradation towards the body. Yet despite the principle of the grotesque being degradation, grotesque realism allows the bodily element to be positive. In Carnival, the

body is often viewed in a grotesque image of transformation and exaggeration, and laughter is linked to the bodily lower stratum (20). There is a focus on the certain functions of the body such as reproduction, eating, and defecation. Certain body parts, such as the mouth when it is used for eating during banquets, are also greatly emphasized. Despite its heavy exaggerations, the grotesque body is not separated from the rest of the world and is a symbol of life. As Bakhtin notes:

> "It is not a closed, completed unit; it is unfinished, outgrows itself, transgresses its own limits. The stress is laid on those parts of the body that are open to the outside world, that is, the parts through which the world enters the body or emerges from it, or through which the body itself goes out to meet the world" (26).

The grotesque body represents both the positive and negative elements of life, and it can be seen in modern festivals such as Mardi Gras and the pride parades, with masks and clothing used to exaggerate body parts. Grotesque imagery has existed in all cultures, and yet it has been excluded from great literature. The question would be: can the grotesque be considered a form of art? Considering that it is an essential language for Carnival and has an impact on its participants, the answer is affirmative.

The grotesque symposium of Carnival blends the profane and sacred. Scripture whirls around in a grotesque dance, and the collective body of the people is transferred to the private body of man in class society. Again, here is the exaggeration, hyperbolism, and excessiveness that is found in Carnival, and for that moment the impossible exists. The grotesque body is involved with the renewal of culture, where "each man belongs to the immortal people who create history" (367). In other words, all people are equal and are capable of changing the future.

Such thoughts still persist within modern Carnivals, many of which celebrate the future or positive changes in life.

To further understand Carnival's influence on people, let us diverge from Bakhtin's texts and examine it through a historical lens. Peter Burke, author of *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, explores the reason for Carnival and the way it challenges hegemony's status quo. In agreement with Bakhtin, he says that Carnival was not meant to oppose the elites, but rather was meant to shift emphasis on the rebel in all of us (8). What this means, as was stated before, that Carnival was simply a time when people were allowed to do performances and dress up in ways that were normally restricted. Yet as we will soon see that this idea of Carnival would later change once certain powers move in to try and eliminate it.

It must be emphasized once more that everyone participated in Carnival, not just nobility. People of the clergy have even joined in Carnival celebrations, with some of them adorning clothing of the opposite sex (53). Crossdressing is seen in modern celebrations, particularly in LGBT communities. Such early breaking of gender norms could have potentially inspired feminist ideologies in later years. Moreover, the action of ignoring social norms could have also inspired other marginalized groups and their own social movements.

Each culture had its own version of Carnival. The German Carnival had a greater emphasis on preparing meat, with butchers performing weapon dances with their knives (65). European Jews had Purim, which was consisted of aspects taken from the cultures they lived in, but with the Christian references removed (79). Most Carnivals had a significant number of women participating in them, with some rituals focusing on the inversion of the roles of the sexes (83). Here is yet another example of gender norms being swept aside during the time of festivities.

It is not only Europe that had Carnival. The Holi festival in India also focused on the reversal of the hierarchy, in which village leaders were mocked and forced to ride backwards on donkeys (90). Just as the grotesque has been found in every culture, it appears that Carnival is also a nearly universal concept. Almost every person, it seemed, had a desire to challenge and reverse the hegemony of their cultures, and to allow dialogue and heteroglossia to roam free.

In France, there was a common performance called *recontre*, in which two performers took the roles of Carnival and Lent and quarreled with each other (169). This performance was not the only personification of Carnival; in mock trials and mock battles, Carnival was personified as a fat man, while Lent was personified as a thin woman (230). These personifications fall into the "artistic images" of Carnival, the language that is used throughout the festivals. Here is a holiday that celebrates the grotesque arguing and fighting against a holiday that represents holiness.

Why do people celebrate Carnival? There is no clear answer, for Carnival meant something different for each person. There are three themes of Carnival: food, sex, and violence. Food, as it is obvious at this point, was provided through banquets and people ate and drank as much as they pleased. Carnival, however, was also a prime time for sexual activity. *Carne* meant both "meat" and "the flesh," and so naturally the two intertwined. Historians says that a large amount of conceptions were made during Carnival times, and it was also a popular time for weddings (265). It is amusing to think this when considering that these were the eras when religious authority had the final say. Carnival was also the festival of destruction, where aggressive insults and mock battles regularly took place (266). In all of these themes, sex is the middle term connecting food and violence.

Overall, Carnival usually represented what was lacking in Lent. Lent was the holiday of fasting and prayer, while Carnival was dedicated to feasts, performances, mockeries, sexual activities, and the general feeling of freedom. Carnival was opposed to diurnal actions, and was an enactment of "the world turned upside down" (268). The language of Carnival brought the people together through its carnivalesque heteroglossia, no matter who they were or what positions they held in society. It is no wonder, then, that others have tried to reform and suppress it.

The reformation of Carnival began in the 1500s. Catholic and Protestant reformers were opposed to popular forms of entertainment such as festivals, dancing, performances, masks, magic, and other elements that were deemed as "unchristian". Carnival, of course, was composed of these elements, and naturally the reformers focused on it. Carnival was criticized of having pagan roots and for encouraging people to overindulge themselves (291). It was accused of being blasphemous, indecent, and for lacking order. Catholic reformers feared that practicing Carnival before Lent would diminish the proper observations that were required for Lent (299), and the celebration of Carnival was compared to that of "a dance around the Golden Calf" (303), a reference to the Old Testament passage in which the Hebrews worshipped a false idol during Moses' absence. By the 1800s, many traditional practices in Carnival had declined in popularity, and a split of traditions between the reformers and the populace had occurred as a result of the reformation (333). At this point, Carnival seemed to have lost its language and had its voice silenced. However, this silence was not destined to last.

Evolution of Carnival

In order to further understand the influence of Carnival, we must examine its history. Carnival's long evolution and many forms make it difficult to pinpoint its exact origin, but it is generally agreed that it has its roots in pagan holidays that celebrate the renewal of nature. Many believe that it is linked to Saturnalia, the Roman festival that honored the god Saturn and is a possible predecessor to Christmas. Customs were overturned during this festival, and food and merrymaking were the main focus of the celebration. Slaves were given temporarily freedom and mock kings were crowned. Near the end of Saturnalia, people received gifts from each other. These traditions would later be incorporated into Christmas, a celebration that is not usually carnivalesque but does have Carnival roots. Other forms of Carnival would adapt these very same traditions.

In the contemporary world, Carnival continues to exist. New Orleans is the home of Mardi Gras, a massive festival that is commemorated before Shrove Tuesday, similar to how the original Carnival was set before Lent. Then there is the Rio Carnival, often cited as the largest Carnival in the world. This festival is also held before Lent and exhibits the characteristics of past Carnivals (Britannica). Other Carnivals exists as well, but these are the ones that many are familiar with.

Mardi Gras is one of the most recognizable festivals in contemporary society. It also has roots dating back to pagan holidays, and is celebrated around the world. Mardi Gras was formed when Christianity made its appearance in Rome. Instead of removing the popular Roman festivals, the Christians have decided to merge their faith with the festivals, a move that would

create less resistance in the people than it would if the festivals were banned completely. This tactic proved to be fruitful, as people embraced the new holiday.

Mardi Gras soon spread throughout the rest of Europe, and was recognized for its participants indulging in several fatty foods, in reference to the word "gras" meaning "fat" in French. The present-day Mardi Gras that is celebrated in New Orleans was established in 1699 by French explorers, but was abolished when New Orleans came under Spanish control. It was not until 1812, when Louisiana became a US state, that the ban was removed. Over the years since, Mardi Gras evolved. In 1827, students wore colorful costumes in the streets of New Orleans, and the festival grew from there and eventually the Mardi Gras parades became part of the tradition (History). The failed suppression of Mardi Gras only serves to show that Carnival cannot be rid of so easily, and that people will find a way to resurrect it, fitting since it is the symbolism for the resurrection of nature.

The Rio Carnival also has a rich history. Originally a food festival in Europe, the Rio Carnival formed from a cultural mixture between the Africans and the Portuguese. Both cultures brought their own traditions over to Brazil; the Portuguese brought the festival, while the Africans brought their music and dances. These mixtures of cultures resulted in the creation of different music styles such as samba, and soon the dancing and music evolved into something bigger.

The Rio Carnival was born from the concept of "pretending" and "performing." Social norms were ignored, and people could change their appearances however they wanted. The rich and poor mingled among each other and men cross-dressed and wore drag (a tradition that is just as old as Carnival itself). The world is essentially turned upside as people enjoyed themselves (About Brazil). The celebration is so large that it lasts for about a week.

Carnival is an ancient tradition that may very well be celebrated until the end of time. Although there are many forms of Carnival, they all hold the similar themes of performance, breaking social boundaries, and bringing people together. Heteroglossia and dialogue continue to be represented in these Carnivals. Bakhtin stated that heteroglossia and dialogue form language and culture. Carnival is a part of culture, and its language is made up of heteroglossia and dialogue because it allows performance and change to thrive in its presence.

Other Texts

Despite the reformation, Carnival managed to survive in various texts over the years. The works of William Shakespeare, for instance, are filled with carnivalesque elements. Subject matters such as body transformations, the mockery of social structures, mischievous fairies, crossdressing, and the breaking of social boundaries can be found in many of his titles. *Twelfth Night*, a comedic play centered on a crossdressing character, is a fine example of carnivalesque themes being used in Shakespeare's writings.

Named after the festival that takes place before Christmas, *Twelfth Night* has themes that were common during Carnival. Viola, the protagonist of the story, disguises herself as a man and works as a page for Duke Orsino. This act resembles the crossdressing that occurred during Carnival, in which people would dress up and perform as the opposite sex, an event that was even participated by members of the clergy. The crossdressing goes further, however, when the noble lady Olivia mistakes Viola for a man and falls in love with her. Although Olivia marries Viola's brother Sebastian at the end of the story, one can see a homosexual subtext within the interactions between Viola and Olivia. This subtext would be fitting, as gay and lesbian individuals were not accepted during and before Shakespeare's time, but such identities would possibly be acceptable during Carnival.

Moreover, the play mocks the social hierarchy that is set within the story. Malvolio, Olivia's steward, becomes the victim of pranks by several characters throughout the narrative. He is tricked into wearing ridiculous outfits and is generally made into a fool, a type of prank that fits well in a Carnival setting. Malvolio presents himself as a virtuous figure, and when he

chastises Olivia's uncle Sir Toby for excessive drinking, he is met with the response, "Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?" (Act II, Scene III). The reformation took place during Shakespeare's time, so it is possible that this remark was a reference to the Catholic and Protestant reformers who were attempting to suppress Carnival.

Sir Toby himself is a carnivalesque figure. Throughout the play, he is portrayed as mischievous and a lover of eating and drinking. He constantly antagonizes Malvolio, whose personality is the exact opposite of his, and their quarrels resemble that of *recontre*, the performance in which the personifications of Carnival and Lent would constantly argue with each other. One can make the argument that Sir Toby and Malvolio were meant to be Shakespeare's versions of Carnival and Lent when judging their interactions.

The social hierarchy was further mocked by the love Olivia had for the disguised Viola. Lady Olivia is expected to marry someone of noble rank, possibly Duke Orsino, who pines for her for nearly the entire play. Yet she falls in love with a lowly page instead, an occurrence that would cause a scandal within the social hierarchy of the real world. She ignores both the advances of Duke Orsino and Malvolio, and eventually marries Viola's brother, who is never stated to be of any noble rank.

The language of Carnival surely lived on in Shakespeare's plays despite the reformation period. The plays offered not just entertainment for the attendees, but a way of releasing their frustrations toward the struggles they faced every day. Shakespeare's comedies were often satirical, chaotic, and carnivalesque, and it is no wonder that they have managed to survive hundreds of years after his death; they continue to influence the people who read or watched them, in the same manner that Carnival influences its participants.

In the timespan since the reformers attempted to suppress Carnival, carnivalesque language continued to strive in many forms of literature. Going back to the roots of this paper, some books written by Russian authors have dabbled in the concept of Carnival. *Envy* by Yuri Olesha is a satire on the Communist ideals that represented the Soviet Union. Published in 1927, the book at the time could be seen as a contemporary carnivalesque piece that attacked the Soviet hegemony. The protagonist, Nikolay Kavalerov, is portrayed as a man who doesn't want to live by Communist values, and is envious of another man who works at a sausage factory.

The critical companion book, *Olesha's Envy* edited by Rimgaila Salys, will be used to interpret the symbolism used throughout *Envy*. In particular, the essay that will be the main focus is "The Carnival World of *Envy*" by Victor Peppard. Here, the book's unconventional method of storytelling is examined. The first thing to note is the behavior of Kavalerov and his friend, Ivan Babichev. The two are seen doing troublesome acts, such as throwing eggs at streetcar posts and Babichev threatening to use a pillow as a weapon. These have connections with Carnival, especially the pillow, which calls back to household utensils being used as weapons during Carnival (Peppard 85). Other carnivalesque elements found throughout the book include blasphemous remarks (86) and the imagery of sausages. Food, as stated before, was an important factor of Carnival, and many cultures had a heavy focus on meat. Another character, Andrey Babichev, is a sausage maker who is described as a glutton, a parallel to the common personification of Carnival as a fat man (87). He is also one of the causes for Kavalerov's bad behavior, for it is Kavalerov's envy of this man that starts the carnivalesque storyline.

Crowning and de-crowning are also themes found in the book. Babichev rises himself up as a Carnival king, only to lose his crown later on in the story (89). This was common during Carnival, as crowning people as kings and then taking their crowns away was another way of

mocking the social hierarchy. Later on, Kavalerov himself is de-crowned through laughter, the way in which imposter kings were de-crowned as well (96). These instances throughout the book show that carnivalesque language was still alive even during the Soviet Union, and there were people who used it to criticize the society they were living in. Is it possible that such books would years later influence the fall of the Soviet Union? One cannot be entirely certain, but the possibility is there.

There are other works that do not necessarily focus on the carnivalesque itself, but on performance and language. Judith Butler, for example, explores the performance of gender in *Gender Trouble*. While not strictly connected to Bakhtin's works nor following the exact mindset, Butler's writing explores concepts that could complement Bakhtin's ideas. Butler makes the claim that gender identify is a performance, and is not determined entirely by a person's birth. Butler analyzes gender being formed through discourse and language, and of the human body being sexed by social regulations (Butler 130). This is parallel to Bakhtin's claims of language and culture influencing each other, though in Butler's case this is narrowed down to a specific subject affected by culture and language. Still, there is a bigger link between the two; Butler argues that the notion of natural gender identity is suppressive, in the same vein that Bakhtin criticized rhetoric as authoritative. Both are restrictive and do not allow room for dialogue for other forms of expression.

If gender is a performance, then are we all naturally performers? If so, then the carnivalesque concept is more intrinsic than previously thought. All of us are perhaps performing something, even if unknowingly. Drag queens and other members of the LGBT community exemplify this with their own performances, be it in everyday life or in parades. This idea of gender performance tells us that language and Carnival is also intertwined, that this is what

creates culture. With this in mind, the reformation of Carnival is now seen as more counterproductive than before. One cannot reform something that is a natural instinct in most of the population. People will always perform, and those performances will eventually lead to the social changes that so many desire.

Film

Carnival took form in festivals and books, but it also found home in modern media. Directors have played with carnivalesque genres since the early days of film, some more so than others. The examination of these films will allow one to glimpse at the culture the films were created in, as well as the personalities of their respected directors. Although some of these films do not fall entirely into the carnivalesque category, they still maintain carnivalesque elements. One can assume that these directors were inspired by carnivalesque subtexts.

Let us first examine *Andrei Rublev*, a Soviet historical drama directed by Andrei Tarkovsky. The production of this film is just as interesting as its carnivalesque symbolism, in that it was released in 1969, when Tarkovsky lived in the Soviet Union. The film suffered from heavy censorship for many years due its themes of religion and its portrayal of an oppressive government. The suppression of this film is similar to the suppression of Carnival, and the similarities are more striking when examining the carnivalesque elements in the film.

Tarkovsky probably did not intend *Andrei Rublev* to be a carnivalesque film. Its main focus is on the Christian faith, for the real life Rublev was a religious icon painter. There are not many carnivalesque elements within the film itself, but the very few that are there are prominent. Tarkovsky was no doubt influenced by similar carnivalesque stories, which brings us back to the point that Carnival is inherent in all of us. It finds a way to insert itself in even religious films such as this.

Although Rublev, the eponymous character, is not overtly carnivalesque, there are several characters that fit with the theme of Carnival. There is the jester near the beginning of the film,

who is introduced by entertaining people with a raunchy song and dance. When Rublev and his fellow monks make their appearance, the jester is quick to react negatively, glowering at them and throwing insults. Soon afterwards, he is arrested by the authorities, who knock him out and destroy his instrument. It is made clear that the authorities were alerted by Kyrill, one of the monks who accompanied Rublev and who was not amused by the jester's actions. It is possible to interpret Kyrill as one of the reformers who was against what Carnival stood for.

The jester's insults towards the men of clergy and his subsequent arrest is symbolic with the actual history of Carnival; a festival where blasphemy and insulting authority was allowed, but was later taken away by those who did not approve of it. This symbolism goes further near the end of the film, when the jester returns after years of being imprisoned and dances around a fire. The jester's return brings about an image of Carnival returning after being suppressed, which is emphasized by the fire symbolizing rebirth and renewal.

Numerous scenes of nature are shown during the film's runtime. In one scene, a character finds a dead swan, possibly symbolizing life and death. Later on, we are introduced to the pagans who hold their own Carnival in the woods. In these scenes, Rublev goes off to spy on the pagans and their merrymaking, witnessing socially unacceptable acts such as nudity and sexual intimacy. Rublev seems to be genuinely interested in the pagan celebration, but soon realizes that he is not welcomed when the pagans capture and tie him up. After he escapes, we are shown the pagans being chased by soldiers, which emphasizes their suppression under a government that does not approve of their way of life.

These scenes are more direct references to the suppression of Carnival. Here, we actually see the people enjoying their celebration, only to have it taken it away by those who oppose it. Once again, the film itself was not meant to be a carnivalesque film, but these elements of

Carnival are still found within it. There are moments where the film criticizes oppressive governments, a notion that the Soviet government did not take kindly to. *Andrei Rublev* may not be a carnivalesque film, but it has a carnivalesque heart.

There are plenty of other films that use carnivalesque themes to tackle the subject of government oppression. *Brazil*, directed by Terry Gilliam, is filled with refences to Carnival. Just like with *Andrei Rublev*, Gilliam's film is not entirely carnivalesque, but the little things that it does have do stand out. Set in a dystopian future, *Brazil* handles the issue of totalitarianism in a satirical manner. The mockery of totalitarianism is similar to the laughter of Carnival and the mockery of authority.

The protagonist, Sam Lowry, is a government employee who often gets lost in his dreams (strange dreams of flying and fighting monsters) in order to escape his daily life. The characters he interacts with include his mother, who is obsessed with youth and wears bizarre outfits that would not look out of place in Carnival. Each time the audience sees her, she appears younger, as she spends most of her time receiving plastic surgery. Her reverse aging is rather grotesque, as she no longer looks like her original self by the end of the film. In contrast, she has a friend who is also obsessed with plastic surgery, but her appearance becomes more botched and more traditionally grotesque each time we see her. It comes to the point where the friend dies from her surgeries, and the coffin in Sam's dream sequence reveals nothing but a skeleton.

In this film's world, every home is made up of giant visible ducts. The ducts resemble organs, particularly intestines, and are shown to keep the houses running. When the ducts are damaged, things go haywire, as we see when Sam's home overheats due to a malfunction. These intestine-like ducts and the women's constant plastic surgery invoke the grotesque body. With the women, the plastic surgery changes them drastically and is portrayed in an exaggerated

manner. With the ducts, it is as of the characters are living in the belly of an animal, which transforms their environments from ordinary homes to something abnormal and claustrophobic.

There are other moments invoke the carnivalesque elements. In one scene, a restaurant is blown up by a bomb and the primary characters barely react to it. A scene of nonchalant violence also happens when Sam goes to visit his friend Jack, a torture technician whose victim's screams of pain are calmly written down as a transcript by the secretary. Feces are also involved when a character gets back at two corrupt workers by attaching the tubes on their suits to a sewer pipeline. The government itself is portrayed as highly corrupt and hilariously inept, with the first scene showing a character's name being misspelled and another character being falsely arrested because of the misunderstanding. Although maybe not intentional, Gilliam's biting satire at the government and society and its employment of grotesque imagery make *Brazil* another film with a carnivalesque heart.

There are films that are more in line with the carnivalesque. While the previous two films were subtler with their Carnival influence, the next two films, *The Decameron* and *Satyricon*, can be classified as purely carnivalesque works and both can be described as Carnival in film form. These two films do not shy away from their carnivalesque influences. The films storylines would not be out of place in an actual Carnival performance.

Directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini, *The Decameron* is consisted of several stories, each with a carnivalesque theme. Blasphemous acts and sexuality are prevalent in this film. In one story, a convent of nuns has sex with a man who they believe is deaf. In other stories, spouses cheat on each other and young lovers have forbidden romances. Excrement and death are not absent, either. In one of the first stories, a man is tricked into falling into the sewage and has his money stolen from him. In a more tragic tale, a young woman cuts off the head of her murdered lover

and buries it in a potted plant. Most of these stories are portrayed humorously and are meant to invoke some level of shock among the audience. Pasolini himself was a controversial figure in life, for his other works also explored social taboos. He was no stranger to the carnivalesque and wasn't afraid to use it for social mockery or to criticize people.

Satyricon by Federico Fellini is surreal and dreamlike, a fitting description for a film that is essentially Carnival on the big screen. The primary characters engage in homosexual relationships and find themselves in bizarre situations, such as one of them being married off to another man in strange wedding ceremony. Banquets and festivals are central to the film, with one festival dedicated to a god of laughter. Violence is also present, with one of the first scenes showing a man getting his hand cut off during a play. Alongside the violence is the sex; there are many scenes of intimacy, as well as the appearance of a hermaphrodite character. At the end of all of this chaos, the film ends abruptly. There is no doubt that *Satyricon* is Carnival personified.

The purpose of discussing these titles is to showcase the evolution of Carnival from festival and literature to film. Carnival is a constantly changing language that will adapt to all forms of media, because humans have a natural instinct for carnivalesque themes. Carnival, heteroglossia, and dialogue are simply too innate for us to ignore.

Modern Carnival

Carnival continues to thrive in contemporary times, but how does it hold up compared to its past manifestations? Does heteroglossia, dialogue, and the desire for change still exist in modern Carnival? An examination of modern Carnivals is required to answer this question, and there are many to choose from. There are the obvious Carnivals to look at, such as Mardi Gras, but what of celebrations such as the LGBT pride parades and the Day of the Dead? These two are not labeled as Carnivals, but they are carnivalesque. How well do they fit the standards of Carnival?

Mardi Gras was first celebrated a few years after New Orleans was established, although it started not with the famous parades that people are familiar with today, but with society balls. The first reference to Carnival was in 1781, and by the 1830s, Mardi Gras included carriages and horses ridden by masked performers. Torches were lighted to lead the "krewe" (organizations that put on the parades), and in 1856, the Mistick Krewe of Comus introduced floats to the parade.

Over the years since the Mardi Gras parade evolved. Floats became more extravagant and vibrant, and newspapers began to announce Mardi Gras events. In 1872, Russian Grand Duke Alexis Romanoff was set to visit New Orleans. Because of his arrival, a group of businessmen decided to create a new krewe called "Rex," or the "King of Carnival," in order to honor the Duke. They then made the official colors of Mardi Gras green, gold, and purple, because those were the Romanoff's family colors. The song, "If Ever I Cease to Love," became the official Mardi Gras anthem after the Duke expressed his liking for it.

Mardi Gras also hosted "The Missing Links to Darwin's Origin of Species", in which people wore grotesque animal masks as a way to mock Charles Darwin. In 1875, Mardi Gras was recognized as a legal holiday (Mardi Gras New Orleans). To this day, it is one of the most famous and celebrated forms of Carnival. Countless numbers of people participate in Mardi Gras every year, and its name has become synonymous with New Orleans. The celebrations may be familiar to those who are unaware of Carnival in general.

Despite its roots in Carnival and its boisterous parades and festivities, Mardi Gras is a much more reserved form of Carnival. Although its participants wear costumes and spend their days eating and drinking, Mardi Gras does not have the true heart of Carnival. For one thing, there are the changes made to appease Duke Romanoff. The Rex parade was made specifically to impress the Duke, and the Duke's family colors were made the official Mardi Gras colors. This goes against the spirit of Carnival, which is to mock hegemony and the social hierarchy. While mocking the Duke would have been an unwise idea, there was no need for the Rex parade to continue after the Duke's departure. The official colors are also questionable, as they represent a royal family in a positive light.

This act of appeasing royalty is not the only incident that makes Mardi Gras different from other Carnivals. Many krewes were racially discriminatory and refused to integrate with black people. It wasn't until 1992 that New Orleans passed an ordinance that forbade krewes from discriminating on the basis of race, as well as sexual orientation and religion. Many krewes agreed to integrate, but some refused and stopped parading altogether (History). Much like the Rex parade, the discriminatory behavior of the krewes goes against the spirit of Carnival, in which all are allowed to participate. One cannot find heteroglossia or dialogue in a festival that

had such restrictions, and even though Mardi Gras is more inclusive than it was before, this chapter will forever be a part of its history.

Dia de los Meuertos, or Day of the Dead, is a popular Mexican holiday that is observed near the end of October. A combination of Catholicism and Aztec rituals (similar to the Rio Carnival being a combination of Portuguese and African traditions), the holiday honors the dead through festivals. The belief is that the dead would not want their families to be saddened by their passing, and so the Day of the Dead is celebrated through parties, drinking, and eating. Death is a central point in this holiday; it is a natural part of life, and the dead are believed to awaken and celebrate with the living during these festivities.

The famous symbols of the Day of the Dead are the calaveras and calacas (skulls and skeletons), which are found everywhere during the holiday. The calacas are depicted as wearing clothing and doing activities that they would do in life. They represent the dead that are celebrated and remembered throughout the holiday, and candies are often made in the shape of calaveras (National Geographic). It is interesting to note here how the skull-shaped calaveras are turned into edibles during this holiday. What is usually symbolized as death and sadness is transformed into a sweet food that many enjoy eating.

The Day of the Dead is not recognized as a Carnival, but it bears many similarities. In many cultures, death is viewed in a negative manner and those who have passed away are remembered solemnly. The Day of the Dead ignores that taboo and celebrates the memories of the dead through parties, food, and drink. This switch in viewpoint is a characteristic of Carnival, where subjects like death are treated differently than how they are usually depicted. The calacas, the skeletons wearing clothing, is reminiscent of the grotesque bodies of Carnival. Though not grotesque in an exaggerated way, the calacas are grotesque in that they are depicted as human

remains walking and dancing among the living. There is a sort of freedom in the Day of the Dead, where the living are not restricted to solemn mourning and are free to express their emotions in ways that they see fit.

Furthermore, there is the pride parades of the LGBT community. These parades are not only inspired by Carnival, but are also the most successful in challenging hegemony. Since the inceptions of the parades, the perspective towards the LGBT community has changed tremendously over the years. Although discrimination towards the community still exists in the contemporary world, the changes that have been made are historic. To understand this, we must view the history of the parade.

The beginning was at the Stonewall Inn, an establishment that allowed refuge for struggling members of the LGBT community. In 1969, however, a violent police raid disrupted the inn and the Stonewall Riots followed. Many were arrested, and protests and riots broke out from the LGBT community, lasting for several days. This event was the catalyst for the LGBT community to change how they were perceived by the public; they would no longer be suppressed by higher forces, and would convince everyone that they, too, deserved human rights.

Before the Stonewall Riots, the LGBT community protested passively. Afterwards, however, it was clear that these tactics were not working. Months after the riots, LGBT activists proposed to hold marches in June where there would be no dress or age restrictions. At the time, the LGBT marches had strict dress codes and were held in silence. Brenda Howard, one of the activists involved in the marches, suggested that the marches be turned into several-day celebrations with festivities. Here is where the carnivalesque elements of the pride parades start to appear, and continue to be a part of the parades years later.

On June 28, 1970, the march was held in New York. It went from Greenwich Village to Central Park and there were no music or floats, or any of the other elements that are recognizable in current pride parades. The crowd was estimated to be between 1,000 and 20,000 participants. Chicago held their march around the same time as New York. Unlike New York, it included dancing and speeches in its week-long celebration, and it ended with its participants marching through the Civic Center. Marches were also held in Las Angeles and San Francisco, and San Francisco would later hold its very first pride parade.

The marches and parades proved to be a success. The LGBT community was gaining more awareness and support than it did before, with newspapers even printing their support for the parades. Cities around the world began to host their own pride parades, and even countries where same-sex marriage is still illegal, such as Pakistan, held pride parades as well. In 1999, June was recognized as LGBT Pride Month in America, and the Stonewall Inn was later turned into the first LGBT national park site in America (Human Rights Campaign). Although it has never been explicitly stated that the pride parades were influenced by Carnival, they still retained carnivalesque elements. For one thing, the parades celebrated a lifestyle that was considered "abnormal" by society at the time, and those who practiced this lifestyle outside of the parades were often attacked and othered. The parades broke down the hegemonic boundaries and allowed their participates to express themselves through their own dialogue, and the fear of being an LGBT person was eliminated.

The success of the pride parades paved the way for LGBT rights in America. Anti-discriminatory laws were made, and in 2015, the Supreme Court ruled that same-sex marriage was legal in all states. The pride parades continue to be held and are consisted of music, dancing, and the breaking of social boundaries. Heteroglossia and dialogue lived within these parades; the

participants could say and be whoever they wanted to be without the fear of being harmed or shamed, and the parades allowed for conversations to be made. Its success is proof that Carnival has the power to challenge hegemony and change the way society sees its marginalized groups.

Conclusion

Over the last few centuries, Carnival has faced suppressive opposition and had almost lost its language. However, it has managed to survive in texts, films, and other celebrations, and its use of dialogue and heteroglossia continues to challenge hegemonic statuses. Carnival has shown that it has the power to incite change, no matter how long it may take for that change to advance. The carnivalesque elements that allow these changes to happen will only continue to grow as more Carnivals are celebrated in the future.

Mikhail Bakhtin may have had a different viewpoint on rhetoric than other traditional rhetoricians, but his works show us a unique perspective on rhetoric that deserves mention. Most might not view Carnival as a rhetorical tool, but its performances and celebration of broken boundaries are proof that rhetoric can be found within cultural festivals. Carnival is rife with heteroglossia and dialogue, and which have the ability to change the way people view each other. From these examinations, we see that Carnival is a natural occurrence that will continue to be celebrated.

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