Rupture, Loss, and the Performance of Masculinity at the World Trade Center: A Post-9/11 Reconsideration

by

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Abstract

The tragic events of 9/11 have impelled scholars to rethink the symbolic meaning of the now-destroyed World Trade Center (WTC) in New York. The following thesis joins this effort in the aim of demonstrating that the Twin Towers at the WTC were not merely functional "machines for capitalism". Typically, skyscrapers are discussed as the logical outcome of empirical factors, such as technological advances or population growth. I argue, however, that tall buildings in America, including the WTC, are not merely functional objects but are coded by the gender norms that affect every aspect of the lived world. In particular, this study examines the ways in which socially-constructed ideals of masculinity have shaped planning and design practices that gave rise to the Twin Towers.

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Dedication

For her tireless encouragement, support, and her willingness to discuss ideas, I dedicate this thesis to my partner, Yolanda. Love always.

Chapter One: Introduction

Who's afraid of the big bad buildings? Everyone, because there are so many things about gigantism that we just don't know. The gamble of triumph or tragedy at this scale – and ultimately it is a gamble – demands an extraordinary payoff. The trade center towers could be the start of a new skyscraper age or the biggest tombstones in the world.

Ada Louise Huxtable
NY Times, 1966

At 8:47 AM on September 11, 2001, American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the North Tower at the World Trade Center near the 90th floor. Twenty minutes later, United Airlines Flight 175 sliced through the northeast corner of the South Tower close to the 60th floor. Within an hour and a half, events took a surreal and deadly turn as both buildings collapsed, ending the lives of 2792 people. As Ada Louise Huxtable's prescient comment suggests, from the moment of conception to their fall, the Twin Towers posed a tremendous threat to the city. No one, however, could have anticipated how severe the economic, social, and emotional toll would be when the "biggest tombstones in the world" lay shattered over Ground Zero. Unfathomable yet all-too-real, the destruction of human life and property at the WTC demands a profound reconsideration of a site that has largely been overlooked by critics, historians, and theorists since its completion. The desire of terrorists to destroy the Twin Towers makes plain the site's symbolic capital, yet oddly in the West they have appeared void of mythic content, their spare geometry expressing little more than functionalist ambition, greed, or hubris.

Though the events of September 11th have compelled an end to this critical silence, there is cause to be concerned by the general lack of reflection on the WTC as a complex, contradictory, and ambiguous "meaning producer", rather than as a new-age Alamo. In the months following 9/11, widespread focus on the heroism and sacrifice of emergency workers at the scene overshadowed—even stifled—any

genuine reflection on the nature and purpose of the Twin Towers and the Pentagon. As social geographer David Harvey points out, initial attempts by local media to question the global excesses of American military or political power were silenced by suggestions that critics should "go tell that to the bereaved families of firefighters" (58). Instead a barrage of muscular imagery championing bravery, patriotism, and societal unity beat back any open discussion of both targeted sites, deflecting – at least in the American media – even-handed debate regarding the wounds to the nation's systems of power and their inherent logic. How else to divert the dreadful realization that tall buildings such as the Twin Towers symbolize the West's technological and economic superiority but also its fragility, that America's economic and social well-being rested on space-age stilts now kicked out?

Like most scholars and students, I had interest little in the WTC until after 9/11. My fascination with this project took root during the weeks following September 11th, watching the robust performances of masculinized propaganda disseminated through the American media. Firepersons became firemen, a grim-faced Robert DeNiro was paraded though the streets of New York, and President George Bush talked tough, of a world split into binaries of good/evil, civilized/barbarian, with us/against us. On the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*, Peggy Noonan welcomed back the "old-fashioned masculinity" of John Wayne, a timely revival that would again help the US reassert its place as a no-nonsense, moral force in the world.[1] In particular, suggestions that the attacks on the WTC constituted a symbolic act of castration of US potency led me to undertake this study.[2] Though I believe this interpretation trivializes the scope of the attacks, it raises provocative questions about

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[1] Quoted from Wall Street Journal.com—www.opinionjournal.com/columnists/pnoonan/.
[2] For instance, in the November, 2001 issue of *Poets and Writers*, J. Kelly Nestruck described the loss of the WTC as a "castration attempting to emasculate America".

the relationship between gender and the architecture at the WTC. Though it is reductive to discuss the Twin Towers purely as phallic symbols, can they as easily be regarded as gender-neutral? Though constructed in the functional, Modernist style, can such buildings escape the influence of beliefs about gender that shape everyday human behaviour? Can it be that these buildings conveyed idealized, socially-constructed notions of masculinity? I will argue that though the "castration hypothesis" is off-base, the general recognition of the Twin Towers as a site of concentrated masculinity is intuitively correct. Further, I will attempt to make connections between discourses expressing idealized modes of masculinity and the construction of tall buildings like the Twin Towers.

Since the study of masculinity continues to receive sharp criticism from a number of feminist scholars, the purpose and orientation of my engagement with this discourse is needed. Contrary to the aims of male scholars aligning themselves with feminism, proponents of "men's rights groups" and authors of "mythopoetic" self-help books have championed the study of masculinity to possibly erode gains made by feminism. Unfortunately, they have also received a lot of media attention, fueling an atmosphere of suspicion and ridicule towards men's studies. Though profeminist men categorically reject these views, profeminist work also receives sharp criticisms from a number of feminist scholars. At issue are concerns over the appropriation of feminist theory, increased competition for funding and media attention, and the focus of men's groups on healing member's wounds rather than addressing their privileged place within patriarchy. Though I believe these concerns are valid and should guide my approach to the topic of masculinity, I strongly disagree with feminist critics who denounce the worth of men's studies.

Profeminist scholars deconstruct masculinity in the hope of revealing that masculinity is socially-constructed, rather than biologically given. For example, in a report to UNESCO on masculinity and violence, Robert Connell outlines how culturally-held notions of masculinity, not men's biological make-up, provide the spur to male brutality. He points out that certain societal structures – armed forces, organized sports, and corporations – not only reflect but also actively fashion a narrow range of masculinities. While acknowledging connections between violence and racism, nationalism, greed, and poverty, Connell contends that the production of specialized masculinities within hegemonic organizations radically influences the degree and frequency of destructive behaviour men exhibit, both within and in opposition to these authoritative systems (23). In this study, I need to take a profeminist stance herein from an awareness not only that male-dominated systems continue to inflict physical, sexual, mental, and economic suffering upon women worldwide, but that the societal norms enforcing patriarchy necessarily find force through men's uncritical engagement with certain constructs of masculinity. Moreover, I believe that this unthinking engagement impairs both women's and men's exploration and expression of identity, for the coercive force of past models of maleness necessarily forecloses emancipatory possibilities of being.

This thesis is concerned with how personal identity, the body, and the city act on one another. Unlike the simplistic discourse advanced in the wake of 9/11 by the Bush Administration to justify wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the adoption of first-strike capability, and the curtailing of civil rights at home, my work on this paper continues to suggest the opposite. Commonsensical thinking cannot encompass the legion of contradictions raised by the events of 9/11. Understandably, many feel an increased need for security after September 11th, but does the circumvention of the

will of the United Nations, the violation of Iraq's sovereignty, and the bombing of innocent people really achieve this? To understand how the gendered coding of discourse, architecture, and subjectivity inter-relate, I aim to outline ideas or facts that do not easily fit—to underscore how the quest to depict the world in cut-and-dried terms relates to constructs of masculinity often most evident nearest the exercise of power.

In my view, the destruction of the Twin Towers on September 11th constituted a profound rupture of the gendered norms supporting the logic of development in the West—prompting reactionary revivals of "old-fashioned masculinity" to restore a general sense of societal order and agency. At the same time, I believe the rupture of 9/11 exposed the fiction of those gendered norms, opening opportunities for new critical, self-reflexive, and transformative approaches to the study of masculinity. The tragic fall of the trade towers has led me to question the interconnection between socially-constructed masculinities and the built world. Without this shocking slippage, I would not as clearly have noticed the ways in which certain concepts of masculinity shape my surroundings and my sense of subjectivity. Ground Zero is a site of untold loss and pain, necessitating efforts to heal, to ask difficult questions, to find new definitions. Without adequately considering alternative ways of understanding our relationship to the built world, we risk the danger of perpetuating what Diane Agrest calls the "normative discourse of architecture" – which aims to define absolute standards of architectural meaning (*Without* 7). Foiling this "mode of repression" requires a continual widening of discourse to "allow questions to grow, to acquire depth, to open fields, and not to be stopped short by the normative will trying to find immediate answers" (ibid. 2). In this spirit, I explore links between American notions of idealized masculinity and the presence of tall buildings like the Twin Towers—not

to reach quick conclusions, but to contribute to the continual widening of discourse concerned with 9/11 and the WTC.

Though my intent in studying the Twin Towers concerns their symbolic content over their technical merit, a brief overview is included here – to touch briefly on the factual story of the building and to ask readers to begin looking at the form of the towers before proceeding to the core of my argument (fig. 1). The idea of building a trade center in New York to centralize businesses and agencies involved in international trade dates to 1946, but in its infancy the concept was scrapped as unfeasible. Not until the late 1950's did the trade center concept resurface, this time under the direction of David Rockefeller. In January 1960, a group of businessmen headed by Rockefeller, the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Association (DLMA), announced plans to construct a world trade center on the East River. Rockefeller referred to the massive size of the project – five million feet of office space – as "catalytic bigness", believing both that it would stimulate further development in Lower Manhattan and that it would ensure that New York remained a hub for global trade (Darton 64). From this initial plan – to the dedication of the Twin Towers in 1973 – the World Trade Center (WTC) site shifted west to the banks of the Hudson River, it swelled to fifteen million square feet of space, and it claimed the title of world's tallest building (fig. 2). Realizing Rockefeller's vision for Lower Manhattan required overcoming tremendous resistance. At various instances, opposition to the WTC came from state and municipal governments, powerful business interests, and local residents displaced to make way for the megaproject. Construction of the Twin Towers did not begin for six years after Rockefeller's original announcement in 1960, owing to numerous controversies and court battles that plagued the efforts of planners (Robins 47-48). Early in the planning stage, the DLMA realized they would need to

enter into partnership with the states of New York and New Jersey, and the Port of New York Authority (now named the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey) (Gillespie 33). State governments provided much needed tax relief and helped pass crucial legislation, while the Port Authority (PA), as a self-sufficient, autonomous public agency, allowed the builders of the WTC to avoid the usual municipal laws that typically frustrated the aims of builders.[3]

Beyond overcoming political, bureaucratic, and economic obstacles, raising the world's two tallest skyscrapers on the banks of the Hudson River raised a number of serious engineering problems. Indeed, the Twin Towers were engineering marvels, testaments to creative ingenuity and perseverance. One problem: how to underpin a foundation built on land reclaimed from the Hudson River by centuries of landfill? The solution came in the form of a massive concrete "bathtub", a four-sided foundation wall that both kept the waters of the Hudson at bay and insured the integrity of surrounding properties disturbed by the excavation of the site (Ruchelman 59). Through the use of cutting-edge "slurry" technology, the west wall of the bathtub was erected under the water of the Hudson, its stability insured by a series of underwater steel ties anchored to bedrock.[4]

The unprecedented height of the Twin Towers required an innovative system of elevators. Simply put, as buildings rise skyward, demands for elevator service increase. If the 110-floor Twin Towers had adopted a standard elevator configuration, there would have been little room on the

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[3] For instance, though in 1972 Tower One was still under construction, tenants were allowed to move in, a move typically forbidden by municipal legislation. Moreover, as leaseholders on the property, the PA qualified for massive tax breaks from the State of New York.

[4] In order to displace river water that filled the steel forms needed to pour concrete for the west wall, a slurry mixture of Bentonite clay and water was pumped into the wall form, which later would be displaced by concrete pumped into the bottom the of the form by a j-shaped tube.

lower floors for anything but banks of elevators, as seventy-five percent of the available space would have been eaten up. The solution came with the adoption of a "skylobby" system (Gillespie 76). By dividing the building into three vertical zones (plaza-to-43, 45-to-77, and 79-to-110), elevator shafts would not span the entire height of the building, freeing up tremendous interior space. Banks of local elevators serviced each zone, while expresses sped those continuing on to skylobbies found on the 44st and 78th floors, where they boarded local elevators to the floors they desired. Though the system sounds cumbersome, satisfactory service was provided owing to the elevators installed by Otis Elevators, which were both the largest and fastest known.

The design-feature that distinguished the Twin Towers most from other tall buildings is the use of an innovative exoskeleton to provide primary structural support. Unlike the steel-cage frame, which provides support for typical skyscrapers by columns distributed regularly through the interior of the building, the Twin Towers relied on a system of steel columns wrapped around their exterior – what their designer, Minoru Yamasaki, described as a "square tube of bamboo" (Gillespie 78).[5] Unlike most skyscrapers that attach a curtain wall as a decorative feature, the outer walls of the Twin Towers were load-bearing, expressing externally the architectonic forces that kept them standing upright. On each floor, a series of lightweight trusses spanned the distance between these outer columns and the concrete columns running up the core of the building. This system allowed the interior of the towers to be unencumbered by supporting posts, allowing for massive, uninterrupted

[5] Yamasaki did not design the WTC alone, of course, but was aided both by prestigious engineers John Skilling and Les Robertson and also by the veteran New York skyscraper designers at Emery Roth & Sons (Robins 34).

spaces on each floor, totaling approximately an acre of rentable space. Moreover, the lightness of the materials used, especially in the upper floors that carried less weight, was cost-efficient, for less steel went into supporting the towering height of the towers. Wind-sway did cause some difficulties, but these were overcome by an elaborate dampening system and the installation of a "hat truss" on the upper floors, which tied the core to the upper floors, thus reducing sway (Glanz & Lipton 41).

Unfortunately, the quest to lighten the materials used in the trade towers likely led to their horrific demise. In particular, the exterior anchors that fastened the floor trusses to the outer walls appear to be the cause of the catastrophic failure of the Twin Towers. Heat from fires and inadequate fireproofing caused the upper stories to collapse in a "pancaking" action, successively crushing each floor beneath (ibid.). Similarly, the decision not to encase the tower's stairwells in heavy concrete resulted in many deaths, for people could not make their way through heaps of lightweight gypsum wallboard that littered two of three possible exit stairwells. Design decisions can always be understood functionally. If charged with raising the tallest buildings in the world, who would not use the lightest possible building materials? However, this logic avoids asking why it was necessary to build 110 stories high, to ask what desires fueled gigantism despite the catastrophic possibilities.

Chapter Two: Methodology

The following study relates the construction of the World Trade Center (WTC) to the social construction of the concept of masculinity within American culture(s). It draws on the work of scholars who are committed to the belief that gender identity is culturally fabricated, temporally and locally specific, heterogeneous, nomadic and fluid. Accordingly, the term "masculinities" will be used here. "Masculinities" is helpful in avoiding totalizing paradigms of identity, as it better expresses the range of multiple, male subject-positions occupied by American men. Subjectivation (the formation of subjective identity) is understood as occurring at the intersection of several irreducible yet interrelated axes of identity, such as gender, race, sexuality, class, and ethnicity. In this way, the self is not singular but variegated, a junction of diverse and often contrary constructs of identity that can potentially suppress or benefit the subject (Friedman 21). This relational approach attempts to avoid privileging a particular axis of identity or rendering invisible oppressions inherent in others. Moreover, in the hope of steering clear of binarisms – male oppressor/female victim, white/other, empowered/disempowered – I mention, where evident, contradictions that suggest the messiness of subjectivity and of the lived world. As Susan Friedman urges, the paradigm of relational positionality is employed to go "beyond" reductive conceptions of identity, to articulate the "symbiotic, syncretist, interactive formations in the borderlands between difference" (ibid. 48). However, such contradictory, relational positionality of the subject is not to be confused with pluralism, in which difference is construed as heterogeneous but equal, a "discourse of civility" that effectively masks manifold sites of oppression (ibid. 4).

The project of theorizing masculinities would not exist but for the development of feminist and gender theory that has emerged from the work of feminist and pro-feminist thinkers, within and outside the academy. Recognizing the subject's particularity, many feminist theorists have moved away from an earlier essentialist position that gender expresses fixed, innate qualities specific to each sex. Though tactically useful for prompting political action and helping to refute the idea of "biology-as-destiny", unified concepts such as "sisterhood" eventually hindered second-wave feminism, especially with the realization that the experiences of white, educated, middle-class women did not speak for those of all women. In 1979, black, lesbian feminist Audre Lourde urged white feminists to "reach down into that deep place of knowledge inside herself and touch that terror and loathing of difference that lives there" (59). bell hooks's watershed book *Ain't I a Woman?*(1981) further challenged white feminists to heed the marginalization of women of colour in the feminist movement. Non-essentialist gender theory thus questions the binary logic of the sex/gender system championed by the women's liberation movement, pointing to difficulties posed by biological reductionism. If the category "woman" consistently applies to female, and "man" to male, gender identity cannot escape binary reduction, a biological point of origin, or "destiny".

Non-essentialist deconstructive theory also challenges and destabilizes the coherence previously ascribed to categories of gender. Donna Haraway, for example, developed in addition to masculine and feminine, the third category of "cyborg", a reconstitution of the organic subject through its interface with digital technology and information. "Gender", she writes, "is a field of structured and structuring difference.... Feminist embodiment, then, is not about fixed location in a reified body,

female or otherwise, but about nodes in fields ... and responsibility for difference in material-semiotic fields of meaning" (195).

In a similar vein, Judith Butler attempts to subvert the basic premise that gender expresses an ontologically stable essence located in the sexed body, by characterizing the appearance of gender identity, instead, as "performative". She explains the subject's notion of self—of being in a body—as the outcome of reiterated socially meaningful speech and gender acts. For Butler, identity consists not in "being" but in "doing". In her words, "one is not simply a body, but, in some very key sense, one does one's body and, indeed, one does one's body differently from one's contemporaries and from one's embodied predecessors and successors as well" (*Performative* 272).

Butler argues that the "natural facts of sex" are produced through culturally variable scientific discourse, that our most basic assumptions of the sexed body are themselves shaped by societal notions of gender. She refuses the notion that corporeality "appears as a passive medium on which cultural meanings are inscribed", asking, rather, to what extent "does the body come into being in and through the mark of gender" (*Trouble* 28). If neither the primacy of the body nor its connection to gender is stable, why does it seem so for many? In Butler's view, because there is no *a priori* gendered essence and no objective model to which gender aspires, it becomes real only through performance, in acts which "regularly conceals ... [gender's] genesis" (*Trouble* 36).

> The tacit collective agreement to perform, produce, and sustain discrete and polar genders as cultural fictions is obscured by the credibility of those productions – and the punishments that attend not believing in them; the construction 'compels' our belief in its necessity and naturalness. The historical possibilities materialized through various corporeal styles are nothing other than... punitively regulated cultural fictions alternatively embodied and deflected under duress (ibid. 37).

For Butler, the primary function of perfomativity lies in the perpetuation of long-standing structures of normative heterosexuality, and their attendant control of human reproduction. Ascribing moral force to the continual repetition of mundane but rarely noted gender acts imposed on the subject – how we talk, walk, gesture, or speak – causes them to seem so intrinsic as to become as "determined and fixed as... biology-is-destiny"(*Trouble* 32). Despite being fabricated, however, perfomative enactments of gender are not freely chosen in the way an actor chooses to read from this or that script. It is not a "performance that a subject elects to do ... [G]ender is performative in the sense that it constitutes as an effect the very subject it appears to express" (*Imitation* 13). Much as a theatrical script outlives its original cast, so too the conventions of gender acts endure; yet both still require living actors to reproduce them as reality (*Performative* 272). Overt and subtle pressures "by social sanction and taboo" encourage a general belief in the naturalness of fixed gender categories (ibid. 171). Bringing a script to life, as it were, requires "enactment", comprised of the subject's "material acts and gestures that make texts recognizable features of social life" (M. Rose 391). In this way, enactment is the motor propelling performativity. Though lending experience meaning, enactment always seeks "to limit the meaning of texts, and therefore the trajectory of other forms of enactment" (ibid.). Though many enactments yield trivial or even positive results, they necessarily limit meaning's expression. Consequently, the process of performing normative scripts is intrinsically reductive and potentially violent.

Drawing upon Julia Kristeva, Butler argues that the felt firmness of subjectivity relies not only on the repetition of gender acts but also on the invention of "a domain of unthinkable, abject, unlivable bodies" (*Bodies* xi). For the construction

of the subject's gendered body—a "body that matters"—to exist, there must a "constitutive outside", an inhuman non-subject which bounds the subject and gives it life. Butler argues:

> It is not enough to claim that human subjects are constructed, for the construction of the human is a differential operation that produces the more and the less "human," the inhuman, the humanly unthinkable. These excluded sites come to bound the "human" as its constitutive outside, and to haunt those boundaries as the persistent possibility of their disruption and rearticulation (ibid. 9).

The subject's repudiation of the abject, unthinkable body lends a degree of intelligibility to its own body, sanctioned as real within the constraints of normative heterosexuality.

In her well-known study *Gender Trouble* (1990), Butler avoids the theoretical confines of determinism by insisting on the subject's agency, not to escape the performance of gender, but to subvert its normative performativity by parody. By interrupting the constant reiteration that the "cultural fiction" of gender requires, non-coherent genders will gain acceptance and disturb those performances maintaining compulsory heterosexuality. After hearing her assertion widely misunderstood to mean that gender is "freely performed", Butler – to the dismay of many – recast the issue of agency less plainly:

> Performativity is neither free play nor theatrical self-presentation; nor can it be simply equated with performance. Moreover, constraint is not necessarily that which sets a limit to performativity; constraint is, rather, that which impels and sustains performativity (ibid. 95).

Her position on agency remains uncomfortably between both poles, a stance resistant to both fully voluntarist and determinist conclusions. Butler does not dispute that the same citational practices which produce felt identity might at any time collapse or slip, exposing gender's constructed nature – and, thus, opening possibilities for

change through the subversion of entrenched norms. Performative systems are neither complete nor closed, which is precisely why normative scripts must endlessly circulate to remain effectual. Moreover, possibilities for resistance arise not only with unintended slippages exposed through enactments of power but also through supplemental texts overlooked in the gaps of dominant cultural logic. Importantly, though, Butler resists fixing a subversive practice through dogmatic prescriptions such as "subvert ... in the way that I say, and life will be good", which she claims avoids any possible recuperation by the dominant discourse (*Trouble* xxi).

Butler's contradictory subject—subjugated yet potentially emancipated through enactment—echoes the inconsistencies found in Susan Friedman's earlier model of multiple identity: as a shifting site of privilege and oppression, defined by its borders but also by their transgression. Butler, like Friedman, seeks to understand the subject as constituted at the intersection of varied axes of identity. In an interview with Vikki Bell, Butler explains why gender should not be conceived of as a discrete category of identity. In an effort to incorporate issues of race in her work, she describes how, for her,

> it's not so much a double consciousness – gender and race as the two axes, as if they're determined only in relation to each other. I think that's a mistake – but I think the unmarked character of the one very often becomes the condition of the articulation of the other. Then the question is how to sustain an analysis that is able to shift perspectives sequentially in such a way that no one reading is adequate without the other (18).

The manner in which the subject "does" or performs their identity thus cannot be regarded as separate from the variant and often contradictory constructs of identity operating upon them. Nor should any one category, such as gender or race, be seen as paradigms adequate to explain subjectivation.

Hegemonic Masculinities/Hypermasculinities

Butler's theory of performativity will inform my attempt to sketch how socially constructed masculinities are enacted through the texts of buildings and in the social spaces they occupy and help constitute. In particular, I will focus on what I will argue is typically the most destructive enactment—hegemonic masculinity. Maintaining hegemonic masculinity is a tenuous operation at best. Since patriarchy takes form not simply in men's power over women, but in men's power over other men, so solidifying stratification requires the constant play of perfomative gender acts to contain unwanted competition from marginalized groups of women and men (Kaufman 145). As Michael Kaufman points out, the exercise of power can have a positive, life-affirming thrust or a negative one. Power can be the ability to use our creative potential and better natures to manifest a better life for others and ourselves: the power to heal, to grow, to love. More commonly, as used today, however, "power" means individual agency to exercise "power-over", to control material resources and other human lives (ibid.).[6] The flaw inherent in this concept of the powerful individual, though, is that it ignores the necessity of support from others. Philosopher Hannah Arendt delineates the tension between individual and social power:

> Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps it together. When we say of somebody that he is 'in power' we actually refer to his being empowered by a certain number of people to act in his name. The moment the group ... disappears, 'his' power also vanishes (qtd. in Kimmel, *Homophobia* 135).

[6] As Foucault and others have illustrated, traditional top down models of power fail to account for the wide dispersion of *de facto* power in any system, brought to bear through subjects on every stratum. Indeed, there is no neat explication of power's flow, as its manifestation is not the cause of action (as in the sovereign model), but is more an effect of action (Lemert and Gillian 112).

Enactments of masculinities associated with power, thus, are charged with uneasiness— between the solid appearance of performed power and its actual frailty.

Owing to this inherent instability, desires to buttress the subject against perceived threats shape masculinity's performance. Competition among men to demonstrate worth continually threatens masculinity's presence, for any competitive homosocial arena is driven by desires for success and, even more importantly, as historian Michael Kimmel asserts, by fear of failure (*Manhood* 124). He places fear at the core of homosocial interaction, especially the fear of being unmasked as less than a "real" man. For Kimmel, this deeply rooted fear explains the ubiquity of homophobia, not only as a fear of gay men, but also as a fear of being associated with the feminine qualities generally attributed to powerless men. Also, masculinity has long been considered permeable, porous, and prone to contamination from outside its prescribed boundaries. The dread of pollution, and subsequent dissolution, articulates masculinity's uneasy relationship with its abject Other, beyond its margins. Further, as philosopher Michael Taussig puts it, if the human condition allows us "no rest in the nervousness of the Nervous System's system", if no calm, removed center exists apart from the constant barrage of sensory input, then the desire to attain control and stability evident in the enactment of many modes of masculinity appears ever less likely to succeed (qtd. in M. Rose 394). Taken together, these threats to masculinity's integrity – between men, from the abject periphery, and from consciousness itself – suggest why the performances of intense maleness occur: they attempt to solidify, to make real the cultural fiction of the mastering, all-seeing subject.

Though my research focuses on what are traditionally described as hegemonic, patriarchal structures, I employ in my analysis the term "hypermasculinity", rather than "hegemonic masculinity". I make this distinction in order to discuss masculinity as an

always already unraveling construct, in need of constant upkeep.[7] To better explain the term "hypermasculinity" let me here map out the contrasts between various hypermasculinities that have been identified. Generally, most behaviour labeled "hypermasculine" is ascribed to men who act beyond the fringes of acceptable maleness. For example, L.H.M. Ling employs the term to characterize the violent reactions of working-class men to feminist challenges of hegemonic masculinity (23). Michelangelo Signorile discusses the adoption, in the 1970's, of an increasingly "butch" image by gay men in San Francisco's Castro district as hypermasculine (35). These versions of the term share in the belief that exclusion or deviation from a core of socially-dominant, empowered males prompts such a response, yet this overlooks the central role hypermasculinity plays in legitimizing power *within* circles of elite men.

Within America's elite power circles, I argue, enactments of hypermasculinity are prompted by their longstanding function of bolstering masculinity's fragile construction. The difference in the embodiment of "manly" codes of conduct within empowered circles of men is its apparently naturalized appearance, its unstated claim to realize a transcendent inner quality.[8] Long-standing cultural models bolster this fiction – the Classical hero, the noble warrior, the self-made man – feeding a general view of power as the ability to dominate others and linking the attainment of such power to appropriative actions. Culturally constructed scripts of masculinity lie so deep within our culture and imaginations that their emulation seems a justifiable, even moral

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[7] Geographer Mitch Rose points out that "in representing an appearance of power as something self-present and operative, we trust and even empower those practices which brought that representation forth. We give power an existence beyond the momentary, and become complicit in reinforcing a representation of power as actual and preestablished... Hegemony is rendered real - something that is already present, rather than something that is continually coming into being" (384).

[8] This is not to suggest a hierarchy of authenticity, with elite hypermasculine enactment situated on top. Rather, as Mitch Rose points out, the power of performativity becomes entrenched though "instability, elaboration, and difference, rather than stability, consistency, and routine" (393). This suggests the contradictory nature of identity formation, as variant hypermasculinities, though often at odds, interact and gain strength symbiotically across borders.

path to assuming power and "self-actualization". This critique is not made to disavow all qualities championed as "manly" (such as courage, honour, or endurance) but only to suggest how often they inform the performance of power.

Ashis Nandy argues that any overt demonstration of masculinized power, by either a threatened elite or a non-elite group, is hypermasculine. Describing the behaviour of apprehensive English colonists in India and the counter- response of like-minded Indians as hypermasculine, Nandy posits connections between fear, power, and male relations (35). Scholars commenting on Nandy's use of "hypermasculinity" have attempted to distinguish it from hegemonic masculinity: the former motivated by fear, or threat; the latter, referring to "conventional traditions" of masculine dominance, such as control over human reproduction or legal barriers to gender equality. This move overlooks the key points raised earlier by Arendt – that power is fragile and can vanish in a moment – which suggests that fear of losing authority stalks male, homosocial power structures. As such, "conventional traditions" of male dominance that support patriarchal power structures cannot stand independent of the constant presence of perceived threats. To suppress the imminent emasculating threats in homosocial male power relations, to repudiate abject "unlivable bodies", to maintain heteronormativity as Butler describes it, subjects in positions of authority routinely enact hypermasculine scripts, though admittedly with varying degrees of plausibility. In this way, I suggest, hegemonic masculinity and hypermasculinity remain entwined.

As Butler makes clear in the concept of normative heterosexuality – or "heteronormativity" – the perpetuation of "compulsory heterosexuality" through repeated gender acts is key to stabilizing patriarchy's "cultural fiction". At the core of hetronormativity, I argue, stands the idealized image of the hypermasculine male.

Consider how central it is for subjects seeking power, male or female, to assume qualities usually associated with "manliness": emotional self-control, bodily disregard, no-nonsense rationality, and the ability to act decisively. Nearer the apex of those societal structures reinforcing heteronormativity, a highly localized set of gender acts exerts an influence unique to that space. Those who assume a position of great power should also demonstrate a keen sense of direction in which to guide others, an all-seeing collective vision of the future, and the strength to sacrifice others - in some instances through controlled violence - to reach that future.

I do not claim to capture here a law enjoining all people in power to perform hypermasculine scripts. Clearly, some hold power without enacting hypermasculine traits; others will perform some but not all of them. Further, as Butler often points out, no gender act is entirely convincing or self-consistent, for such slippage necessitates the endless reiteration of gender scripts to maintain their "regulatory fiction". However, these exceptions and flaws do not diminish the perceived force of the performance of "manly", "heroic" qualities, such as discipline, instrumental reason, endurance, industry, ambition, courage, aggressiveness, nor do they explain away their all-to-common enactment, especially by highly-empowered men. As Derrida argues, the force of the performative speech act, such as "with this ring I thee wed", springs not from individual will, but from a shared convention:

> Could a performative utterance succeed if its formulation did not repeat a "coded" or iterable utterance, or in other words, if the formula I pronounce in order to open a meeting, launch a ship or a marriage were not identifiable as conforming with an iterable model, if it were not then identifiable in some way as a citation? (qtd. in Butler, *Bodies* 13)

Though not a formulation of "hypermasculinity-as-destiny", the self-evident presence of such gender acts and scripts in elite, traditionally male spaces—military command centers, corporate boardrooms, ministerial chambers—illustrates Derrida's point:

performative gender acts would have no might, or indeed purpose, without their enduring and repetitive use by a group.

Like Butler, Derrida positions the subject liminally between determinism and free will. Though performative utterances or gender acts are experienced as voluntary, the bulk of events precipitating and following such acts remain beyond the control of an individual will. The question remains: to what extent can the subject be free from discourses of power that makes subjectivity intelligible? This, I argue, is how hypermasculinity must be seen – as an embodied effect of discourses of power that, through reiteration, shape the subject. That said, the potential for subversive, emancipatory practice exists in any moment, owing to the inherent incompleteness and openness of discourse and socially-constructed gender. Moreover, through the repetition of hypermasculine scripts, the norms that urge performativity change, for they are not universal, fixed, or ahistorical. Butler insists, "repetition is never mechanical. As the appearance of power shifts from the condition of the subject to its effects, the conditions of power (prior and external) assume a present and futural form" (*Psychic* 16). This helps explain the seeming contradiction between the solidity of coercive, reiterated norms and their fluid expression.

Space/Gendered Space

Though the analysis of hypermasculine performance in American business and government must be considered within a historical context, locating it in time and *space* better explains how buildings such as the Twin Towers aid in the production of such performance. In this context, space is not the empty Cartesian container that accommodates the experienced world. Rather, it is a temporally specific set of relations created by social practices, which in turn shapes social reality. It is active,

not passive. This concept of socially produced space springs from the writing of philosopher Henri Lefebvre, especially his seminal book *The Production of Space* (1974). How to grasp and apply Lefebvre's sprawling metatheory has, and continues to be, hotly debated. The dissent over Lefebvrian theory justifies a cautionary approach; however, it does not rule out the careful use of some of his clearly articulated ideas as useful analytical tools, rather than as a complete theoretical framework.

Beyond Lefebvre's well-known assertion that "(social) space is a (social) product", his famous triad – *perceived*, *conceived*, and *lived* space – offers powerful insights into how architecture facilitates the "production of space". *Perceived* space, also referred to by Lefebvre as "spatial practice", relates to material production and reproduction. It is space empirically discerned: the "space of objects and things and a space of movements and activities" (Borden 6). Spatial practice gives shape to everyday space: rooms, halls, squares, and so on. *Conceived* space, also known as "representations of space", describes the abstraction of space by the planner, architect, and scientist. Rationalized, systematized, compartmentalized, representational space relies on both visual and verbal signs, on specialized professional discourse to exist. This Lefebvre describes as "the concept without life" (33). Conversely, lived space or "spaces of representation", concerns "life without concepts", employing nonverbal sign systems. Possessing the potential to be free from the control of authoritarian discourse, it is the space of the visionary, the artist, and the revolutionary – a space, precisely, that breaks away from the spatialty of academic, bureaucratic, and political professionals.

For Lefebvre, the social production of space continually erodes natural or "absolute space", in its place creating an "abstract space" of accumulation: of wealth,

knowledge, technology, symbols, art. Pursuing his fondness for triads, Lefebvre subdivides abstract space into thirds, and in this tripartite model are found some of the key analytical tools used here. First, abstract space requires a fetishization or "predominance of the visual", which he names the "visual-spectacular" (286). Contrary to the contradictory, opaque, and heterogeneous character of everyday lived space, abstract space is luminous and homogeneous. Second, abstract space demands that lived space is believed to be reducible to mathematical abstraction, made "complete" by the repetition of forms representing rationality, order, and harmony. Models, plans, maps, charts, graphs, make abstract space intelligible through taming vision – making a passive, distanced, a text scrubbed of corporeality and desire. Geometric forms – the circle, the triangles, the square – are invested with cosmic symbolism, representing a foundational rationality and order. This order Lefebvre terms the "geometric" (285). Third, in order to register a "truly full object" in space, the attempt to make abstract space real requires the "phallic", a frontal architectural erection, a "signifier which, rather than signifying a void, signifies a plenitude of destructive force" (287). Taken together, the *visual-spectacular*, the *geometric*, and the *phallic* clearly relate to feminist interrogations of the gaze, masculinist reason, and patriarchal authority ("Law of the Father"), respectively.

Further, Lefebvre's abstract space has three essential qualities: it is *homogenous,* allowing for universal manipulation, standardization, and control; it is *fragmented* into transposable parts to allow for commodification (enabling private ownership of property); and it is *hierarchical*—separated into cores and margins. This hierarchical ranking of space, which Lefebvre labels the "globalization of space", requires that "dominant space … that of the spaces of richness and power, is forced to fashion the dominated space, [and] that of the periphery" (qtd. in Deutsche 75).

Lefebvre did not entirely erase gender from his analysis, yet his work was largely intended to offer a Marxist critique of capitalism's "production of space". From another quarter, feminist scholars have incorporated space into gender theory—"spatialized" it—to include treatment of the way socially constructed gender identity produces (gendered) space, corporeally and architecturally.

The gendering of space occurs simultaneously in various ways. *Use* can gender space. Mark Wigley discusses the physical, spatial arrangement of the *oikos* (house) in ancient Greece as a consequence of the legal institution of marriage and the husband's consequent need to protect his geneological claims by locating his wife's room (cell) in the house's innermost space (*Untitled* 336). *Association* also genders space. Consider the notion, however flawed, of "separate spheres", of private and public, and their attendant gender associations as female and male. The kitchen, the mechanic's garage, the corporate boardroom are examples that demonstrate this gendered effect. Though used by both genders, these spaces are construed as more prominently masculine or feminine.

Similarly, *representation* can gender space. The city can be characterized verbally or pictorially as female: labyrinthine, chaotic, dangerous; or male—rationalized, orderly, and hygienic. Routinely, buildings become bodies. Diana Agrest states, "The inscription of the sexualized body is a central and recurrent theme in Western architecture, but that body is neither innocent nor androgynous. It is a reification of the male longing to appropriate an exclusive female privilege: maternity" (*Intro* iv). The act of drawing buildings itself, what Jennifer Bloomer refers to as "the longing marks of architecture", conveys the fantasies and desires of their makers, members of a discipline long dominated by men (161). Spatialized feminism has called attention to the importance of "emplacement", of "positionality".

In other words, it claims that people experience space differently according to their location. Bodies exist variably within power relations relative to proximity and access to privilege. So, feminist spatial theory attempts to dissolve the mind-body split, to instead "think through the body (G. Rose, *Limits* 318).

Spatializing Butler

Since this analysis of constructed masculinities concerns socially produced space in an actual built world, criticisms and appropriations of Butler's idea of performativity within the field of geography must be addressed. Commonly, human geographers accuse Butler of 'textualism' for hypothesizing real-world outcomes through abstracted subjects divorced from geographical or historical embeddedness. Nigel Thrift describes Butler as a "theorist of the symbolic register ... [who] has little to say about how symbolic norms are related to other social and political structures through which gender is constructed" (413). Similarly, Donna Houston charges that Butler's performativity effects a mystification of social, economic, and spatial practices, while reducing the scale of resistance and subversion to the level of the individual. "For many people in the world", she points out, "questions regarding the body and resistance are life and death struggles, embedded in the very material struggle to keep one's body alive" (404). Further, Gillian Rose states, "Butler is about the only major theorist writing at the moment who has nothing to say about space" (*Geography* 546). Thrift echoes Rose's complaint, writing that "the space within which [Butler's] performativity occurs is implied, not implicated. It lies offshore from the subject" (414).

To bring Butler's disembodied gendered subject 'down to earth' – and into space – connections between performativity and the production of (social) space need

to be established. Lefebvre's assertion that "spatial codes" or conventions take certain forms, that they appear and disappear according to their temporal, social, and spatial *context*, helps to situate the performed subject (*Production*, 13). If contextually contingent, any socially produced space expresses and embodies its attendant social, political, and economic forces. By the same logic, performativity must be seen as temporally, socially, and *spatially* specific. As John Dewsbury notes:

> Our structures of meaning have to be repeated to work, and ... this always entails a shift in context as well as use .... Hence, whilst the performative, as a theoretical tool or concept, can be used in any given circumstance, its usefulness and what it uncovers and creates are fundamentally specific to the context in which it is cited .... This ... performative ontology does not mean an escape from the material struggles of the world, for, through arguing that all thinking, knowledge creating, and experience referencing is a bodily process, it speaks of the variation of our embodiment within the lived world itself (477).

Though contextualizing performative ontologies help to recover the constituted subject from textual abstraction, how do social space and performativity interact? How is 'doing' identity played out in space? Conversely, how does citational 'doing' itself produce space?

Gillian Rose argues that space "is a doing, that ... does not pre-exist its doing, and that its doing is the articulation of relational performances" (*Performing* 248). Referring to Butler's "less-than-human" bodies relegated to an "abjected outside", to a "zone of inhabitability" away from the subject's domain, Rose states that "this particular performance of difference produces ... a specific space. Other performances of relationality will produce other spaces" (ibid.). Contrary to Lefebvre's assertion that "space is already in place before the appearance in it of actors", Rose posits space as not an expansive, preceding volume waiting to engage and define the subject (*Production* 57). Rather, to avoid what she considers to be a degree of foundationalism in Lefebvre's thinking, she describes space as "practiced, a matrix of

play, dynamic and iterative, its forms and shapes produced through the citational performance of self-other relations" (*Performing* 248.). This, however, does not imply space's "infinite plasticity". Patterns of spatial relations recur, just as reiterations of norms do. Though dispatching abject bodies to "spaces of unlivability" is not fated, it is always highly likely. As Rose makes clear, "the spatiality of performative relations is precisely a symptom and condition of the power that saturates every self-other encounter" (ibid.) By placing enactments of identity in specific political, economic, and social *contexts*, analysis of performativity enables a shift from the textual to the geographic. Moreover, by viewing social space as "practiced", as a "doing that does not pre-exist doing", enactments of identity must be seen as producing space, both giving form to normative discourse and potentially subverting it.

How subjects potentially disrupt power relations remains another source of trouble for Butler, mainly as a positive consequence of her vagueness regarding questions of agency. As already discussed, Butler's performativity functions through citational practices, which simultaneously produce and subvert discourses of power - power that concurrently enables and disciplines a subject's performances. Butler believes that subversion of dominant discourse occurs only with "slippages" in normative reiteration, revealing to the subject the constructed, fictional quality of those norms (*Trouble* 30). In her system, counter-hegemonic resignification cannot occur consciously or voluntarily. Rather, disruption relies solely on "accidental displacement" and "inadvertant convergences". This refusal follows Butler's belief that assertions of conscious 'doing' inevitably assume a 'masterful subject' freely moving outside power (Nelson 339).

This belief places Butler in opposition to many scholars influenced by the earlier performance theory of Erving Goffman. In Goffman's view, "the self [is] a

performed character ... not an organic thing ... his body merely provides the peg on which ... [a performed character] will be hung" (qtd. in Gregson et. al. 433). The phrase "will be hung" implies an element of voluntarism in Goffman's thought. Scholars attempting to infuse their studies of performativity—a Butlerian concept—with Goffman's agency are routinely charged with "smuggling". On this point I agree, for the suggestion that subversive performance is available to all at any time diminishes the enduring power of dominant norms and the severity of the taboos enforcing them. Butler's vagueness and inconsistencies on agency, however, open the door to alternative models seeking a middle ground. Throughout her writings, she is unable to articulate a clear, defensible position. For example, in *Gender Trouble* she highlights "parody", especially drag, as a means of subversion, only to recant this view in *Bodies That Matter,* discussing drag's "melancholic" dimension (437). Additionally, though consistently she flatly denies the validity of the choosing subject, she praises "die-ins", public street performances meant to raise public awareness of AIDS – performances clearly expressing the political goals of choosing subjects (ibid.).

To occupy this gap in Butler's discourse, I suggest Lise Nelson's notion of "betweenness" as a potentially valuable means to negotiate the binary stalemate of agency/determinism. While conceding the value of Butler's non-foundational understanding of identity formation, Nelson insists on the possibility of opening a space of betweenness, "a space that captures the instability, the partiality and situatedness of intersubjective relationships, self-reflexivity and knowledge production" (349). She posits a "situated ontology" not anchored by self-knowledge, complete truth, or objectivity, but by partial self-reflexivity – that is, a subject both "constituted by discursive processes and potentially aware of them" (350). Without

the *potential* for self-reflective awareness, identity must blindly flow through constrained channels. By ignoring this potential, Nelson thinks, "we miss the how and why of subjects doing identity, a process tied to their lived personal history, intersubjective relationships, and their embededdness in particular moments and places" (349). She defends herself against the charge laid by a critic that she is recuperating the 'god-trick' of self-knowledge by pointing out the critic's confusion between the subject's partial, situated, self-reflective potential and the "transparent, unencumbered knowledge" attrributed to the Enlightenment humanist subject. Nelson's "situated ontology" thus attempts to broaden the possibilities for subversion, by rejecting the political and intellectual inertia resulting from "uncritically embracing endlessly fragmented knowledges and subjects" (ibid.). Her ontology will be explored later to suggest potential disruptions to entrenched hypermasculine performances.

This study concerns the gendered coding of architectural and social space, and further, how the production of gendered space impacts the subjective enactment of gendered scripts. Specifically, how are socially produced space and the performance of gender related? Have the forms of skyscrapers, like the Twin Towers in New York City, been shaped by performances of masculinity? Do they produce a social space that facilitates the reiteration of hypermasculinities? Are there spaces of resistance to these codes and conventions? To address these questions, the next chapter looks at the history of New York's planning practices. I do this to suggest how plans to establish tight control over Manhattan's streets, buildings, and residents have long been coloured by masculinist, utopian desires to establish "orderly" enclaves in the city, free from the "chaos" associated with poorer neighbourhoods, traditionally populated by non-whites. These early desires for ethnically and racially pure space, it is argued, relate both to the performance of scripts typical of idealized masculinity, and

moreover, continue to influence the planning practices out of which the WTC emerged.

Chapter Three: The Scaling of Manhattan

Nature and machine join in the creation of collective territories. Residues of forces that traverse the subject - the memories, the emotions, the rationalizations, the history, the stories, the assumed knowledge – are fixed by lines, by marks that project the forces of desire…

Diana Agrest
"The Return of the Repressed: Nature"

The din of voices competing to shape the urban fabric of New York has always been too cacophonous for observers to discern any one voice in isolation. Liberal reformers, social scientists, business leaders, philanthropists, bankers, politicians, merchant associations, neighbourhood improvement societies, and grassroots activists have fought – and still fight – to be heard. From this enormously complex situation, I hope only to tease out connections between the city's urban planning practices, the production of gendered spaces, and the performance of hypermasculinities in and through a particular set of spaces. My project does not entail building a case against powerful, shadowy men nefariously pulling strings behind the scenes. Such men do exist but, as Jane Jacobs asserts in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), many reform-minded individuals have been "good and earnest people", deeply committed to the renewal process (8). The same, however, cannot be said of these urban renewal processes or the planning practices that guided them. Jacobs charged that until planners broke with the "familiar superstitions, oversimplifications, and symbols", their practice would remain little more than an "elaborately learned suspicion" akin to bloodletting.

Typically, designed urban space carries connotations of functionality, of programmatic rationality divorced from rhetoric. However, as Rosalyn Deutsche points out, urban planning and design can as easily be regarded as "disciplinary

technologies", thanks to their common aim to fashion space conducive to the production of "docile and useful bodies" (75). She outlines how planning's common-sense language attempts to explain the city's spatial configuration as satisfying needs that are natural and pragmatic: "instrumental function is the only meaning signified by the environment" (51). Planners espousing this mechanical view, who regard their practice solely as apolitical problem-solving, conceal, even from themselves, the ways in which creation and signification of urban spaces are a set of social processes—and never consider that "spatial forms are social structures". Conceiving the city as an autonomous actor speaking for itself, cautions Deutsche, removes from view those who actually "speak through the city".

To demonstrate that the World Trade Center's planning was saturated by enactments of hypermasculinity, I argue that the language of planning and its specialized knowledge are profoundly interrelated with masculinist desires to bring order to a perceived -- and threatening -- sense of urban chaos.[9] Through reliance on instrumental rationality, vision, and abstraction, planned (abstract) space betrays the yearning for fixed masculinist subjecthood. As feminist author and psychologist Luce Irigary writes, the "master subject" forms himself by enacting a space of "distance and separation ... [through which] he will affirm his identity" (qtd. in Rose, *Mirrors* 62). I suggest that modern rationality, the engine of planning endeavors, serves not only to constitute and anchor the "masterful masculinist subject" but, further, that planning discourse tacitly claims to protect (man)kind and the city from what Le Corbusier called the "ruinous, difficult and dangerous curve of animality" (qtd. in Ingraham 646).

[9] "Masculinist" is used here to denote what Rosalyn Deutsche calls a "[subject] position" of social authority, "historically occupied by men but with which women can also identify" (*Evictions*, 312).

Aversions to "animal disorder", I suggest, informed the scheme for the WTC, which not only was developed as a financial center but also figured in a larger project to reshape the human topography of Manhattan. In addition to building the WTC, the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Association plan of 1958 hoped to create predominantly white-collar residential neighbourhoods, to replace many of mid-and lower Manhattan's working-class tenants.[10] The proposed creation of a massive central business district, stretching from 59th Street to the Battery required the clearance of much of Chinatown, SoHo, Little Italy, TriBeCa, and Greenwich Village, and the removal of the area's small-scale industries. In their place, high-rent high-rise residential and commercial real estate would force the relocation of "racial minorities" – especially blacks, Puerto Ricans, Asians, and Jews – to the outer boroughs. The program of the 1958 plan, I argue, reiterated long-standing desires, evident in the city's planning practices, to restore Manhattan to its early-19th century status as an orderly, patrician city.

However fictional this idea of an orderly past was, tropes of purity exerted tremendous influence on the city's planning agenda, from the days of overt "negro removal" to the pernicious "planned shrinkage" contemporaneous with the WTC's erection.[11] These repeated attempts to plan spaces purged of the racially, ethnically, and socially 'disagreeable' cannot be explained solely by economic motives such as those suggested by theorists of "highest and best use".[12] I argue, rather, that the WTC's planning modalities were, to an important degree, performative, citing

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[10] Founded in 1956, the DLMA, headed by David Rockefeller, sought to revive Lower Manhattan's business district, which had since the Depression attracted far less new office space.

[11] 'Planned shrinkage' refers to the city's policies, in the early 1970s, of cutting back transit, sanitation, fire and police services in underprivileged neighbourhoods to spur relocation of local residents, largely blacks and Puerto Ricans, to outer boroughs and suburbs.

[12] The concept of 'highest and best use', developed in the early 1900s, justified the relocation of Manhattan's poor by the logic that each person required more living space, fresh air, sunshine, etc., than were available in the city. Only moving them to the outer boroughs would both facilitate that and free central high-priced land for its 'best use', i.e. commercial real estate.

humanist discourses of subjecthood and of abjection. Butler, drawing from Kristeva, asserts that the creation of an abject Other, the "less than human", the "excluded site", helps constitute the recognized subject's apparent boundary, its identity. The permeability of that boundary, however, is "haunted" by the possibility of absorption, by the possible rearticulation of the disavowed within the borders of subjecthood. Though bourgeois WASP males enjoyed the greatest privilege, that position was seen as especially vulnerable to degeneration, through physical, moral, and spiritual pollution. On a societal level, I posit that under the guise of functionalism and aestheticism, rationalized city plans have routinely sought to fix relations, to shore up boundaries, to protect the recognized subject from the disempowering, effeminizing contamination of abject "zones of inhabitability"-- both corporeal and architectural.

Fear, uncertainty, disavowal, and desires to shield the constructed self, fuel "cultural fictions" of urban order and health, producing spaces shaped by sexism, homophobia, racism, classism, ethnocentrism, ageism, and ableism. Gillian Rose explains:

> the spatial articulates. . . difference and desire. 'Difference' becomes 'distance' from the self. Yet this distance and its placing 'outside the self' is not ... a distance measured in the space between the sovereign phallocentric subject and his bounded other; it is not a gap between bounded things but the production of two" (*Intro* 16).

Seen in this light, then, the 1958 DLMA plan, with its aims to reconfigure the borough's racial, class, and ethnic make-up—and to raise a new city of towers—did not simply 'put space' between the recognized subjects and abjected Others. Also, it enabled the production of space that would articulate masculinist, authoritative binaries of subject/Other. In this chapter, New York's planning practices which gave rise to the World Trade Center – and numerous other high-rise developments – are examined, to suggest the enduring presence of repetitive hypermasculine enactments.

I argue that enactments do articulate hypermasculine spaces, and further, that the WTC played a key role in spatializing hypermasculine desires. Again I stress this effort is not intended to exclude other social, economic, cultural, technological, or political factors explaining the emergence of the tall building.

Mice, Men, and Manhattan's Abject Spaces

In *Divided We Stand*, written before 9/11, Eric Darton describes the World Trade Center as an "enduring monument to one of New York's last great renewal schemes"(69). Darton accompanies his claim by a verse originally found taped to a Manhattan demolition site's fence. It reveals the spirit of his words:

> No war declared
> No storm had flared
> No sudden bomb so cruel
> Just a need for land
> And a greedy hand
> And a sign that said
> "URBAN RENEWAL"(ibid.)

Indeed, the planning history of New York's urban renewal reads like a "whodunnit", with writers attempting to pin blame on one culprit or another for what appears to be a catastrophic series of bureaucratic failures.

Though the bulk of slum clearances occurred between 1949 and 1959, with the implementation and subsequent demise of Title 1 of the Federal Housing Act, the impetus for the destruction of city neighbourhoods actually originated as far back as the end of the Civil War.[13] Long before the heavy-handed renewal schemes of Robert

[13] Title 1 legislation provided federal subsidies to local development authorities to purchase and clear "blighted" areas of America's inner cities before selling them to private contractors. Title 1 was originally meant to spur the construction of affordable housing. However, in the hands of Robert Moses, the number of low-rent units in New York decreased, venerable neighbourhoods were lost, and at least 100,000 poor were displaced to crime-ridden projects - or worse - to make room for middle-income tower complexes on superblocks.

Moses – New York's answer to Baron Hausmann – Lower Manhattan was filled with newcomers (from abroad and from the South), burgeoning industries, and a keen bourgeois dread of social collapse. Considering the Draft Riot of 1863, cholera outbreaks, and violent labour disputes, this dread can perhaps be understood. Myopically, however, blame for the city's ills fell on its 'poor, huddled masses'. In July, 1871, the *New York Times* warned readers that "we are in this city on the crust of a volcano", a plight wrought by the "powerful 'dangerous classes' who care nothing for our liberty or civilization … who *burrow* at the roots of society" (italics mine, qtd. in Scobey 151). Animalizing disdain extended, too, to the buildings that housed the 'dangerous classes'. Another journalist, writing of Manhattan's Lower East Side tenements, charged that "the high brick blocks and closely-packed houses … seemed to be literally *hives* of sickness and disease" (italics mine, qtd. in ibid. 149). Likewise, images of tenement dwellers in the popular press routinely depicted a seamy underworld, where social decorum and moral virtue were subverted by uncontrolled animal urges.

Pathologizing of the poor and their dwellings was effected with new and influential fervour in Jacob Riis's *How the Other Half Lives* (1890). Riis's sensationalistic photo-essay on Manhattan's Lower East Side called little attention to the iniquities of landlords or to laissez-faire municipal legislation, attributing the area's horrific conditions to "the unclean beast of dishonest idleness" (qtd. in Page 79). He concluded bluntly that tenement dwellers were "shiftless, destructive, and stupid", that "in a word, they ... [were] what the tenements made them" (ibid.). Early reformer's language, describing neighbourhoods as "cancerous", "leprous", "scabrous", "puss-filled", prompted surgical metaphors for urban renewal— "amputation", "severing", "incising arteries", and so on. Though Riis's aspiration to

demolish Lower Manhattan's worst neighbourhoods was not realized, his demonizing tone echoed a general commitment to rid the city of its "foul cores" of tenements, a hysteria that informed the later "science" of urban renewal (ibid. 85).

Representations such as Riis's photos functioned as a means of articulating—of performing—social space. In saying this, I do not suggest that the high rates of violence, substance abuse, or infant mortality exposed by Riis and others did not exist, or that Riis felt only antipathy for his subjects. Rather, as Rosalyn Deutsche reasons in her essay "Men in Space":

> if representations are social relationships, rather than reproductions of preexisting meanings, then the high ground of total knowledge can only be gained by an oppressive encounter with difference - the relegation of other subjectivities to positions of subordination or invisibility (198).

Such a notion of representation is tied to that of performativity by stressing that speech's power lies in part in creating and repeating names to describe people, objects, and ideas. "Power works in part", says Gillian Rose, "by its ability to name, to define ... to describe certain people and places both as different [and] ... in a way that excludes other definitions" (*Taking* 437). How then did the animalizing imagery of commentators like Riis enable hypermasculine enactments? How could representations of abjection have facilitated the production of hypermasculine spaces in Manhattan?

In her essay "The Scaling of Bodies and the Politics of Identity", political scientist Iris Marion Young discusses the mechanical operations typical of "cultural imperialism"– defined as the projection of a dominant culture's values, traditions, and worldviews, as if they are normative and absolute, onto marginalized groups. Young asserts that maintaining boundaries between cultures often requires a "scaling of bodies", wherein the "dominant discourse defines ... [the Other] in terms of bodily

characteristics, and constructs those bodies as ugly, dirty, defiled, impure, contaminated, or sick", and its own members as morally, intellectually, and aesthetically superior (220). Biases of every stripe, Young reminds us, are not throwbacks to Dark Ages suspicion. On the contrary, much modern scientific discourse – exemplified in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by phrenology, physiognomy, and eugenics – has relied on what it called reason to justify its dubious "scaling of bodies".

Generally, white bourgeois men established and enforced such rationally defined scales and situated themselves as "master subjects" at their apex. Importantly, however, that privileged position afforded no security. As the border between "beautiful" and "abject" bodies was thought permeable, scientific, medical, and self-help texts routinely warned of physical, moral, and spiritual effeminacy. "Abjection", argues Kristeva, "is above all ambiguity, [b]ecause ... it does not radically cut off the subject from what threatens it – on the contrary, abjection acknowledges it to be in perpetual danger" (9) The deployment, though, of what Foucault labels "normalizing reason" stabilized the all-seeing "master subject", to a degree placating masculinity's inherent anxieties. Thriving in the "sciences of man", Foucault states normalizing reason

> measures in quantitative terms and hierarchizes in terms of value the abilities, the level, the 'nature' of individuals. It introduces, through this 'value-giving' measure, the constraint of conformity that must be achieved. Lastly, it traces the limit that will define difference in relation to all other differences, the external frontier of the abnormal (qtd. in Young 222).

Normalizing reason thus represents a logic of identity that excludes other possible epistemologies or modes of subjectivity. It situates the "master subject" at its core, gazing outward, distant and separate from what it sees. The recognized subject—the

"body that matters"—maintains "value" by adhering to the constraints of normalizing reason and by enforcing difference. The "external frontier" of Foucault's normalizing reason, the "zones of inhabitability" of Butler's constituted subject, the "periphery" of Lefebvre's globalized space – all spatialize an exclusion whose articulation secures centrality. Neither center nor margin exists independently. Neither is any center closed, secure, and free of "haunting" from without – thus the need for constraint, for repetition, for violence.

In this same way, by naming Lower East Side tenements "rookeries", "hives of sickness" and applying to their inhabitants such terms as "burrowing", "unclean beasts", and "shiftless", reformers delineated sharp divisions between the human looking subject and the bestialized "less-than-human" object of its gaze. Riis's book confronted readers with images of abjection, with those "fragile states where man strays on the territories of the animal" (Kristeva 12). Max Page writes in *The Creative Destruction of Manhattan*:

> cultural understandings of the 'leprous houses', images of danger and political unrest ... continued to animate housing reform projects. Just as the recalled and invented memories of Fifth Avenue were utilized to create an image of a 'good' place that had to be defended... the 'foul core' of New York was repeatedly paraded before the public to offer a diagnosis of a 'sick place' that had to be eliminated (84).

The production of abject imagery, thus, enables hypermasculine enactments by defining the Lower East Side and its residents as alien to and outside "the good subject". Through excluding other definitions, "naming" establishes hierarchical, binary, "globalized space" – a space which is, however, constantly "haunted" by permeation, by "ambiguity", and is thus threatening to the fragile identity of the "master subject". Hypermasculine performance, therefore, seeks to spatialize a desire for distance, homogeneity, and conformity, to reinforce the stability of power-over

social structures. In Manhattan, such citational enactments express a utopian urge to enforce unity, to displace the contagion of the tenements and their dwellers with modernity's architectural panacea—the tall building.

Towering Utopias

Numerous tenement laws, committees on congestion, and zoning regulations preceded the 1929 Regional Plan of New York and its Environs (RPNY). These earlier reforming efforts, however compelling, will be bypassed in this analysis since it is only with the RPNY that skyscrapers began to figure heavily in plans for a rationalized, hygienic urban utopia.[14] Though debasing terms such as "rookeries" or "scabrous" gradually fell into disuse in 20th-century planning discourse, aversion to New York's poorest neighbourhoods and residents continued to influence "scientific" planning practice. As historian John Kuo Wei Chen points out, New York's first comprehensive plan of 1929 was produced in an era of "100 percent Americanism, [and was part of] a xenophobic movement of cultural cleansing driven by eugenic obsessions" (39). Consider, for example, the plea for order from Regional Plan Association (RPA) 's director Robert Haig:[15]

> Some of the poorest people live in conveniently located slums on high-priced land. On patrician Fifth Avenue, Tiffany and Woolworth, cheek by jowl, offer jewels and gimcracks.... A stone's throw from the stock exchange the air is filled with the aroma of roasting coffee; a few hundred feet from Times Square with the stench of slaughter houses. In the very heart of this 'commercial' city, on Manhattan Island south of 59th street, the inspectors in 1922 found nearly 420,000 workers employed in factories. Such a situation outrages one's sense of order. Everything seems misplaced. One yearns to rearrange things to put things where they belong (qtd. in Fitch 60).

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[14] Prior to 1929, zoning and planning efforts, most notably the 1916 zoning ordinance, sought to limit skyscraper height, bulk, and location. Many supporters of the 1916 ordinance believed that hi-rise construction would cease completely, its form relegated a historical curiosity.

[15] Directorship of the RPA included Rockefeller Foundation and Morgan banking executives, New York and New Jersey rail directors, and major real estate developers. They oversaw the drafting of the region's first comprehensive plan, at a then-stratospheric cost of one million dollars.

Haig's desire to put "things"—that is people—where "they belong" from its inception animated the RPA's plan to build an extensive network of rail bridges, tunnels, and fast highways in New York and New Jersey. Inspired by plans of the City Beautiful movement, in particular Daniel H. Burnham and Edward H. Bennett's Plan of Chicago (1909), RPNY planners shared with Burnham dreams of societal propriety and harmony among the classes (Ward 109). City Beautiful schemes had appealed to moneyed urban Americans concerned at the flood of immigrant workers housed in inner-city tenements.[16] Though the RPNY shared City Beautiful aims to establish central business districts (CBDs), to improve circulation and accessibility through improved transportation, and to banish the "blighted" industrial city, not until the 1929 plan did the tall building begin to symbolize, even monumentalize, a new urban spirit.

To realize the RPA's "yearning" for order, New York and its surrounding region would be divided into three zones: Zone One, a CBD in Manhattan south of 59th Street; Zone Two, an industrial zone with a twenty-mile radius encircling Zone One; Zone Three, an outlying rural area. (fig. 3). The RPA coined the term "diffused recentralization" to describe its planning palliative – with the central aim of shifting working class tenants and "inappropriate" industries from the new CBD to the industrial zone (Fishman 109). According to the RPNY, Zone One would become the "ultimate downtown", defined by modern tall buildings, luxury housing, and elite shopping districts. Zone Two would contain industrial plants and its workers, while

[16] "Progressive" City Beautiful planners in the U.S., drawing from Baron Hausmann's formula for renewal, sought to bring order to the "chaotic" city by cutting wide boulevards through existing neighbourhoods, building grand municipal halls, public squares adorned with monuments, and public parks - often displacing low-cost housing in the process. By imposing geometrical order on the city's topography, adherents believed civic pride and social order would follow. No grand plan, however, was fully executed in a major American city.

rural lands of Zone Three would remain protected from "invasion" by the lower classes and their "wasteful and disorderly spreading of houses" (ibid. 116). Relocated blue-collar families, to the RPA's thinking, should be content to live in Zone Two, in the industrial sector close to work. These class-and race-informed biases, coupled with the planners' desire to stop the city's suburban growth, in time undermined the realization of the RPA's "comprehensive" vision. The failure to reorganize the region's rail system, and the shift to building bridges, expressways, and tunnels for automobiles but not trains, contributed to the decline of the industrial zone while facilitating the spread of suburbs. Significantly, however, the RPA's dream of a "patrician" downtown escaped alive, to be later revived in the 1950s by the architects of the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Plan (Darton 59).

This reiterated desire to impose order on Manhattan, in Robert Fitch's view, must be read as a "spatial battle". Spatial struggles were necessarily covert, however, as Fitch explains,

> for prudence dictated that the social Darwinists of the RPA could rarely express [their aims] publicly like happy Homeric warriors or even like their parents' generation – the Robber barons. They couldn't portray the battle as they saw it – as a battle between in-groups and out-groups (78).

Accordingly, the Association's director, Robert Haig, portrayed Manhattan's spatial conflict as a clash of "functions". In any given society, Haig argued, intelligence rates as the highest and best function. Attempting to naturalize "recentralization", he reasoned that the most intelligent—thus most fit—group dominates social space, of course proven by Manhattan's removal of its industrial base for "intelligence-transmitting" FIRE (finance, insurance, real estate) companies (ibid. 79). This "strong tincture of ideology and wishful thinking", Fitch points out, fueled the heavy

development of tall office towers in the CBD, leading to a glut in office space that has never been absorbed, even since 9/11 (ibid.).

Though discussed by the RPA as a means to offset the high cost of transportation upgrades, skyscrapers also appear as monuments to a new fantasy of technological transcendence and social homogeneity. As an RPNY illustration for the proposed Chrystie-Forsyth Parkway suggests, desires for a quasi-Futurist Lower East Side percolated beneath the plan's functionalist surface. (fig. 4) A visionary scheme fed by the radical urbanism of Le Corbusier transplanted a "sleek Art Deco Wonderland" where aged tenements had stood (Fishman 117). At the north end of the parkway, beams of light radiate from the lantern of the Metropolitan Life Building (Napolean le Brun & Sons, 1909), locking with those of other towers, to form a Cartesian grid above the new city. In this period, electric light held a near-mystical fascination for the elites of U.S. cities. As historian David E. Nye notes, "the lights of the city created a new kind visual text, a new landscape of modernity.... If by day poor and unsightly sections called out for social reform, by night the city was a purified world of light, simplified into a spectacular pattern, interspersed with now unimportant blanks" (qtd. in Nasaw 277). This technological utopia, however, remained unrealized. After a failed initiative to develop what had become an extensive slum clearance, the city simply planted a parkway between Chrystie and Forsythe streets.

The "scientific" methods of urban planning ushered in by the 1929 Region Plan of New York informed later efforts to erect massive housing developments, another arm of the relocation machine fueled by erecting tall buildings. In theory, slum clearance made space for housing projects to accommodate low-income residents: in practice, new building complexes afforded owners the opportunity to

"sift" tenants, to exclude on any basis they chose. Generally, hi rise developments forced poor, immigrant tenants to relocate with little compensation. Worse still, from the New Deal of the 1930's to the demise of Title 1 legislation in 1959, government funding aided the construction of tall residential buildings for white, middle-class tenants in the belief that middle class vacancies would "trickle-down" to blue-collar tenants, with little concern for how those tenants would afford higher rents (Lopate 22). Further, development of residential towers increased the density of land use and raised land values, which made adjacent parcels attractive for still more development and evictions (ibid.).

Stuyvesant Town, a massive Lower East Side development begun in 1945, illustrates how large-scale tower construction aided desires of societal restructuring. Plowing under the notorious "gashouse district", named for its noxious gas-storage tanks, Stuyvesant Town occupies a stunningly large plot bounded by 14th to 20th streets, Ave C to 1st Ave (fig. 5). In a limited-dividend project, Metropolitan Life, in cooperation with the city, relocated 11,000 working-class tenants, many black and Puerto Rican, to raise a segregated, white, middle-class enclave for veterans returning from the war (Fitch 92).[17] Defending the megaproject—relocations and all—Paul Windell, then the head of the RPA, bluntly asked "how [else] can we stop the drift away from the city and maintain valuations in older areas?" (qtd. in ibid.). In short, Windell asked how else but through mass evictions of immigrants and racial minorities, through increased density and higher land values brought by tower construction, could the "drift" of middle-class whites to the outlying regions be

[17] In the 1940's, limited-dividend projects allowed major savings banks and insurance companies to invest directly in private development companies given contracts to build public housing. Federally funded, limited-dividend projects were protected in principle from greedy speculators by establishing rent ceilings. Gradually, however, controls were eroded, especially requirements stipulating the need to aid evictees' relocations.

stopped? However, when Met Life chairman Frederick Ecker stated openly that Stuyvesant Town was built exclusively for whites, he touched off a controversy and spurred fierce opposition that would continue to haunt the city's future public housing projects (Schwartz 96). [18] In spite of grassroots resistance from groups such as Save Our Homes, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the American Jewish Committee, dubious public housing projects continued to eat up large chunks of the city unchecked for the next fifteen years.

From 1949 to 1959, New York witnessed devastating demolitions of low-cost housing and a staggering proliferation of high-rise residential superblocks. By eminent domain, the city -- often at the behest of one Rockefeller family-member or another -- evicted tenants to build high-rise apartments, hospitals, schools, and cultural centers.[19] Wielding Title 1's might, Rockefeller family-members aided by Robert Moses's Committee on Slum Clearance evicted tens of thousands of families in the name of "civilization". Subsidized with federal funds to force out 5,572 tenants, hundreds of stores, and scores of manufacturing firms, John D. Rockefeller III touted his plan for the Lincoln Center on the Upper West Side as the new center for world culture, crucial in the Cold War "struggle for minds" (ibid. 287). Similarly, David Rockefeller received Title 1 subsidies to displace black and Puerto Rican residents of the Manhattantown, further up the West Side, to erect multiple apartment-tower complexes for middle-class whites, "solidifying" Morningside Heights – the so-called "spiritual, cultural, and intellectual capital of the world" (ibid. 152).[20]

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[18] Ironically, upon completion in 1915, the Metropolitan Life's tower was proclaimed a "symbol of God", standing "erect as a plea for righteousness and purity in business corporations, and as a monumental protest against the exploitation of the poor" (W.H. Atherton qtd. in Van Leeuwen, 62).

[19] Eminent domain allowed municipalities to condemn private property, demolish buildings, and redevelop for "public use". After an amendment in 1954, "public use" became "public purpose" fueling questionable appropriations of property across the U.S. to build private office towers, luxury condominiums, and even casinos.

[20] Morningside Heights - also named the American "Acropolis"- is home to Columbia University, Barnard College, Teachers College, St. John the Divine Episcopal Cathedral, and the Juilliard School

The Rockefeller projects, little more than thinly veiled Jim Crow real-estate measures, reveal a desire to establish what philosopher Noelle McAfee describes as "capacities to differentiate". The need to distinguish—to *discriminate*—signals the experience of abjection, as fear of permeable, collapsing boundaries is central to abject encounters. McAfee suggests "abjection is the state in which one's foothold in the world of self and other disintegrates ... blurring boundaries of oneself, pushing towards psychosis where the all-too-real undermines the division between self and other and the capacity to differentiate" (qtd. in Popke 749). As perhaps the most '"powerful and shadowy" actors in New York planning history, the Rockefellers' interventions, empowered by Title 1, throw into high detail a familial yearning for order. Historian Joel Schwartz charges that:

> Title 1 projects accomplished what their proponents had planned but could never admit. They redefined entire neighbourhoods, provided visible redoubts and unmistakable boundaries, enclosing interior villages, and raising blank exterior walls. They uprooted 'undesirables' and held on to the valued middle-class (296).

As architects of the plan to erect the WTC, Nelson and David Rockefeller's ambitions to reshape Manhattan's CBD cannot be regarded separately from their "eugenic obsessions" at Morningside Heights or on the Lower East Side. In both instances, they enacted scripts deeply coded by masculinist desires for stability and the disavowal of the "less-than-human" abject. Riis's "foul core", the RPA's "outraged order", Stuyvesant Town's "maintaining valuation", the Rockefeller's "solidifying" – all suggest a profoundly worn iterative track, a hypermasculine interpellation of the in-group to impose the steady, distanced vision of the master-subject. Tellingly, in a short historical description of the site, Stuyvesant Town's

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of Music. David Rockefeller headed a group of concerned elites, who, to stem the tide of blacks and Puerto Rican's "infesting" neighbourhoods south of 125 St., used Title 1 and CSC clearances to establish a firm colour boundary between Harlem and the Upper West Side (fig. 6).

website claims that "Peter Stuyvesant was known for bringing order to the chaotic 17th century 'Island of the Manhatoes'".[21] Such repetitive doing produces social space, as Rose stated earlier, a space "produced through the citational performance of self-other relations".

Trading Spaces

Years before architect Minoru Yamasaki designed the Twin Towers for New York's World Trade Center, David Rockefeller and the Port Authority's executive chairman Austin Tobin became infatuated with the idea of "catalytic bigness". If an immense office complex housing all of the city's international trading firms were to be built in Lower Manhattan, they thought, a chain-reaction would occur, spurring the area's sluggish office-tower development, dormant since the Depression. Likely, Rockefeller's motives for creating the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Association (DLMA) can be tied to his construction of One Chase Plaza, the first office tower raised in the financial district in over twenty years (Darton 15). Underneath these obvious financial aims streams the similiar "yearning for order", so succinctly voiced a generation earlier in the 1929 Regional Plan of New York and its Environs (RPNY). In its praise of the DLMA's 1958 billion-dollar redevelopment plan, the *New York Times* used words strangely familiar to those seen in the RPNY: "In the present hodge-podge, properties across the street from one another may vary in assessed valuation from $17 to $115 a square foot. Slum tenements, auto-body works, warehouses and tiny industrial plants are jumbled in the shadow of skyscrapers" (in qtd. in Darton 72). In a second piece, the *Times* described the area to be demolished as

[21] The Stuyvesant Town website's version of history, not surprisingly, does not mention the demolition of the "gashouse district" or the troubled process of relocating its tenants. Generally, it seeks to promote its "magnificently renovated luxury apartments" (www.pvcst.com).

a "daytime enclave of 350,000 employees" who at night flee the area leaving it to "a few policemen, countless wharf rats and the residents of the fringe of tenement houses" (qtd. in ibid. 63). That wharf rats figure before tenement dwellers should not surprise us, considering the plan's aim to develop upper-end housing on the Hudson's shore.

Though massive public-housing projects for the middle-class sputtered in the 1960s, new office towers continued to displace small industries, pressing forward the long-held vision of a deindustrialized, white-collar borough. It cannot be a coincidence that between 1945 and 1957, a period of prosperity for small industry, only one new downtown office tower climbed over twenty stories. It is not mere chance that the erection of twenty-six skyscrapers between 1957 and 1968 coincided with the loss of nearly 150, 000 jobs in manufacturing (Fitch 42). When the site of the WTC shifted from the East River to the Hudson, the DLMA set its sights on the blue-collar infrastructure nestled on the Hudson – docks, markets, and rail yards. In concert, the Regional Planning Association's 2nd Regional Plan (1968) states that "from 12th Street to the Battery, housing, parks and related facilities should be built along the River *to complement the growing office developments like the World Trade Center*" (original italics, qtd. in ibid. 117). This concerted effort to deindustrialize Lower Manhattan rested on an ill-conceived faith that "intelligence-transmitting" FIRE companies would fill the void created by the loss of manufacturing. As an unpublished draft of the city's 1969 Plan for New York City says plainly:

> In the long run, New York does not want to retain the low skill, low wage segment of the industrial mix.... The displacement of manufacturing activity in the CBD is the complement to the expansion of office construction which results in more intensive land use, higher investments and more jobs than the manufacturing activities they replaced (qtd. in Darton 99).

The plans went wrong. Today, as historian Mike Wallace points out, New York's FIRE monoculture threatens the city's stability, as rapid fluctuations in the market bring rapid downturns in earnings—by as much as 50 percent—bringing with them business closures and lay-offs (212). With a diverse manufacturing base, "our stool stood in many legs... now those legs have been shortened, rotted out, or sawn off, and our situation has become correspondingly perilous" (ibid.). Moreover, non-union FIRE companies have downsized a large portion of middling positions, creating the greatest disparity of wealth in the city's history. Even as the financial sector reached its peak in 1999, twenty-five percent of New Yorkers fell below the poverty-line—double the U.S. average (ibid. 213).

It would be a mistake, however, to see these blunders simply as a result of the folly of greed, though greed was a factor. While the Port Authority scrambled to attract tenants to the Twin Towers, the city struggled to remove unwanted residents, especially undereducated blacks and Puerto Ricans. The buzzword "job-skills mismatch" was applied to those industrial workers who, as a result of dwindling manufacturing jobs, were no longer needed or wanted in Manhattan's CBD. As the head of the Housing and Development Administration, Roger Starr flatly stated

> [we need to] stop the Puerto Ricans and rural blacks from living in the city.... Our urban system is based on the theory of taking the peasant and turning him into an industrial worker. Now there are no industrial jobs. Why not keep him a peasant? (qtd. in Fitch viii).

Starr's ill-advised comments, for which he was fired, make clear the deep-seated prejudices informing Lower Manhattan's restructuring. In his study of South African modernism, geographer E. Jeffrey Popke explores modern urban development as a

means to delineate what he calls "identity space" – a tactic to define, locate, and fix explicit subjectivities:[22]

> While urban interventions in the early 20th century can be read as a form of administrative rationality they also highlight the ways in which the spatial epistemology of modernism codified a particular definition of subjectivity as a relation of absolute difference, producing not just spaces of the city, but a certain kind of identity space as well (38).

In this light, Lower Manhattan's CBD can be viewed as a particular "identity space", based on the exclusion of any who do not fit. "Doing" this space, enacting this space, as Mitch Rose emphasizes, requires the attempt "to situate, violate, close off, and circumscribe other forms of enactment" (394). Due to the inherent openness of space, enactment continually seeks a closure of meaning, an intrinsically violent constriction. Lefebvre echoing Rose, observes that capitalism's abstract space cannot be closed or complete—thus the need for police truncheons to maintain it (134).

The WTC's ruthless displacement of "Radio Row", a bustling neighbourhood of electronic stores, cobblers, Mom and Pop grocery stores, fish and produce markets, exposes the role violence played in redefining the meaning of the WTC's site. Presenting Radio Row as little more than a stumbling block, David Rockefeller's public relations smear campaign charged that the area's buildings, streets, and services, were causing its potential for growth to stagnate. "This area", claimed Rockefeller, "is largely occupied by *commercial slums*, right next to the greatest concentration of real estate values in the city" (italics mine, qtd. in Ruchelman, 20). Despite protests in the streets and courts, Rockefeller with the help of the Port Authority exercised the power of eminent domain and leveled the humble, venerable

[22] Popke's work joins a popular departure from the belief that the apartheid city is an anomalous, racist warping of standard, rationalized urban planning practice. Rather, South African segregation is increasingly regarded as remarkably similar to interventions common to most cities shaped by 20th century modernism.

district and some 18, 000 jobs with it (Darton 172).[23] Ironically, for a project heralded as the materialization of "the relationship between world trade and world peace" its spatial delineation relied on a cannibalistic turn. Old-fashioned American entrepreneurs, heretofore the backbone of the nation's free market system, were consumed as Saturn ate his young. As city planner and historian M. Christine Boyer puts it,

> New York would evolve into a global city reserved for white-collar services housed in gleaming skyscraper towers. If the skyscraper image is a celebration of white-collar production and the mighty forces of corporate capitalism, then it rests on a failure to celebrate the process of material production out of which it rose. Nor has it ever acknowledged the suffering inflicted as it threatened the very existence of blue-collar workers. The competition ultimately split white-collar work and blue-collar labor apart, and only one would remain to claim Manhattan as its proper home. One of the epochal battles in this removal – notorious for all the wounds it caused – took place on the blocks surrounding the site on which the Port Authority's World trade center would rise (114-5).

If the planning process of the World Trade Center is not viewed in the larger context of the region's planning history, the normative scripts embedded in the text of the site remain concealed. Not every ideal animating the development of the WTC was born fully formed in the minds of its makers. Rather, a deeply-ingrained rhetoric of societal propriety and stability, of functional order, and of power's rightful use lives through and beyond those subjects espousing it, hailing new actors to perform it. For over one hundred years prior to the construction of the WTC, reformers sought to impose an abstracted vision of the "good life" onto Manhattan's streets. The efforts of the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Association in the mid-1950s to establish the

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[23] The struggle to save Radio Row found a national audience. Memorable street protests carried coffins for "Mr. Small Businessman", displayed nooses of the "Kremlin Port Authority" that killed him, and toted signs reading "Rockefeller, What Are You Doing to My Daddy?", "Rocky Hates the Working Man", "Rockefeller Signed Our Death Warrant: He Made the World Trade Center Land Grab Legal".

primacy of financial, real estate, and insurance firms (FIRE) over small manufacturing, clearly echo the Regional Planning Association's (RPA) aim thirty years earlier to "put things where they belong". Though continually refined, from nineteenth-century compassionate hysteria to the cool, instrumental rationality of the 20th-century, planning measures betray a core desire to render the urban fabric legible for specific subjects, for racialized "bodies that matter". Aestheticized, imbued by a homogeneous geometric "harmony", the city's production of abstract space reveals repeated moves to excise perceived disorder and danger.

Increasingly, since the RPA's Regional Plan of New York and its Environs (1929), the tall building began to figure in the spatial battles of "in-groups". Especially after the adoption of Title 1 legislation in 1949, the Committee on Slum Clearance possessed the power, through eminent domain, to implement the RPA's frustrated dream to fashion Manhattan as the "ultimate downtown". High-rise apartment towers replaced aging tenements, displaced blue-collar families to the outer boroughs and suburbs, and through high rents and exclusionary procedures, created invisible ramparts that repelled "out-group" members. Similarly, the development of office towers raised land values, pushing out small industry in favour of an economic monoculture of "intelligent" FIRE companies. In this way, the skyscraper facilitated a societal reordering of Manhattan. With its destruction of Radio Row, its displacement of 30,000 jobs and hundreds of small businesses in favour of white-collar workers, the WTC also aided this aim.

The push to transform Lower Manhattan created untold suffering. Though phrased in value-neutral terms, the language of urban planning and design facilitating this shift bears the marks of masculinist desire: to impose luminosity and transparency on the thickset, heterogeneous world of experience, to reduce the lived world to

comprehensive formulae. Moreover, the need for clarity, solidity, and order cannot be regarded separately from the ever-present threat of masculinity's dissolution, its effeminization and haunting by the abject, less-than-human bodies at the margins. Policies of "negro removal", tenant sifting and planned shrinkage expose the struggle to shore up exclusive enclaves for the master subject. Moreover, this transformation relied on the production of a certain kind of social space. Again to quote Gillian Rose, "the spatial articulates... difference and desire" (*Human* 16). Seeking to solidify life's constant flux and masculinity's inherent fragility, hypermasculine enactments of identity at once exclude other possible enactments, while reaffirming the master subject's own fictional presence. The relational performance, between "bodies that matter" and abject Others, produces a space of distance and difference, while rendering firm the boundaries that signal the subject's being. Hypermasculine "doing" thus produces social space, a space that does not precede its doing. In the case of Manhattan, then, well-worn normative scripts have passed from hand to hand, from generation to generation, spurring hypermasculine performances that at once produce sharply divided, hypermasculine space, but also, due to the incompleteness of enactment and social space, leave room for slippage. At bottom, this radical openness of social space fuels the constant repetition of hypermasculine scripts, but also leaves room for disruption and emanicipatory practice.

Chapter Four: Self-Making, Ascendancy & the Twin Towers

I would like there to be places that are stable, unmoving ... unchanging, deep rooted: places that might be points of reference, of departure, of origin... Such places don't exist, and it's because they don't exist, that space becomes a question... Space is a doubt: I have to constantly mark it, to designate it. It's never mine, never given to me, I have to conquer it.

Georges Perec
Species of Spaces and Other Pieces (1974)

The Twin Towers were a pure, uninhabited image floating above the city, an image forever above the horizon, in some kind of sublime excess, defying our capacity to understand it. The unfathomable trauma of their destruction simply deepened the mystery.

Mark Wigley
"Insecurity by Design" (2002)

When architect Minouru Yamasaki designed the Twin Towers his semantic aims were thought legible, revealed in his design choices, program and use of materials. Unlike prior, symbolically laden styles, Modern architecture conveyed meaning through its "honest" articulation of structure and function, facilitated by stripped down formal aesthetics and new, mass-produced building materials. Before informing the production of post-War American skyscrapers, Europe's modernist idiom had connoted utopian possibilities to improve the lot of the average person, through better housing, factories, schools, hospitals, libraries, and community centers. By the time this formal language radically refined the skylines of U.S. cities, however, it had come exclusively to serve capitalist utopianism. This ideological shift explains why Yamasaki could describe the world's tallest modern office-towers as "living symbol[s] of man's dedication to peace". (qtd. in Gillespie 241).

Though the planning and early construction of the WTC occurred in America's exuberant high-modernist era, doubt of modern architecture's aesthetic language had taken root in the U.S. by the early 1970s, when the first tenants had moved in. Despite this anti-foundationalist turn and subsequent reconsiderations of

architecture's sign-value, architectural historians and theorists engaged cursorily, if at all, with the Twin Towers—until 9/11. The tragic events of September 11th have brought scholars back to a site previously considered tedious, brutally disproportional, and generally beneath mention. In this now active yet largely untrammeled scholarly space, I hope to delineate further connections between the enactment of hypermasculine scripts, the production of gendered social space, and the form of the Twin Towers. First, I survey how "self-made" masculinities outlined in American conduct literature informed free-market capitalism, bolstering the recognized subject's position in competitive, homosocial spaces where fears of effeminizing failure continually threaten. I suggest that enactments of self-made masculinities helped feed and reiterate desires for architectural ascendancy, including the world-record height achieved at the World Trade Center. Second, I argue that the "supersolid", "supervisible", "superlocated" form of the Twin Towers actively conceal the circulation of covert hypermasculine scripts based in gendered notions of rationality and seeing. Through their spare, geometric form and otherworldy vistas, the trade towers can be read as an attempt to spatialize and fix socially produced masculinities that are *never* secure.

Housing the Myth of the Self-Made Man

Conventional materialist explanations for the appearance of the tall building in America cite the advent of the passenger elevator, the office concept, the affordable fabrication of structural steel, along with speculative real estate practices, as the impetus for building upward. I do not intend to deny the causative force of these. Doubtless, without technological advances in building materials and machinery, engineering inventiveness and increased demands for urban rental property, the high-

rise tower would not have appeared. Is this combination of factors, however, sufficient to explain why this new architectural form emerged in America in the second half of the nineteenth century? Are the sum impulses and energies fueling the development of this building type easily contained within the confines of functional need? I hope to problematize traditional explanations for the appearance of the tall building here by making connections between discourses of the self-made man circulating in America and the endeavour to raise the "world's tallest" office towers, including those at the WTC. Curiously, America's post-war embrace of modernist skyscrapers obscured the way in which profoundly idealized constructions of masculinity informed the erection of earlier tall buildings in Manhattan. A brief consideration of the earlier period, I suggest, reveals the fiction of the modernist skyscraper's legibility, evident in the sudden invisibility of hypermasculine scripts which previously had been an overt part of architectural struggles for Manhattan's skies.

Since Independence, American ideals of masculine behaviour have found rhetorical expression in self-help manuals, popular literature, and religious tracts. Commonly, most texts championed self-actualization: they promised that qualities of independence, industry, frugality, and temperance would bring earthly and heavenly success.[24] As the pace of modernization and industrialization quickened in Victorian America, religious values promoted in earlier conduct literature shifted, becoming more individualistic and forceful, extolling *initiative, competitiveness, aggressiveness* as requisite virtues for gaining success in business (Cawelti 44). Concurrently, there

[24] In *A Christian at His Calling* (1701), Calvinist clergyman Cotton Mather preached acceptance of – even reverence for – men earning abundant sums of money. Mather argued that God is most pleased by men who are not only pious and obedient, but also financially self-sufficient. Comparing mortality to a man rowing a boat to heaven, Mather claimed that without minding his two callings equally, one "pulls the oar on but one side of the boat" and will never arrive at the "Shoar of Eternal Blessedness".

were changes in the modes and locales in which men worked. In 1800, four out of every five men had worked a farm, while after 1880 only half did; and by this time only one-third of males were self-employed (Kimmel, *America*, 82). As Michael Kimmel points out, the shift from artisanal self-employment in agrarian settings to wage labour in urban settings created a "crisis of masculinity", for the average man had to compete to prove his manhood in an impersonal marketplace (ibid. 45). Prior to this societal restructuring, the stable position occupied within one's family and community had changed little. Kimmel asserts that this stasis, though confining, raised little of the uncertainty experienced later by men when most competed in an "open" environment against "equals" for success – a shift giving rise to a new gladiatorial masculinity – what Kimmel refers to as "marketplace manhood". Common to all texts lauding marketplace manhood was the basic belief in capitalism's justness. While dominant myths of self-making held that through discipline, hard work, and frugality *any* man could better his rank, in reality all versions of dominant rhetoric actively concealed the narrow pocket of privilege containing so-called self-made men.[25] Imagined as an egalitarian space, the workplace served in spirit as the great leveler dissolving social, racial, ethnic, and economic barriers.

Mythic narratives, however, manifest themselves in other than textual form. Overtly masculine—or hypermasculine—scripts find performative expression, not only in the constant recapitulation of self-making myth, but are spatialized, giving shape to the built world. The skyscraper is an especially mythologized building type,

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[25] Today, many masculinity scholars, for example Gail Bederman, Michael Denning, and Elizabeth Frantz-Parsons, challenge the notion that American myths of self-making trickled down to the working class from mainstream texts promoting bourgeois values of individuality, self-restraint, and economic prosperity. Rather, much attention is paid to how alternative or even subversive modes of masculinity "climb the ladder" to be both recuperated by and to influence masculinity's dominant discourse.

routinely linked to Babel's tower, Jerusalem's temple, and Pharaonic pylons. From its inception, the process of designing and building skyscrapers in the US co-existed with powerful mythic narratives of masculinity. Contrary to positivist explanations for the skyscraper's form, I suggest, from its origin a degree of interpenetration occurred between the gendered performance of self-making myth and the tall building. Again, I stress that I am not trying to discredit functionalist explanations of the tall building but, rather, aim to disrupt notions that buildings are ideologically neutral objects ruled *solely* by the laws of science and logic.

In the late nineteenth century, the development of "Printing House Square" in New York saw the building of most of the city's first skyscrapers. Known today as City Hall Square, Printing House Square was remarkable for its localized legibility of self-making myth. The first tall building erected there, R.M. Hunt's New York Tribune Building (1873-76), stood as a monument to the *Tribune's* legendary founder, editor, and self-made man, Horace Greeley (fig. 7). In 1897, author Frank Moss wrote that the Tribune "was the first of the many tower buildings in the lower part of the city... Many were the envious cuts at the editor of the Tribune by those less fortunate ... who could not compose their editorials on such a lofty plane" (qtd. in Van Leeuwen 96). For thirty years after its cornerstone was laid, this sense of envy would turn "Park Row" in Printing House Square into a space of intense competition, as buildings and those commissioning them clambered ever higher.

Several papers vied for their share of the *Tribune*'s market. This competition took place on the streets, on the editorial page, and—owing to the general popularity of the Tribune Building—in architecture. Another self-made man, Joseph Pulitzer, was committed to raising the profile of his newspaper, *The World*. To this end, he resolved to build the tallest office tower on earth (fig. 8). Pulitzer hired notable

architect G. B. Post to design the New York World Building (1889-90), at 349 feet the first building in New York to top Trinity Church's 284 foot spire (Stern 145).[26] By the turn of the century, the dominance of Pulitzer's World Building over Printing House Square became too much for the owners of the Tribune, and its neighbour, The New York Times Building (also by G. P. Post, 1888-9). Incredibly, in 1903 the roofs and towers of the Times and Tribune buildings were removed to add additional stories – the Tribune added over 100 feet to its height (fig. 9)! Architectural historian Thomas Van Leeuwen discusses the competition at Printing House Square as an anthropomorphic mutation, where the skyscraper became "an architectonic servant to its human master, shaped to his ideological likeness" (99). He further suggests that the vertical dominance of these monoliths could be seen as emblematic of "Darwnistic/Spencerian virtues such as self-reliance and individualism, which were highly esteemed in American popular ethics" (100). The battle for architectural ascendancy at Printing House Square cannot be seen as merely power plays between wealthy, egocentric men. Occupying the apex of urban space generally lent a moral, even mystical, aura to tall office buildings, especially to those most ascendant.[27]

The Woolworth Building (Cass Gilbert, architect, 1913), built for retail magnate Frank W. Woolworth, likewise proclaimed the triumph of America's self-made man through ascendancy (fig. 10). A 1913 promotional pamphlet describes Woolworth's tower as a "monument to small things", those "small things" the countless frugal exchanges in any of Woolworth's fifty-nine stores (qtd. in Van

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[26] From a functionalist viewpoint, the profusion of towers built to house news firms on Park Row could be explained by their close proximity to City Hall. However, it is noteworthy that the site chosen for the Tribune at Printing House Square was Pulitzer's second choice, as he hoped to build next door to a business archrival (in another locale), but was unable to secure the property. Pulitzer settled on Park Row to literally overshadow another rival, the owner of the *New York Sun*,.

[27] Each at one time the "world's tallest", Pulitzer named his World Building the "people's palace", Met Life's tower was referred to as a "symbol of God", while the Woolworth Building (1913) became a "cathedral of commerce".

Leeuwen 65). Described as a "colossal and enduring gift to civilization ... [from] a trueborn, patriotic American", the building with its enormous height of sixty stories and its lavish decoration, inside and out, materially signified the moral rectitude of economic self-sufficiency preached in conduct literature since Independence. Both Woolworth and Pulitzer built without mortgages, a source of enormous pride to both self-made men. The "Empire Room", Woolworth's personal office, reveals the depth of his infatuation with myths of self-making. Situated on the fortieth floor, the Empire Room contained all things Napoleonic. Furnishings, statuary, coffered ceilings, marble columnry—even a life-sized copy of Bonaparte's potrait—all professed Woolworth's adoration of and identification with the Corsican general.[28] Shortly after its construction, Woolworth's tower was described as "the chosen habitation of that spirit in man which, through means of change and barter, binds alien people into unity and peace", a corollary echoed sixty-five years later by the WTC's architect, Minouru Yamasaki. However, Yamasaki reiterated none of the overt, heroic, masculine associations tied to the Woolworth Building and many other pre-War tall buildings.

Perhaps the most explicit linkage of height to masculine virtue is the "skychurch". Concerted efforts by influential and moneyed Methodist church groups to reclaim Manhattan's firmament for Christendom similarly fell from view with the emergence of the modernist tower. Charged with the quest to "restore the cross to the skyline", devotees championed the sky church, also known as the "revenue church", to combat what was seen as individualistic, Mammonistic excess. To do this, the sky church topped the tall building with a massive spire, its office space leased to fund the structure's higher aims (fig. 11). In the belief that raising tall churches would reassert

[28] Emulating Napoleon was common to tycoons of this period. Though megalomania tarnished Napoleon's reputation in Europe, Americans continued to celebrate his image as a self-made success. Even today, as seen on the television show "The Apprentice", the penthouse suite of Donald Trump's "Trump Taj Mahal" in Atlantic City is named "the Napoleon Suite".

religion's ascendancy, a series of sky churches were planned for Miami, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York.[29] In New York, it was hoped that The Broadway Temple Building would assert the rightful place of faith in the city. The *Broadway Temple Album* explained:

> For much too long a time, here in New York, secular architecture has dominated the scene. Manhattan boasts a 'Cathedral of Commerce', even a 'Cathedral of Motion Pictures' – While office buildings, hotels and immense towering apartment houses dwarf the tallest church spires, making the visible emblems of religion less and less conspicuous... How far is this process to go? Build! Put the symbol of our saviour's dying love high above Manhattan, a sign of wonder, flashing back the sunlight by day and brilliantly luminous by night (qtd. in Van Leeuwen 75).

The push to "restore the cross" reveals both the degree of alarm caused by the appearance of tall, secular buildings and the perceived value of ascendancy. It is not coincidence that the Temple Album appropriates the phrases "flashing back the sunlight" and "brightly luminous" directly from descriptions of Woolworth's tower. The Methodists fought fire with fire, seeking to redress a perceived imbalance through open competition – ironically, the means and *raison d'être* facilitating the rise of commerce's cathedrals.[30] Animated in part by American myths of masculine self-making, the form of the secular tower to Methodist crusaders signified visual and ideological domination, the intolerable triumph of individualistic Mammonism. The Depression halted the erection of tall buildings, sky churches included. Yet after the war, with the resumption of skyscraper production, the spiritual battle for the firmament ceased, as did the memory of it.

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[29] At 556 feet, the Chicago Temple/First Methodist Church (Holabird and Roche, architects, 1924) was the world's tallest church and second in height only to the Woolworth building.

[30] This tactic exemplifies how dominant discourse, in this case the righteousness of competition, is always potentially open to subversion.

Though the building boom of the 1950s raised numerous office towers in Manhattan, not until the Twin Towers was the seemingly unassailable title of world's tallest building stripped from the Empire State Building (Shreve, Harmon, Lamb, architects, 1931). Interestingly, the aim to outdo the Empire State was not originally planned, but came from the project's public relations office. Immediately, the title of "world's tallest" tempted Port Authority chairman Austin Tobin, for the "culture of the agency promoted a sense of manliness and an almost compulsive competitiveness" (Gillespie 177). According to a PA insider the idea to overshadow the Empire State "filtered down through the chain of command ... like a subconscious order to see if it could be done" (qtd. in Robins 41). Though the PA's "program" to build ten million square feet of rentable space is usually credited as the force pushing Yamasaki's original design from 80 to 110 stories, tellingly the Twin Towers ascend only a mere one hundred feet above the Empire State.[31]

Though concealed beneath a modern, functionalist façade, by their ascendancy the Twin Towers reiterated hypermasculine desires to spatialize dominance, so plainly articulated in Pulitzer's World Building or Woolworth's tower. As the builders of cathedrals of commerce had, the Rockefellers, PA leaders, and Yamasaki shared (if briefly) the powerful glow of being on top of the world.[32] By repeating the refrain "world trade means world peace", Yamasaki situated the Twin Towers in series with the Woolworth Building and the Metropolitan Life Building – as sites celebrating the values enshrined in myths of self-making (Gillespie, 241).[33] Though dressed in

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[31] Fearful of losing the world record, Larry Wien, the Empire State's principal owner and head of the Committee for a Reasonable World Trade Center, twice sued the Port Authority in a bid to reduce the Twin Towers height, failing both times.

[32] On March 6, 1973, Chicago's Sears Tower (Bruce Graham/SOM, architect) wrested the short-lived title of world's tallest from the Twin Towers.

[33] Interestingly, for his design of the WTC, Yamasaki won the 1964 Horatio Alger Award, celebrating his "rags to riches" achievement. In the 19th-century, Horatio Alger prolifically penned stories of the unlikely successes of diligent, honest, and fortunate lower-class protagonists.

modernist garb, the WTC's message deviated sharply from the collectivist dreams of European architects and theorists of earlier generations. The Twin Towers housed the individualistic myth of the self-made man—wherein peace and harmony manifest only through "open" competition and shelter granted to the fittest competitors. As had the Woolworth and Met Life Buildings, the Twin Towers spatialized the virtue of self-making, standing as an enactment of an idealized, aggressive, and racialized form of hypermasculinity that for so long prowled the pages of American conduct literature. These world-record skyscrapers, I suggest, stood/stand as testaments to the fictional values of "marketplace manhood", promising that discipline, industry, aggressiveness, pragmatism and instrumental rationality would lead any man, regardless of race, religion, class, sexuality or physical ability away from the ever-present slippery slope of failure and effeminization. Thus, in Manhattan, the tall building naturalizes tenuous, exclusionary practices of accumulation, their presence legitimizing—and thus stabilizing—the ravenous economic systems needed to raise them.

In this way, the WTC can be seen as spatializing hypermasculine desires, to enact in steel, concrete, and glass a stasis inherently absent from adversarial, capitalist practices and, as well, from intertwined, idealized constructions of masculinity. The spur to any such performative enactment, Vicky Bell argues, lay in our inherent need of "belonging", that is our "longing-to-be" in community with others. Following Butler, Bell states that a subject:

> does not simply or ontologically 'belong' to the world or to any group within it, [rather] ... the performativity of belonging 'cites' the norms that constitute or make present the 'community' or group as such. The repetition ... of these normalized codes makes material the belongings they purport to simply describe (3).

The continual production of hypermasculine space, thus springs from a constant desire to shore up masculinity's fragile construction, at risk in the radical openness of lived space. Moreover, a general desire to belong in communities of empowered men spurs enactments of hypermasculinity and further proliferations of hypermasculine space.[34] I suggest that in this already unstable space tall buildings affirm the phantasm of power-over patriarchy, metonymically staving off ever-looming fears of failure and emasculation, by illustrating and celebrating the possibility of dominance. However, possibilities for subversion are likewise opened, as hypermasculine space by its instablity and incompleteness will never yield predictability.

Full Frontal Trade Towers

Though Angus Gillespie's book *Twin Towers: The Life of New York City's World Trade Center* (1999) is touted as a "thread to grasp as we unravel the meaning of the World Trade Center in history, and in myth", surprisingly it avoids *any* discussion of mythological or symbolic meanings.[35] I suggest his omission is not an oversight on the part of a thorough historian. Rather, Gillespie's text overlooked the WTC's symbolism, for such meaning lay too well concealed under the tower's "legible" skin. For example, Gillespie relates how their geometric simplicity and lack of variety in fenestration "allow no multiplicity of readings", a refusal that leads him to conclude "what you see is what you get" (185). Gillespie's conclusions reflect what has been a general consensus. As this thesis argues, it is the dramatic point of rupture—the absence of the towers—that has made us rethink their myriad meanings.

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[34] In the Pacific Rim, desires to "belong" in a global economic community with the West plausibly help to explain the rush to build world-record buildings. For example, Malaysia's Prime minister Mahathin Mohamed describes the world's two tallest buildings, the Petronas Towers (Cesar Pelli, architect; 1998) in Kuala Lumpur, as symbols which "express our towering ambition" (in Darton 218). Shanghai, Hong Kong, and New York currently have plans to outdo the Petronas Towers.

[35] *Boston Herald* reviewer quoted from *Twin Towers* dust jacket.

Now scholars scramble to recover mythic meaning from buildings that, for most, simply seemed to be there.[36] As we have seen, it is only through their destruction that their symbolic life has emerged more fully into collective social memory.

LINK Architectural historian Mark Wigley points out that the towers betray little depth; especially when seen at a distance their facades became the "cliché embedded in a worldwide consciousness ... [merely] two seamless screens side by side" (*Insecurity* 80).[37] Unlike Gillespie, Wigley quickly connects the mute form of the towers to what is not seen. "In a strange way", he asserts, "[these] supersolid, supervisible, superlocated buildings stood as a figure for the dematerialized, invisible, placeless market" (ibid. 74). Within that impassive and inarticulate twin space dwelt the "unfixed, invisible, and carnivorous" corporation, screening from sight its operations, while rendering invisible those bodies doing its bidding (ibid.).

If Wigley emphasizes economics, I suggest here, as well, that hypermasculinity, another "unfixed" practice, took up residence behind the Twins' efficient, pragmatic and functional façades. As Lefebvre argues, the ruse of the modernist skyscraper's legibility "conceals what the vertical is – namely arrogance, the will to power, a display of military and police-like machismo, a reference to the phallus and a spatial analogue of masculine brutality" (144). He underscores two crucial points: ties between tall buildings and masculinities are cloaked by modernist architecture's functionalist guise; and skyscrapers spatialize, to a degree violently, enactments of masculinist, "power-over" authority. Tall buildings, for Lefebvre, function as "frontal expressions" of power and authority, registering in the ephemeral

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[36] Gillispie relates how, after giving a conference paper arguing for the acceptance of the WTC as a "landmark in American architecture", he was advised by David M. Sokol, a prominent professor of architecture, to avoid the topic of the WTC. "At our college we take architecture very seriously", cautioned Sokol, "and the WTC never comes up. It is simply not discussed" (in Gillespie 141).

confines of abstract, bourgeoisie, capitalist space a "truly full object", bearing an "objectal 'absolute'" (286). The tower form ably fills abstract space, for it bears "a heavy cargo of myth". Plainly, in his mind this is masculinist cargo, as the "arrogant verticality of skyscrapers introduces a phallic or more precisely phallocratic element into the visual realm" (98). The ascendancy of the tall building, thus,

> symbolizes force, male fertility, masculine violence. Here again the part is taken for the whole; phallic brutality does not remain abstract for it is the brutality of political power, of means of constraint: police, army, bureaucracy. Phallic erectility bestows a special status on the perpendicular, proclaiming phallocracy as the orientation of space, as the goal of the process – at once metaphoric and metonymic (287).

The trade towers' Platonic forms filled Manhattan's "visual realm", locating in space a hypermasculine desire to make abstraction *real.* Cloaked by technological spectacle, these *axes mundi*, visible from each corner of the city smuggled their mythic, gendered "cargo"—of verticality, mathematical rationality, and instrumental efficiency—tacitly affirming Manhattan's capitalist, phallocratic space.[38]

Without what Lefebvre calls the " predominance of the visual", the phallic could not spatialize order. Lidlessly, the eye of God, the Father, or the Leader, have "usurp[ed] so many privileges, it ... falls to the phallus to receive or produce them" (262). Heidi Nast and Audrey Kobayashi argue that sight's hegemony sprang from developments in optical technologies (the *camera obscura*, theodolite, astrolabe), feeding notions of a "mind's eye", and with it a rationalized, distanced—and masculine—interiority. For Nast and Kobayashi, the gridded logic of those early geometricizing devices continues to exert force in capitalist, science, and state praxis:

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[37] Importantly, Wigley draws attention to the disparity between the enduring disdain of architecture professionals and the public's "deeply held affection" for the Twin Towers, which he warns cannot be dismissed as the "delusions of an exploited public".

[38] However, here again it is important to acknowledge the subversive or supplemental in every dominant space. For many New Yorkers, the WTC was not the focal point of global capital, but the

> Laboratories, penthouse boardrooms and... governmental chambers become contemporary camera obscura-like rooms wherein logics that command and police correspondence between image and world, signifier and signified, are lived out and circulated. Facts and figures, graphs and photographs, surveys, quotas and forecasts are means for locating, registering and controlling outside truths in a rationalizing fashion (86).

Similarly, situated 1362 feet above the street atop the South Tower observation deck, the world's highest, and thus most effective, scopic regime found expression.[39] From ratiocination's triumphal perch, the looking subject achieved the desired end of any scopic regime: to be nothing more than an all-seeing eye.

As Michel de Certeau writes in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, standing on Tower Two's observation deck "transforms the bewitching world by which one is 'possessed' into a text that lies before one's eyes.... It allows one to read it, to be a solar eye, looking down like a god" (92). Indeed since the nineteenth century, tall buildings have routinely been advertised as a means to escape the smoke and grit of the street, providing natural light, fresh air, and sanitized views of the city below. The trade center was no exception. In 1972, after visiting the observation deck, a *Times* columnist related seeing "a majestic New York without perceiving the dirty sidewalks and streets... There is a magic in altitude—crime and ghetto and politics and corruption become invisible" (qtd. in Gillespie 154). In a chillingly poignant parallel, architectural critic Paul Goldberger stated that the towers were so tall "that the city below is completely silent—the only noise comes from the airplanes above" (qtd. in

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location of Century 21, a bargain clothier frequented mostly by locals located in the tower's concourse level.

[39] Martin Jay generally uses the term "scopic regime" to refer to "Cartesian perspectivalism", an institutionalized set of assumptions in which human sight is regarded as fixed, monocular, universal and transcendent, regulating a perceived harmony between human reason, optics formulae and laws of Nature (or will of God). In scopic regimes the viewer is disembodied, forever situated outside the viewed scene.

ibid. 155). As de Certeau points out, this technologically rendered vista is the result of longstanding reiterations of want, not merely the outcome of functional need:

> The desire to see the city preceded the means to satisfying it. Medieval or renaissance painters represented the city as seen in a perspective that no eye enjoyed. This fiction already made the medieval spectator into a celestial eye. It created gods. Have things changed since technical procedures have organized an "all-seeing power"? The totalizing eye imagined by the painters in earlier times lives on in our achievements. The same scopic drive haunts users of architectural productions by materializing today the utopia that yesterday was only painted. The 1370 foot high tower that serves as a prow for Manhattan continues to construct the fiction that creates readers, makes the complexity of the city readable, and immobilizes its opaque mobility in a transparent text (92).

Just as the desire to "see the city" preceded the view from the South Tower's observation deck, so the desire to rationally order the built world long preceded the streamlined form of the towers. From its inception, an abiding faith in reason has fueled scientific inquiry, fostering a distanced view of nature, human emotion, the body, and those not deemed capable of participating in its practice. For example, the theories of Francis Bacon, Réne Descartes, and Issac Newton forwarded male-centered concepts of reason, though their discoveries were intended to facilitate a greater moral connection to God. Emmanuel Kant's writings signaled the arrival of a male-centered reason that was a moral force unto itself, a universal tool for discerning a truly ethical path in life. Kant argued that human life could serve a moral purpose only with the suppression of desires and feelings, which he regarded as selfish. Rationally justified action provided the sole means to be a moral actor, to avoid the snare of relativism and to participate virtuously in public life (Seidler 24). Though a full discussion of the historical development of male-centered rationalism exceeds the confines of this argument, the idea is mentioned here to affirm its enduring role in

modernity's articulation of a stable, distanced, racialized space in which to enact Western masculinities.

Le Corbusier's concept of "orthogonal rationality" exemplifies how disembodied rationality has informed modern architecture, while coincidentally suggesting what fears or uncertainties fueled its production. In Catherine Ingraham's view, Le Corbusier's belief in a new, highly rationalized architecture capable of emancipating the human condition from the discord and chaos of the historical city "best expresses the spirit of the modern age" (645). Without an "orthogonal state of mind", asserted Corb, the city follows the "pack donkey's way", an irrational, chaotic meandering of chance. [40] Orthogonal linearity, in Le Corbusier's mind, was above all the primary means to overpower the "animality" of the historic city, a triumph over the chaotic material body by an orderly, reasoning human spirit—the "positive ... result of self-mastery ... sane and noble" (qtd. in ibid. 646).[41] For Le Corbusier, tall buildings figured prominently in restoring reason to the city, as skyscrapers "contain the city's brains... act[ing] as agents of control 'over a world put in order'" (qtd. in Agrest, *Nature* 60).

As early as 1920, Le Corbusier envisioned a "City of Towers", wherein the congestion of the inner city would find relief by erecting well-spaced towers on open greenspaces. However, as architect and theorist Diana Agrest points out, the hollowness of Le Corbusier's view of nature opened the door for its future denigration. His inserted greenspaces merely appear as "modernist visual field(s)", stages upon which human geometry demonstrates its order and dominance (*Nature*

[40] Le Corbusier mythic history of the city recounts how the wagons of early settlers skirted obstacles before them – rocks, mire, stumps – in the process wearing tracks upon which houses, then city walls and gates would eventually be built. Thus, Europe's historical cities formed according to a "donkey's idea" of how to traverse the landscape, rather than from a rationalized programme.

59). Reduced in Le Corbusier's scheme to a cog in the "machinery of circulation", nature appeared only as a green plane or datum upon which the urban mechanism rests, to be later "expelled by the economic-political forces of capitalism ... based on the exploitation and destruction of nature" (ibid.).[42] Le Corbusier regards the earth – the "beaten ground" on which structures sit – as "frightfully unhealthy", made habitable only through being made artificial. Beyond serving as a substructure to "withhold the strains" of architecture, "the natural site... is the enemy of man" (ibid.). Consequently, this mechanistic, empirical view informing the rationale of modernist architecture depends on a suppression of nature, traditionally coded as female – while the "progress" it facilitates, linked to exploit and discovery, is coded male.[43]

Regarding the world fetishistically as a machine ideally ruled by reason, a faculty long coded male and white, modern urbanism sanctions the "double domination" – of nature and of those perceived situated closest to nature. (ibid). Moreover, Le Corbusier's attempt to delineate a universal, rationalist law for architectural practice suggests further correlations between desires for order and fears of chaos. His disdain for nature and the body reiterate hypermasculine scripts bent on subduing nature and systematizing the built world according to a predictable masculinist mode of rationality, a modality producing its own gendered space of difference and distance.

The force of masculinist reason found formal expression in the Twin Towers, I suggest, through its reductive, "transparent" aesthetic. Whereas heroic, pre-War

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[41] Though orthogonal linearity does not necessarily denote the use of graphically straight lines, for Le Corbusier, it privileges the "rightness of the right angle" – or as Ingraham states, "the ethos of geometry is the ethos of the right angle" ("Nature", 647).

[42] The sparse, five acre concrete plaza, in which the Twin Towers were situated typifies the American refusal to fully incorporate Le Corbusier's greenspaces, as discussed by Agrest.

[43] Victor Seidler argues that white, Anglo-Saxon men generally act as the "gatekeepers" of reason, excluding from the "magic circle of humanity" those most commonly associated with threat of nature: women, children, people of colour, those from non-Western cultures.

towers often employed symbolic forms – obelisks, spires, ziggurats – Modernist skyscrapers, especially those in the International Style, eschewed any such allusion, signaling desires to move from mystification towards the new, rational spirit earlier advocated by Le Corbusier and others. Modern architecture's stripped-down aesthetic has from its origin analogized masculine virtues: Corb, for example, related it to a nude male figure, while Adolf Loos encouraged designers to mimic the austerity of an Englishman's attire (Sanders 14). Admittedly, Yamasaki sought to distance himself from International Style aesthetics through his New Formalist design, yet his contemporary-Gothic detailing seen at the plaza level and between the 108th and 110th floors was largely rendered invisible by the tower's vertiginous, geometric bulk[44] (fig. 1). Moreover, as Gillespie makes clear, despite Yamasaki's attempted decorative turn, his repetition of modules, fenestration and floor plans reveals his strict adherence to International Style principles learned under the tutelage of architect Mies van der Rohe.(184).

Jean Baudrillard labels the pure, gridded volumes of the trade towers "architectural graphism", claiming that post-Fordist systems of capital exchange are no longer served by signifiers like obelisks or pyramids. For Baudrillard, the "punch card and the statistical graph" best symbolize a "system that is no longer competitive, but digital and countable, and from which competition has disappeared in favour of networks and monopoly (38). In this formal analysis, however, he misses a key point: the building's appearance changes radically according to the time of day. When seen at night from straight on from the west across the Hudson River, the towers did appear

[44] The architectural style know as "New Formalism" emerged in the mid-1950s as some architects grew dissatisfied with ahistorical, stripped down, "glass box" aesthetic – known as the "International Style" – typical to postwar American cities. Most notably, architects Edward Durrell Stone, Philip Johnson, and Minoru Yamasaki sought to incorporate historical decorative elements from many different cultures into the modernist idiom, but not without controversy. Detractors labeled both Yamasaki and Stone "kitschmongers" for their eclecticism.

to flatten out like punch cards or graphs, as any tall building does. However in the daylight, owing to Yamasaki's narrowly spaced and deeply set windows, they appeared impenetrably dense—as if two solid, sculpted alloy blocks have impossibly been propped up on the horizon[45] (fig. 1). Instead of punch cards, the towers could be analogized as two computer CPU's stretched vertically 110 stories in space, their opaque skin concealing a mass of connections through which countless flows of capital, information, people and material course. Unlike the windows of most towers, which in daylight either allow a glimpse of occupants or at least delineate the presence of glass (thus suggesting the possibility of a person looking through it), the trade towers from afar completely denied the presence of glass, and consequently people. In the light of day, neither flat nor ephermeral, the impenetrable mass of Manhattan's twin "brains" appeared more as a Kaaba for capitalism, around which global streams of capital circumambulated.[46]

In my view, Baudrillard's assertion that the modernist form of the trade towers signifies the emergence of a non-competitive global economy, is again only partially correct. While the reductive, repetitive trade towers do announce a new faith in utility and standardization that arguably is reflected in the new, flexible global economy, I believe Baudrillard takes the homology too far in claiming that the Twin Towers represent an end to competitive capitalist practice. As sociologist Arthur Brittan points out, since the onset of capitalism's market economy it has traditionally been men who have enjoyed the freedom to compete as "rational economic agents" in the financial arena (101). Moreover, the disproportional absence of women and non-

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[45] Yamasaki narrow fenestration (18.5 inches) appears to have been motivated by his own fear of heights, and his desire to make users comfortable and secure at great heights. Oddly, the unintended consequence of this compassionate and fearful decision rendered a truly forbidding form in space.

[46] Located in the Masjid al Haram mosque in Mecca, the Kaaba's black, cubic masonry form was built by the prophet Abraham, meant to purify those believers who prostrated themselves before it.

Western men as participants in this competitive sphere has supported the dominant group's claims to inherent rationality, while concealing *de facto* restrictions to a truly competitive environment. Despite the surge of theory challenging Enlightenment notions of an all-seeing, rational subject, governments still tend to listen most to economic theorists, whose essentialist thought reflects reactionary notions of competitiveness, masculinity, and reason (ibid. 102). As Brittan explains, this type of rationalized, self-interest theory focuses "on the individual and *his* motives" (101). In this light, it appears, the thoughts that fill the "city's brains" have little to do with the image of progress so forcefully projected by their efficient facades. Instead, within their functional spaces, reiterations of centuries-old scripts proclaiming the primacy of a racialized masculine reason order the flow of activity and resources.

Real Space Desires

If, as I argue here, tall buildings such as the Twin Towers betray the force of hypermasculine enactment, reflecting yearnings to spatialize relations of self and other, to open stable spaces of distance while foreclosing the possibility of alternative enactments, the question of what fuels such desires remains to be considered. For Mitch Rose, the need to enact identity depends neither on *a priori* want, interests, nor aims; rather, it "finds direction, objective, and purpose in situ" (391). Each moment opens various possibilities for doing identity, and within the space of the moment, desire guides enactment; or, as Rose puts it, "how one performs depends on how one desires" (ibid.). He is not suggesting that each moment exists autonomously, free from its connection to the past, the only determining force being desire. Rather, Rose argues that enactment gives shape and particular meaning to the myriad of texts circulating in society and, further, that the manner of enacting texts is utterly

contextual, fed by idiosyncratic desire.[47] In this way, varied performed identities that shape desire in any particular moment are also "utterly contextual". Though enactment does not reflect "inner motivations", can a subject moved about by desires be thought of as a *tabula rosa*, semantically unencumbered by the desires giving them form? Though desire seems universal to humans, I argue it cannot be regarded independently of assumed identity and the demands of a particular, constituted subject position. Though no innate need to "belong" within a certain group exists, the coercive flow of normative scripts supports this naturalized fiction, as it does the presumed presence of a natural, gendered identity. I suggest that in this way heteronormative scripts distinctly charge the moment/context, shaping from without the manner in which desire manifests itself. In other words, how one performs depends on how specific gendered norms shape available trajectories of desire.

Of course, as architectural theorist Mark Cousins argues in his essay "Where?", both genders do desire, colouring each subject's encounter with space. He relates, after Freud, how the baby's first sense of non-satisfaction brought on by a disrupted desire for food prompts an awareness of absence—of lack—subsequently creating the "object of desire", a craving to seek refuge in a space before desire (111). No longer is milk the object of want; rather, the representation of satiation takes the place of the "lost object". Owing to this continual state of desire, our experience of space is altered. As Cousins suggests:

> From the beginning, this relation to the subject and space cannot be neutral; space is not a neutral medium for the subject. It is where the subject is already ex-centered, precipitated from the glorious nowhere of the lost object. This is already some analytic advance; the subject is not yet in space as an object might be. Rather, the subject is in a primary exile—an exile of projections and externalisations. There will be no neutral, not even *ordinary* experience of space, for the very experience of space, or rather the subject's relation to space, is

[47] Though Rose does not discuss architecture specifically, by his logic a building would be a text enacting a discourse.

> constituted by being the bisection of the moments of desire and loss (original italics, 112).

This general account of spatial anxiety, however, fails to account for how the gendering of space produces variant expressions of desire, depending on the positionality of the subject. Though both a female, working-class person of colour and a white, upper-class male both endure a state of non-satisfaction while sucklings, surely their potential arcs of desire differ based on available, gendered subject positions? I assert here that within what Seidler describes as the "magic circle of humanity"—i.e. elite, Western, white, male—a temporally, geopolitically, socially, and racially specific set of desires circulates (x).

As Western, white, bourgeois socially-constructed masculinities for so long have been tied to a rationalized, authoritative ordering of the lived world, it follows that this subject position depends heavily on the articulation of a firm ground plane on which to stand, on the delineation of "real" spaces in which to perform. In her essay "As If the Mirrors Had Bled", Gillian Rose considers why many geographers – male and female – seek to differentiate between real and metaphorical space. She argues that the articulation of real space represents a performance of masculinist power, that this distinction between real and non-real renders a pecking-order for spaces, with real space assuming a superior position owing to its perceived authenticity (58). In this way, real space becomes a solid platform upon which to interpret the world, while metaphorical or imaginary space are relegated as "ephemeral, superficial, specular, eclectic, fragmented, chaotic, depthless, schizoid, fascistic, fetishistic, [and] chaotic" (ibid. 59). According to this model, real space is "concrete" and "dynamic", characteristics that for Rose denote masculinity, while non-real space is both confining and unstable, signifying the feminine. Rose questions what drives these postulations of real spaces:

> What if this insistence that there is a real space, that there is a real which is neither imagined nor symbolic ... is not a statement of plain commonsense fact at all, but a hope, a desire? What if this real, this claim that there is a real space, itself depends on desire, is itself an imagined fantasy? A desire for something safe, something certain, something real? A fantasy too of something all-enveloping, something everywhere, unavoidable, unfailingly supportive: space? In which all things could be charted, positions plotted, dwellings built and inhabited? ... Whose desire, whose space would this be? Who would dwell in it and how? (ibid. 62).

Rose asserts that real space exists for the benefit of the master subject, as the "master subject constitutes himself through the performance of a particular kind of space" (ibid.). Beliefs in the real, in the presence of an empirically grasped object world support the belief in the constructed self, as it becomes simply another object that can be enclosed, inhabited and controlled. In my view, hypermasculine desires to produce real space spring from an anxious disjunction between the general nervousness of the subject's experience of the world and the reiteration of masculinist texts proclaiming realization, transcendence and mastery of self.[48]

Spatial articulations of distance and difference function not only to firm up boundaries between the recognized subject and abject other, to assert and naturalize dominance between competitors in the "open" market, but also to shore up masculinity's most fragile haunt: the constructed, male self. Considered against this complex of negotiated uncertainties, the presence of the tall, modernist building, in addition to its functional attributes, provides a symbolic anchor for masculinity's ephemerality. Though modernist aesthetics appear rational, egalitarian, and transparent, the near-absence of pre-9/11 critical discourse reveals how effective they

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[48] Mitch Rose, after Walter Benjamin and Taussig, argues that human consciousness and the systems devised by the intellect cannot, as a rule, be seen as having a fixed center. Rather, the inherent "nervousness of the Nervous System's system" precludes such a secure paradigm, though we are taught to ceaselessly search for mental stillness "in a world whose tensed mobility allows ... no rest" (Taussig qtd. in Rose, 394).

are at masking the "mythic cargo" of the skyscraper. Concealed beneath the "orthogonal rationality" of the twin towers lay desires to ascend above the chaos of the city, to grasp urban text at once, as an all-seeing eye. Through their apparent expression of instrumental rationality, modernist skyscrapers such as the Twin Towers efface the continuum that connects them to earlier, heroic towers, such as Pulitzer's World Building or Woolworth's Woolworth Building, or to the virulent rejection of Mammonism evident in the push to "restore the cross to the skyline". They appear merely as machines of capitalism, rather than houses for the myths of self-making that continue to animate American economic practice. Though Yamasaki's twin behemoths could be explained as the logical outcome of the Port Authority's insistence on raising ten million square feet of office space, their "supersolid, supervisible, superlocated" forms could also be read as objects of desire, as representations replacing the lost object of stability and presence. Born from a masculinist tradition of ascendancy and from the intensely male-centered, competitive atmosphere of the PA, the Twin Towers articulated the "realest" space in Lower Manhattan, displacing the "disorder" of Radio Row. As the foregoing analysis suggests, this hypermasculine production of "really real" space affirms the presence of a racialized master subject, whose fragile identity relies on the erasure of effeminizing, fluid states of metaphorical space.

Conclusion

The transition to a new age in turn necessitates a new perception and a new conception of *space-time*, the *inhabiting of places*, and of *containers*, or *envelopes of identity* (original italics).

Luce Irigaray
An Ethics of Sexual Difference (1993)

What you chart is already where you've been. But where we are going, there is no chart yet.

Audre Lorde, Interview

In conclusion, then, masculinity can be seen as a social construction, performed bodily in social space, rather than an innate, monolithic essence that is universally expressed. As it is performed variably – according to a subject's embodied position – factors of class, race, age, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, and health are imbricated in its performance. Such "emplacement" occurs in the built world, the development of which continually reproduces the social space it inhabits. Within and through this social space, enactments of masculinity play out, given shape by the constraints and coercion of iterative norms that act upon the subject. Social power that both gives shape to and constrains the subject flows multifariously; the built world, which orders and (re)produces the space that its inhabitants traverse, operates as a ready channel for power's constitutive effect. Part of this constitutive effect is to create subjects that are "more and less 'human', the inhuman, and the humanly unthinkable" (Butler, *Bodies* 9). Such disparity – not all men are created equal – gives the subject solidity, while dividing the subject from the abject, a division shored up by fear, disgust, and disavowal.

Enactments of gender, thus, exist within and through the power structures that impel them; they do not occur "outside of power". Thus, the preponderance of performances of intensive masculinity – or hypermasculinity – within elite circles of

power suggests a mutually inclusive relationship. The constantly repeating norms compelling our belief in the "cultural fiction" of heteronormativity are expressed in mundane acts – how we walk, how we talk. Also, they are inscribed in the built world around us. Routinely, the development of the tall building in Manhattan has been explained as the outcome of technological advances, population growth, and speculative real-estate practices. As this study has maintained, though, powerful notions of idealized masculinity have circulated in America since Independence and these scripts have profoundly influenced performance of masculinity, the production of gendered social space, and the erection of skyscrapers.

However, after arguing at length for the performed nature of hypermasculinity and its impact on tall buildings such as the Twin Towers, the question "so what" still looms before me. If, as Butler argues, the fiction of gender's construction becomes obvious and open to subversion only after unintended slippage, how is emancipatory change to occur? Following Butler's startling hypothesis – that largely we do not know what we do but, rather, we do to know – who exactly sees a rupture? If performative gender acts rather than biology constitute the subject's identity, on what alternative ground can that constructed subject stand to discern slippages or the supplemental spaces overlooked by the dominant logic shaping any particular discourse? In other words, who, other than an assemblage of performative messages, is there to know? In my opinion, Butler's conviction to dispel the Enlightenment model of the rationalist, choosing "master subject" appears to have put her in a bind. Though I agree with her rejection of unfettered free-will, I question how any change can occur without the subject possessing a degree of reflective potential, without which, I suggest, "biology-as-destiny" is simply replaced by "discourse-as-destiny".

Rather than Butler's one-way concept, where the subject's identity forms due to the power and failure of reiterated scripts, Elizabeth Grosz describes a permeability of signification - between the built world, cultural discourse, and the human subject – as an "interface":

> The form, structure, and norms of the city seep into and affect all the other elements that go into the constitution of corporeality and/as subjectivity. It effects the way the subject sees others... as well as the subject's understanding of, alignment with, and positioning in space... Moreover, the city is, of course, also the site for the body's cultural saturation, its takeover and transformation by images, representational systems, the mass media, and the arts... In turn, the body (as cultural product) transforms, reinscribes the landscape according to its changing (demographic, economic, and psychological) needs (248-9).

Following Grosz, there is interplay between the subjective and object world, each looping back on and shaping each other. The question remains, however, though the subject "reinscribes" the landscape, how does this process take place? Is it a mechanical or a reflective act?

Here, I return to what Lise Nelson described earlier as "betweeness", the "space that captures the instability, the partiality and situatedness of intersubjective relationships, self-reflexivity and knowledge production" (349). I believe Nelson's notion valuable, for it reintroduces the possibility of an inner space—not the lucid, transparent, humanist mental spaces but nonetheless a subjective space charged with the possibility of self-reflection. I suggest that the sanguine, humanist view of personal agency in a way parallels the view espoused by Butler, in that neither accounts for the incomplete nature of human agency. While the prior position exalts an individual capable of complete self-determination, the latter forecloses, save through fortunate accidents, most of the subject's means to change themselves or their world. What of a middle ground, a mean between extremes? This is not to suggest yet

another belief in a "can-do" god-trick but, rather, to argue for a flawed, incomplete, subjective space, in which the subject *is* altered by accidental slippages, not in the sense of some Newtonian action-reaction modality, but through an uneven hermeneutic of the sensed world. However inaccurate this interpretive process is, it rightly accounts for factors that distinguish an interiority particular to each subject—such as traumas, memories, and dreams.

Nelson's call for a "situated ontology" not anchored by self-knowledge, complete truth, or objectivity, but by partial self-reflexivity allows for return for a degree of subjective interiority, without which, I believe, our ability to implement emancipatory change is hamstrung. Much in the same way that Gillian Rose asserts the primacy of the subject to the production of space, that space "is a doing, that... does not pre-exist its doing", I suggest that, only through self-reflexivity, can men change destructive patterns of hypermasculine enactment. As this thesis has maintained, 9/11 constituted a massive rupture, exposing the fiction of the Twin Towers' gender-neutral, functional façade. Moreover, we would not now be grappling with the symbolic dimension of the Twin Towers' and their relationship to gendered discourse, if it were not for the rupture of our inner space, defined by our unique experiences. Without the capacity to reflect in an inner space, how are we to adapt new knowledge gained through living through such ruptures? How are we to apply new truths to ourselves, even those accidentally gleaned?

Architecture itself is not the ground for change. The choice of companies such as Microsoft to build unassuming, horizontal headquarters in outlying areas indicates that there is no direct cause and effect between the tall building and the exercise of corporate power. Similarly, utopian building projects have consistently failed to produce an architectural heaven on earth. I believe that possibilities to move away

from violent traditions of hypermasculine enactment exist in each person's ability to apply to their experience, however flawed, those insights gained through living through unintended slippages. Without a measure of this type of self-reflection, surely the reiterative force of past scripts would soon overwhelm our vision. How many more times will we need these points of rupture before we are called to revise the lived space that we create?

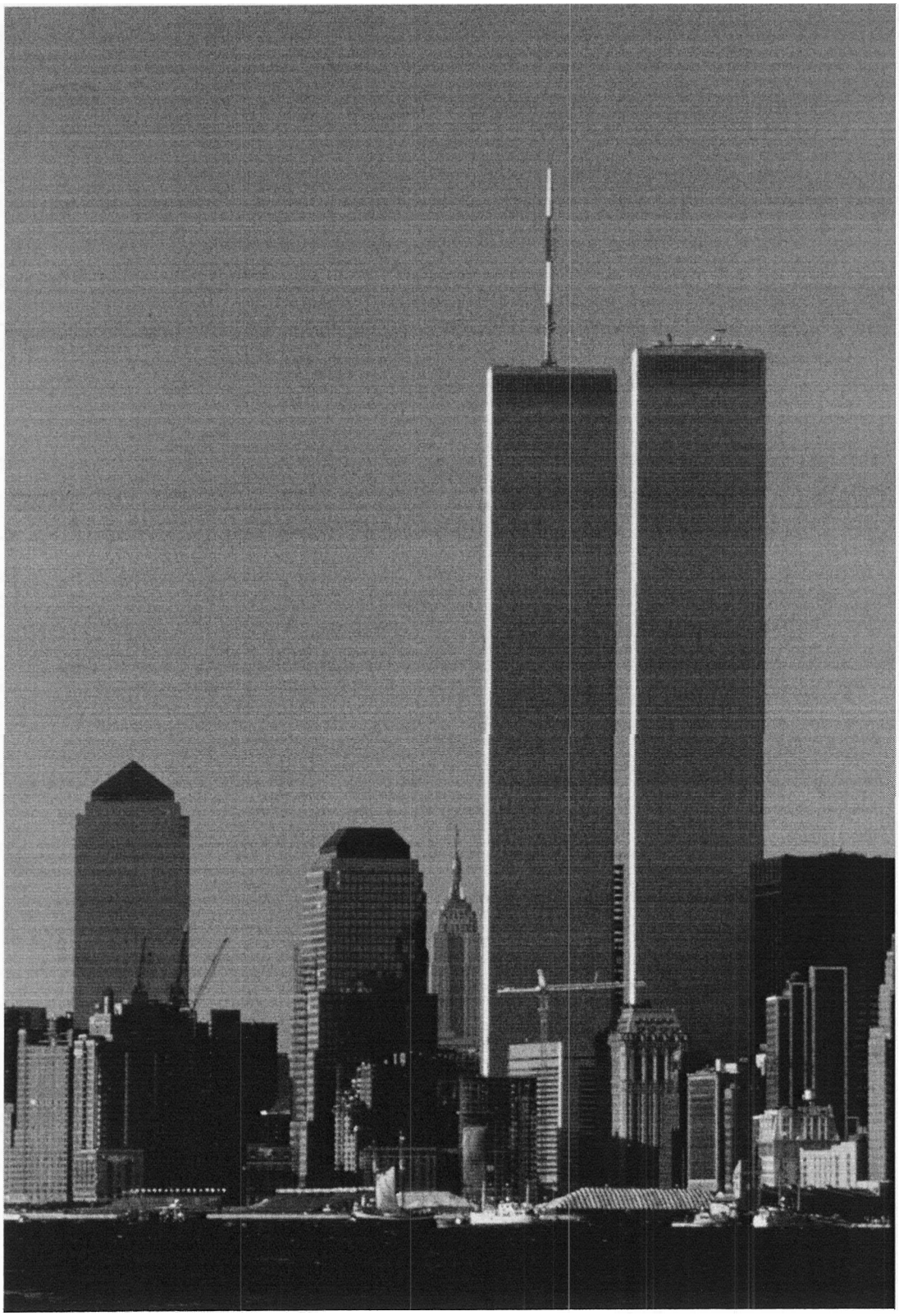

Figure 1. New York's World Trade Center
Courtesy of U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
http://www.photolib.noaa.gov/

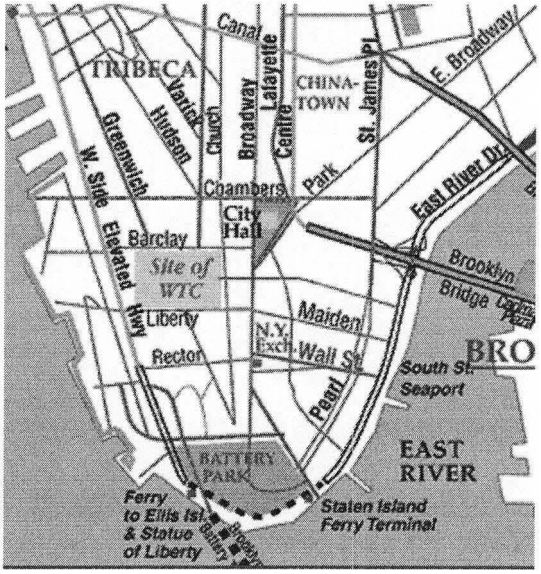

Figure 2. Map of Lower Manhattan
Courtesy of www.aaccessmaps.com

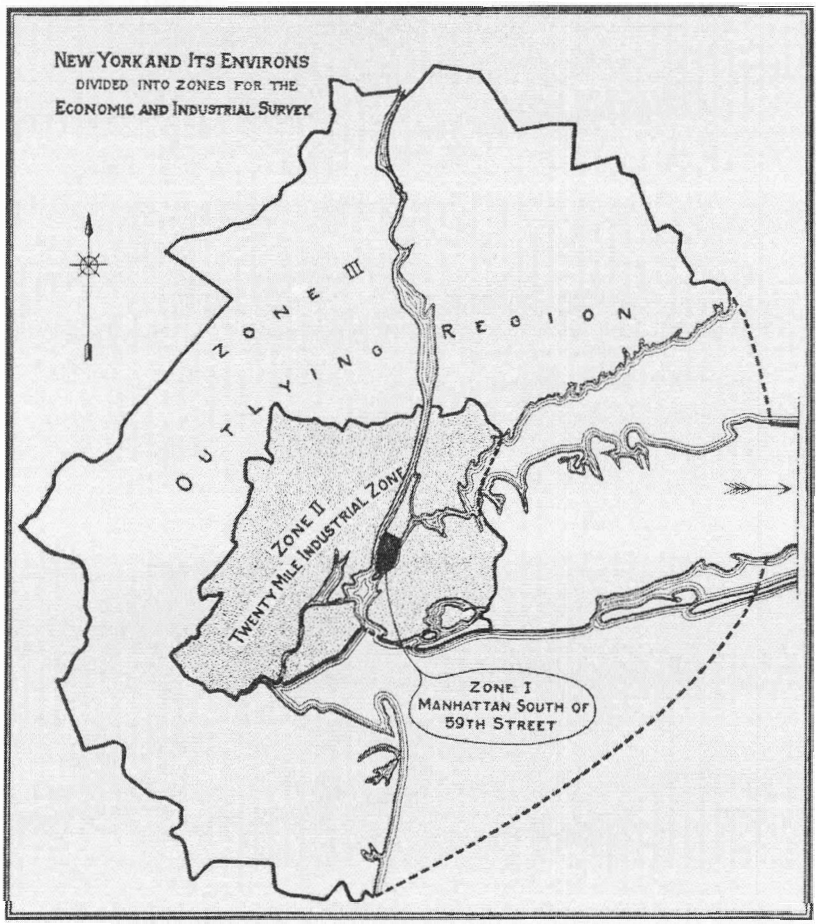

Figure 3. Map of 1927 Regional Survey of New York: "Three Zones"
Courtesy of Regional Plan Association of New York

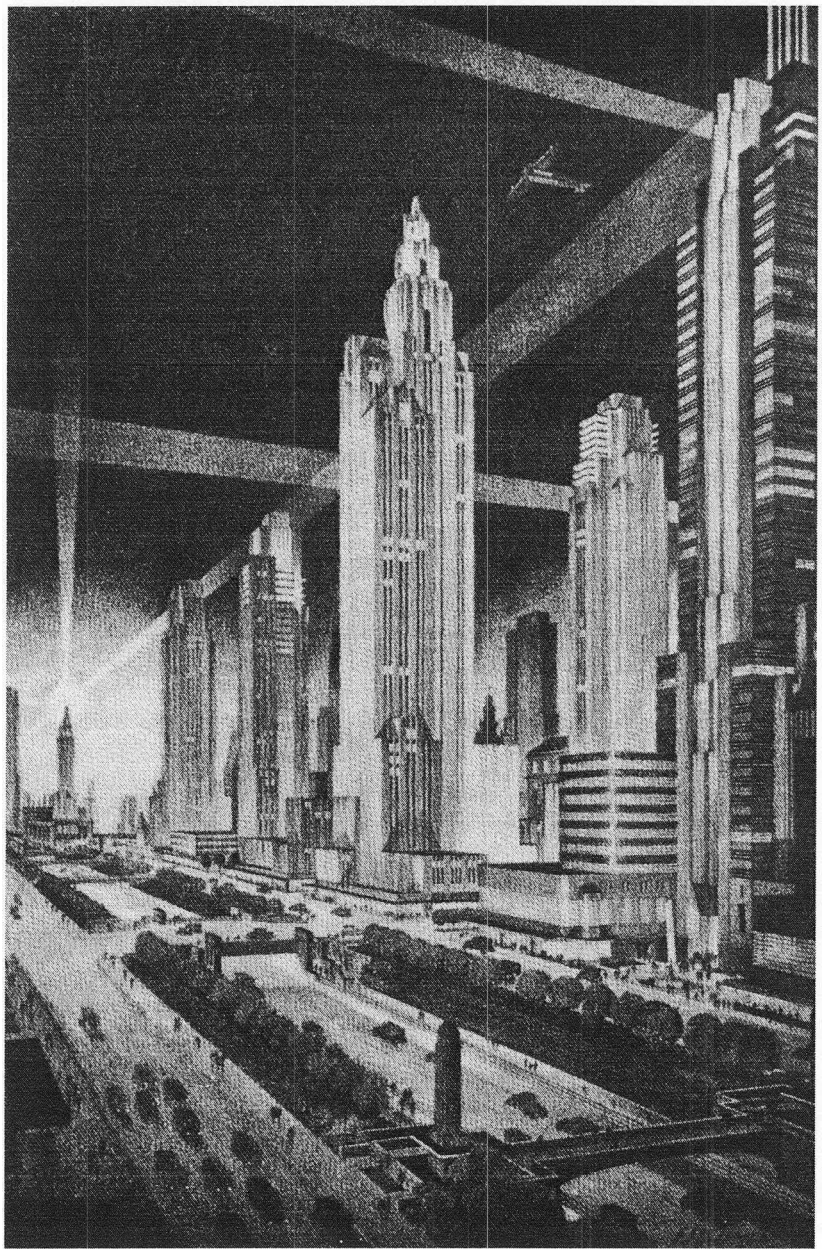

Figure 4. "The Proposed Christie-Forsythe Parkway"
Courtesy of Regional Plan Association of New York

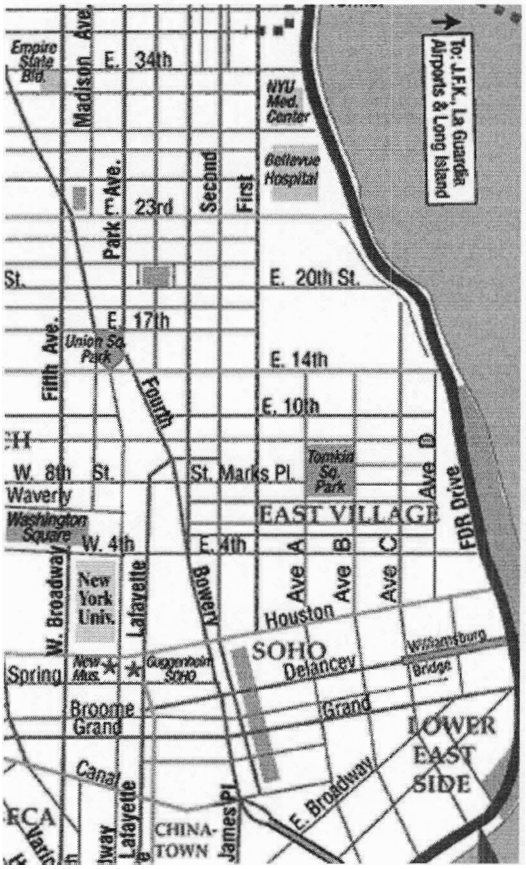

Figure 5. Map of Manhattan's Lower East Side
Courtesy of www.aaccessmaps.com

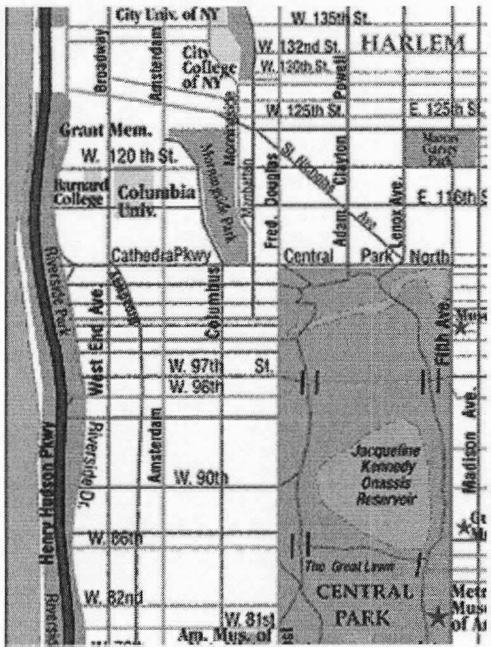

Figure 6. Map of Manhattan's Upper West Side and Harlem
Courtesy of www.aaccessmaps.com

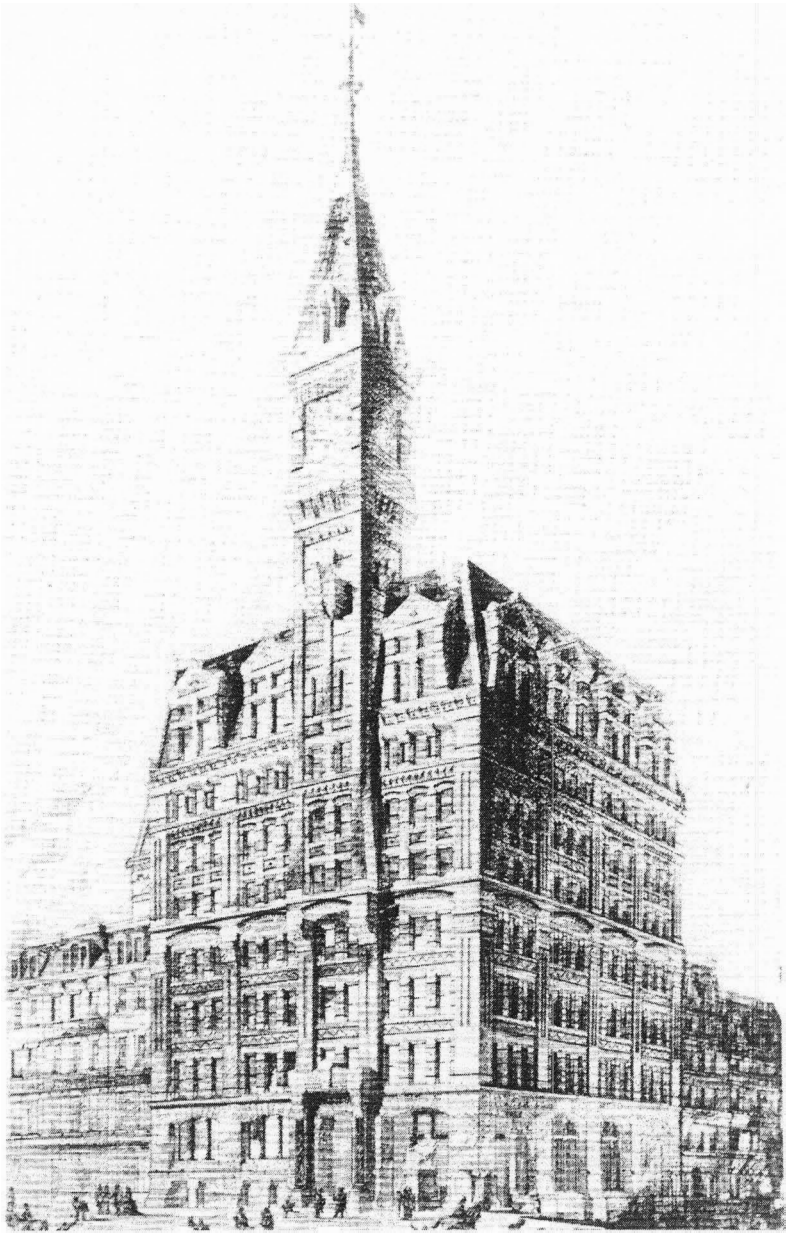

Figure 7. New York Tribune Building (1873-76)
Courtesy of MIT Press

Figure 8. The World Building (1890)
Courtesy of MIT Press

Figure 9. Printing House Square/City Hall Park: Before and After (Circa 1902)
Courtesy of MIT Press

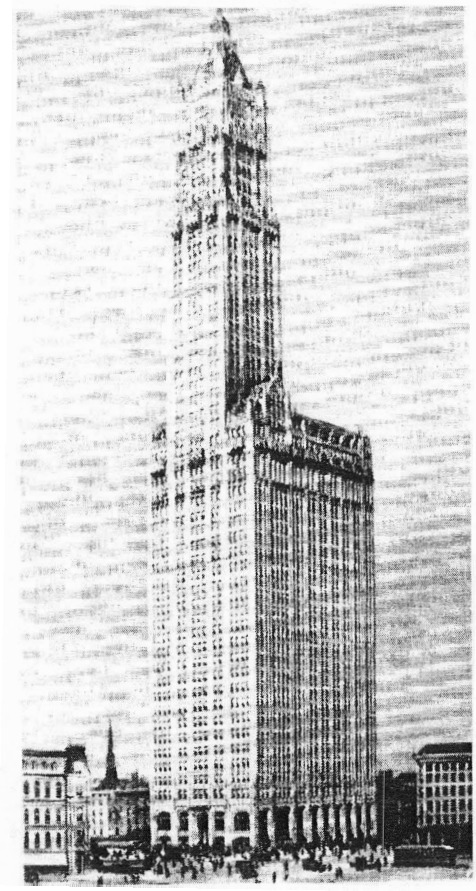

Figure 10. Woolworth Building (1913)
Courtesy of MIT Press

Figure 11. The Chicago Temple (1923)
Courtesy of MIT Press

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