



Edition 3!

Horror and Tech

with interviews featuring

Jelly Diver and R4GE BUNNY

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Credits

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Dear Reader,

The state of the world is horrifying. Thank you for fighting for a brighter future, and thank you for stopping in for the third edition of Southern Scum Collective, happy halloween.

Put this page to use. Draw a picture. Defeat AI slop one poor drawing at a time.

Tech and Apartheid Why Queers Should Join BDS

By Liz Hewitt

In the wake of the ceasefire in Gaza it is more important than ever to continue to oppose the Israeli occupation of Palestine as well as the continuation of genocide in Gaza and the apartheid state as a whole. One way to remove complacency and put pressure on Israel is through consumer boycotts through the BDS movement. BDS focuses on boycotting, divesting from, and pressuring governments to sanction Israel and companies that support it. Queer liberation must be intertwined with liberation for all. An Israeli bomb does not spare a Queer politician. Furthermore US police receive training from the Israeli occupation forces¹, their brutality can and will be turned on Queer communities in the United States as we continue to face repression and oppression by the Trump regime. The Department of Homeland Security has also removed its explicit language on the exclusion of spying based on sexual orientation and gender identity from their policy manual² and while the department claims it would not spy on individuals for that reason as it would be illegal³, I do not trust the current DHS to follow the law.

EDIT: As I continue to work on this article, it appears that the ceasefire may fail as Israel continues to violate it through bombings, murder, and the denial of promised aid access. This further shows why we must continue to stand in opposition to and limit our complicity with the Israeli apartheid regime.

EDIT 2: Israel has now started a bombing campaign in Gaza and cut off all aid. In all but words the ceasefire has now failed and the genocide continues at its most extreme.

EDIT 3: Despite Israel's breach of the ceasefire it has somehow held as of 10/22. Aid has been resumed and the bombing has stopped.

EDIT 4: As of today, the 28th of October Israel has renewed air strikes in Gaza leading to at least 9 deaths.⁴ This blatant violation of the ceasefire and of the rights of the Palestinian people continues to accent the importance of action to support Palestinian Liberation in the US, such as BDS.

Below are some of the targeted tech boycotts from the BDS. These, among their other targeted boycotts, are some of the most critical boycotts to take a part of to enact change. You can and should look at their full list of targeted boycotts on their website.

Microsoft: Microsoft is one of the most important companies to be boycotting whenever possible. Microsoft is complicit in their continued support of Israel through their connections to

¹ Valenzuela, "Deadly Exchange," Webteam, "Where Do Many Police Departments Train?"

² Ibrahim, "DHS Ends Ban on Intelligence Activities Targeting People for Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity."

³ Ibrahim, "DHS Ends Ban on Intelligence Activities Targeting People for Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity."

⁴ Desk, "Israel Launches Renewed Strikes in Gaza Less than 3 Weeks into Trump's Ceasefire Deal."

the Israeli military, government, and prison system becoming implicit in their torturing of Palestinian prisoners.⁵ Through their Azure Cloud storage Microsoft provides Israel the ability to conduct mass surveillance on Palestinians and operate its genocide.⁶ Azure has also been used to support combat and intelligence operations.⁷ Furthermore Microsoft has provided the state with access to AI tools for military operations.⁸ Workers within the company have attempted to hold Microsoft accountable by forming the group "No Azure for Apartheid" but Microsoft has refused to address worker's concerns⁹ as such it is a critical target to boycott.

Intel: Intel both supports the economy of Israel as well as the Israeli economy. Over the last 50 years, Intel has invested over 50 billion in the Israeli economy.¹⁰ Intel has also provided the Elbit to Israel which is, according to BDS "a main engine of Israel's ongoing genocide in Gaza"¹¹ as well as launched an AI research center to expand the capabilities of Israeli weapons.¹²

HP: According to BDS HP is "complicit in Israel's occupation, settler colonial, and apartheid regime."¹³ HP has provided technology necessary for Israeli military and police to occupy and siege the Palestinian territories including Gaza.¹⁴

Dell: Dell supplies and is the main provider of "servers, storage systems and related services to the Israeli Ministry of Defense and the Israeli military."¹⁵ Due to this, they are part of BDS' boycott.

Google: After the signing on of Google to Project Nimbus workers and BDS has called for people to boycott or pressure Google when possible. Project Nimbus is a partnership between Amazon and Google to "provide cloud computing infrastructure, artificial intelligence (AI) and other technology services to the Israeli government and its military."¹⁶ Google workers have organized against it to not support the apartheid regime or further Israeli spyware.¹⁷

Cisco: According to BDS Cisco supports Israel through "its illegal operations in illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), discriminatory policies, long-standing partnership with the Israeli military, and serial acquisitions of Israeli companies complicit in human rights violations" and as such should be boycotted.¹⁸

⁵ "Microsoft | BDS Movement."

⁶ DC (ACW), "The War on Gaza and Israel's Technology Sector."

⁷ Davies and Abraham, "Revealed."

⁸ Davies and Abraham, "Revealed."

⁹ "Microsoft | BDS Movement."

¹⁰ "No Tech for Oppression, Apartheid or Genocide | BDS Movement."

¹¹ "No Tech for Oppression, Apartheid or Genocide | BDS Movement."

¹² "No Tech for Oppression, Apartheid or Genocide | BDS Movement."

¹³ "BOYCOTT HP | BDS Movement."

¹⁴ "HP Inc | AFSC Investigate."

¹⁵ Technologies, "Who Profits - The Israeli Occupation Industry - Dell Technologies."

¹⁶ Staff, "What Is Project Nimbus, and Why Are Google Workers Protesting Israel Deal?"

¹⁷ Staff, "What Is Project Nimbus, and Why Are Google Workers Protesting Israel Deal?"

¹⁸ "CISCO | BDS Movement."

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Baptism

By Liz Hewitt

It's odd, no one has heard from Vi in a while. As I walk up to my apartment I notice that all of her lights are still out. I stopped by yesterday as I've been getting a little worried about her. She has been pushing for our apartments to join the tenants' union pretty hard for the past month and recently a tenants' union organizer in the city over, Durham, had their car firebombed. She is usually very social and, honestly, the life line of community in our apartments.

Before Vi started organizing here there was no real community, besides those landlord hosted events that reeked of corporatism and plastic. I need to check in on her again. She has been trying to get me to read her zine on Christian socialism for a few months, but I keep putting it off. I just always feel like I have too much to do and as an atheist I have been somewhat uninterested in it. But she is my friend and she does so much for us that I really should suck it up and read it. The last time I saw her was at a rent party she hosted in her apartment to help one of our neighbors, Dylan, avoid eviction. I should just knock now, but there is something about her door that feels odd, off even. I notice she has one of those door bell cameras now. I wonder when she got it? I have never noticed it before.

I walk to my balcony and pick some basil and spinach for tonight's dinner. Its getting near the end of the season and I feel a chill in the air that lets me know soon my garden will be dormant. I pick some extra herbs and greens, I'll bring them over when I visit Vi, she always appreciates fresh veggies.

I make dinner, eat, take my estrogen and spiro, then decide I should check on Vi. I'll ask for a copy of her zine and actually read it this time. Hopefully she is doing well. I go outside and walk across to her apartment. It's still odd to me that she has one of those camera door bells, especially as she has been staunchly against increased surveillance. I go to knock again but at the last second decide to use the door bell instead. It lights up and I hear Vi's voice.

"Hello, I'll be there in a second."

I wait, produce in hand for a few seconds and then her door slowly opens.

"Hi Vi! It's great to see you!!!"

"Hello, Leah, how have you been doing? Oh and please, call me Violet now."

Something seems a little off with her, she seems a little... calmer than usual? Maybe she is just getting over something. She also has never gone by her full name before. But we have all gone through a rebrand before, hell I'm on my third name, not including nicknames.

"I wanted to stop by and check in on you. No one has heard from you in a while and Dylan told me yesterday you didn't go to church on Sunday. I wanted to make sure you weren't sick or something."

"Oh and I brought you these."

I hand over the produce and she hesitates for a moment, then smiles, slowly, like she is unsure about this situation. I see something odd in her smile but I can't tell if I'm just being paranoid, maybe I need to go see a psych. Then she grabs the produce from my hands.

"Thanks, Leah! Oh no I am fine. I have just been so busy with everything. I started going to a new church and I had that meeting with the landlord. We had the meeting at his church and I found it to be such a welcoming and cozy place. That's why Dylan didn't see me."

I looked at her for a moment and her smile faded.

"Oh also, I wanted to finally read your zine! What was it called again something like 'Christ was a Socialist: Why Christians Must Organize'? Sorry it's taken me so long to read it, I know you cared a lot about it. Do you have an extra copy?"

Now her face warped to a stern almost repulsed expression. Maybe she is upset with me for putting it off so long, maybe that's why this whole interaction seems so odd.

"I do not have any more copies. I decided to stop writing and publishing them. After talking with the Pastor he pointed out the flawed reasoning I wrote with."

This is such a stark change, I feel a chill running through my body. I look at Violet's eyes and the flame that usually resides there is gone, the joy that normally radiates from her is nowhere to be found. I want to go back to my apartment, hell I want to run.

"Sorry that I didn't read it sooner then. Well I'm glad you are doing okay, I think I'm going to go home now." I almost ask about the camera but stop myself. Behind her I see the glow of the TV and another security camera in the corner of her living room. Maybe she is just worried about what happened to that organizer in Durham, or maybe it's something else.

"I hope you have a good evening." Violet says and smiles. I think I see something again in her smile and this time I get a better look. It almost looks like a wire, it must just be something in her tooth.

"You too Violet, stay safe. Let me know if you need anything."

I do an awkward half run to my apartment door as I hear her close the door behind me. Before entering my apartment I look behind me and see her doorbell, still glowing.

I shut my door, making sure it's locked and rush to my room, again locking the door behind me. What the fuck. That was so weird. Maybe I'm going crazy. I try to sleep but can't. I keep thinking about Violet's smile and whatever was in her teeth. Maybe it was pasta or a noodle or something else. I just need to calm down. I even lock my own bedroom door in my

apartment despite living alone. I can't shake the feeling that despite the locked doors, the closed blinds, my apartment walls, I am being watched.

I wake up the next morning, in sheets soaked with sweat. I don't remember falling asleep. I think I took my nightly progesterone? Although I can't remember too clearly. I think I'm just over reacting, people change all the time. It sucks but Violet can make her own decisions. I shower, brush my teeth, take my morning pills, and get dressed for work. As I leave I check my phone and see an email from Violet to everyone in the tenants' union. Meeting Notice: Tonight's meeting location has been changed. The Spirit has graciously allowed us to use their larger space for tonight's meeting. We will no longer be meeting at my apartment. Odd to change locations the day of, frankly, unless it can't be avoided. It's just sloppy organizing. But if it's a good location, I guess it isn't too odd.

Work goes by pretty uneventfully. I decide I'm going to skip out on this meeting. The church is a long walk from my apartment and I don't have a car. After last night's conversation, I also don't want to ask Violet for a ride, I am still just a little off put. It's also a Friday night, so instead I'll stay in, drink a PBR, call my parents, and maybe watch a goofy old horror movie in my living room. It is October after all.

I still had some trouble sleeping last night but that might have been more due to watching the movie Hardware than anything. Don't get me wrong, it was goofy, but it was still more jarring than I expected. Maybe I shouldn't have watched a movie about a killer robot and surveillance after the other day. But at least it is Saturday. I decide to go on a walk, to feel the crisp October air. After getting ready and taking my hormones I walk out the door. The camera on Violet's door lights up, I turn and notice that all the apartments have video door bells now. My hair stands up. I walk up the stairs to the apartment above me and they are all the same. Each door bell flashes light blue as I walk past it. I rush back down the stairs and away from the apartments.

Fuck this is insane. I have to be going crazy. I have an appointment with my therapist on Monday, I might ask for a psych referral. I need to see if anyone else is noticing this. I need to talk to someone that doesn't live here. I decide to go to Violet's old church. Dylan and her always spoke highly of it. Maybe the preacher will have noticed something too. Or maybe I can get a neutral voice to tell me I should seek professional help and that I am losing my grip on reality. Violet always said her church was open to everyone and the preacher loved talking to anyone, even nonbelievers.

I arrive at the church and the parking lot is empty except for one car with its trunk open. It's loaded with books, office supplies, and other miscellaneous boxes. The church windows are boarded up. I see a woman, walking out of the church with a box, pausing to lock the door behind her. She seems professional but a little upset.

"Hi, I was wondering if I could speak to the preacher but I'm not sure if this is the right place. My friend Violet, used to come here and always spoke highly of it. I'm Leah by the way."

"Nice to meet you, I wish you came at a better time. I'm Preacher Anne. Vi was a great member, I wish I heard from her recently."

“Is everything okay? It looks like you are shutting down.”

“Things have been better. Our congregation has been dwindling more and more to the point where closure has been recommended. But that lets me serve God in other areas. Maybe it’s an opportunity to serve other communities. What did you want to speak about?”

“Sorry this may sound weird. I wanted to get an opinion from someone outside my situation. And Violet and Dylan used to speak so highly of you. I can’t tell if something weird is happening or if I am losing my grip on reality and should see a doctor. It feels like something is wrong with Violet, like she is a different person after starting at that new church. She seems so different. She has stopped writing and something feels wrong about her, everyone has started installing video door bells and I always feel like I am being watched,” as I speak I realize that I must sound like a lunatic.

Preacher Anne looks concerned but she still holds a warmth in her gaze.

“I’m sad to hear Violet stopped writing, I know she used to love working on her essays and handing them out. She is a real force for good. Maybe you need to talk to her about your concerns. I would consider seeing a doctor if you are concerned about your own mind, maybe you are right or maybe you are a little disoriented, it wouldn’t hurt either way.”

“Thank you, I think you are right. I should talk to Violet again. Maybe I’m just shaken up, work has been stressful recently. Thank you again. I should go check in on Violet.”

“Thank you for letting me know about Violet. Could you please let her know I’m always here for her even though I’m leaving? She has my number. Let me put it in your phone in case you want to reach out to me too and I hope you feel better soon.”

“Thanks,” I go to hand her my phone, noticing just before I do, that the camera light is on. I dismiss it as paranoia, give her the phone, she adds her contact, and we say goodbye.

I check my phone again but the camera is off. I hear her close her trunk as I walk back to the apartments.

I take a deep breath and knock on Violet’s door. No answer. After a short pause I ring her doorbell. The door swings open. Violet is there smiling. This time I don’t see anything in her mouth. Behind her I see, wilted on the coffee table, in the glow of the T.V. the spinach and herbs I brought last night.

“Hi Violet,” I feel my heart racing.

“Hello, Leah. I am sorry we missed you at last night’s meeting. It was really important.”

“Oh maybe we could chat for a little and you could fill me in. I wanted to talk about a few things.”

“Sorry, Leah, I am just so busy tonight. You should come to church with me tomorrow. We can talk during the ride back after service.”

“I wouldn’t want to impede,” I try to get out of the invitation because this whole thing is creeping me out.

“Oh it’s nothing. Besides, we haven’t talked in a while and I am already driving Johnathan.”

This shocks me, Jonathan is our landlord. I didn’t realize they were close now. I decide ‘fuck it’ I have been a bad friend to Violet for a while. One service won’t kill me.

“Sure I’ll come. They are fine with trannies like me right?” I half laugh, kinda awkwardly.

“They accept everyone, to put them on the right path. Be ready by eight.”

I had a horrible night’s sleep. Full of nightmares and sweating. One dream stays with me. Being spread on an operating table, unable to move, as a surgeon hacks apart my body removing limbs before digging out my heart. I get ready, take my hormones, and then at 8 on the dot, Violet knocks on my door. We greet and I follow her to the car. Jonathan is sitting in the passenger’s seat so I sit in the back, sweating through my blouse. I feel like I have made a mistake but at this point I have to go. If for no other reason to dispel my fears. We drive for a while.

“You chose a great day to come,” Jonathan says in a voice that is almost monotone. “They are doing baptisms today.”

“He is right Leah! I had mine the other week, it was such a beautiful experience.”

The rest of the car ride is silent. We get to the church. It is one of those large strip mall buildings with a large sign reading The Spirit. A place that I struggle to believe could have anything beautiful. As we approach the door my whole body tenses up and all I want to do is run. Before I can turn around I feel Violet and Jonathan both grab my shoulder. They hold tight, harder than reassurance and guide me through the doors. I hear them lock behind me. The windows are all painted so no light goes through. As I am guided forward I almost trip over what feels like a thick cord but Jonathan’s grasp keeps me upright. As we reach the center of the room, bright fluorescents switch on disorienting me. The walls are covered with screens, each one with a camera feed, each one outside and inside of apartments and homes across the country. Each one is always watching. In the center of the room is a large apparatus. It is a steel chair with a large claw protruding upwards and straps on the arms. Wires from around the room connect into it and the center of the claw glows light blue. I try to run but Jonathan and Violet’s grips seem mechanical holding me in place, pushing me towards the chair. After my futile struggle they strap me down. Behind me I hear a door open then shut. A man in a button up shirt and slacks walks into my field of view. He is smiling.

“Hello Michael,” He peers into me as he says it.

How does he know that name, no one does. Not even Violet. What the fuck is happening? I struggle against my restraints but I can't move at all.

“I'm The Pastor.”

“Fuck you.” I spit into his face but he doesn't react, he doesn't even flinch.

“Michael, that's not very kind of you. You truly have strayed. But we are here to put you back on track. This is your baptism after all.”

Every ounce of energy in me pulls against the straps. I kick and swear but I can't move.

“You abandoned your Christian name. And mutilated the body the Lord gave you. It must have made your parents so sad. It must have been so painful for them. They must miss their son.”

“Fuck you, my parents love me!” I begin to cry as I realize my struggle is in vain.

“But I will fix that, your body and your mind will be fixed to please my Lord. As will everyone else in this blessed country. Just like Violet and Dylan.” He won't stop smiling.

The Pastor steps back. He stands in front of Violet and Jonathan.

“Please Violet dont let them do this to me! You know who you are! Help me please,” I sob.

Then the claw above me begins to move. For its mechanical appearance, it is shockingly fluid. The claw opens fully and I stare down it's sharp maw, into a camera. The claw just forward digging into my chest. The pain is unbearable. It cuts through my skin and rips away at my breast. I feel the blood pouring from me, everything starts to fade.

The Pastor said the pain in my chest will go away soon. I can't believe I was astray for so long. My wounds healed in about a week, my body perfect for the lord. The stitches in my skull were extracted easily and my life as Micheal is great. I was so lost before. Violet's tenants' union meetings are a weekly bible study. Sometimes The Pastor even comes. And I don't have to fear anything at night, as I know my door bell will keep me safe and report any suspicious activities. I am so happy to be a member of The Spirit, I know I'm on the right path.





Frankenstein, Alienation, and Familial Queer Rejection

By Liz Hewitt

Recontextualizing Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* through a Queer lens can offer unique insights on rejection, alienation, and otherness that Queer youth face and the consequences that revolve from it. *Frankenstein's* themes of otherness have been analyzed from Queer perspectives before such as by David Sahai in "Fear of the Monster or the Closet?: An Analysis of Frankenstein's Relationship with his Creation Through the Interrelation of Feminist and Queer Theories" and Mair Rigby's "Monstrous Desire: Frankenstein and the Queer Gothic." This analysis aligns more with the latter work as the former focuses more on the potential of Victor Frankenstein's hatred of the monster being due to his own rejection of homosexuality to conform into the expected roles of a man. Similar to some sections of Rigby's work, the dynamics of being excluded from family are what drives this analysis. The monster's alienation from his paternal figure, due to his otherness, as well as the pain, death, and destruction that follow it, can connect to the mental anguish Queer youth experience from family rejection. Similar to the monster, rejected Queer youth may experience homelessness, mental anguish, and suicide. When analyzed through a Queer lens, Shelley's *Frankenstein* reveals how the rejection of Queer youth causes social violence, mental anguish, and suicide among those it impacts.

Victor Frankenstein has patriarchal and to a lesser sense matriarchal obligations to the creature through his act of creation that he shirks due to his own rejection of the creature. This rejection stems from Victor's expectations of the creature before its creation clashing with the reality of his existence. This mirrors the rejection Queer youth experience as they fail to fulfill hetero and cisnormative expectations placed upon them. Patriarchal obligations begin to form and are made clear to Victor before the completion of the creature's "birth." Shelley writes "[n]o father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs" (40). This statement around the expectations of the creature shows that Victor desires the gratitude of a child to its fullest extent, even beyond what a normal father should receive, positioning himself as deserving this begins to develop his parental status. Similarly during the creation Victor begins to gain matriarchal obligations during the creation of the creature as Shelley writes "I beheld the accomplishment of my toils. With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony" (43). The intensity of the creature's creation and the physical and mental distress it puts Victor under relate to the labor of a mother in birth, making Victor both parents in his creation and creating an obligation for him to act as both mother and father to the creature. We can see the acknowledgment of his position throughout the text, especially towards his status as both a creator and failed paternal figure. In reflections on the creature's violence this becomes especially apparent as Shelley writes "I considered the being whom I had cast among mankind and endowed with the will and power to effect purposes of horror" (64) and "[i]n a fit of enthusiastic madness I created a rational

creature and was bound towards him to assure, as far as was in my power, his happiness and well-being” (207). Victor, rightfully, blames himself for the violence of the creature as the text continues, especially in his guilt towards the death of his loved ones. This is an idea he struggles with and does not seem to fully understand until late in the text.

This struggle to accept responsibility appears throughout the text despite the creature’s narrative and direct assertions to Victor that he is not intrinsically evil. Shelley tells the story from Victor’s perspective to further this point, just as Victor does we scrutinize the creature’s story and struggles with rejection despite Victor being equally unreliable in narration. His personal biases seem natural to us both due to his perspective and the creature’s otherness. Despite the story being framed as a retelling from his confession on a boat in the arctic it is told without quotes and without the constant perception of another, except for in the beginning and closing letters, the creature’s narrative however is always told through Victor’s retelling of it and in quotations. The creature frequently asserts his intrinsic goodness as well as connecting the loss of it to Victor, and societies, neglect. Shelley writes:

“I will be even mild and docile to my natural lord and king if thou wilt also perform thy part” and “[r]emember I am thy creature; I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather the fallen angel, whom thou drivest from joy... I was benevolent and good; misery made me a fiend. Make me happy, and I shall again be virtuous.” (87)

Due to Victor’s rejection of the creature and his position as an other Victor does not accept his responsibility until it has become too late as the creature has murdered multiple of Victor’s family members and they are now locked in a struggle Victor has no desire to end, despite his realization of fault and guilt (80,175, 207).

This rejection can be contextualized through a Queer lens to get a deeper understanding that connects to the rejection Queer youth face. Victor’s rejection of the creature stems from a conflict between his expectations for the creature and the reality of his existence. We can see these expectations and the conflict emerging from them as Shelley writes “[h]is limbs were in proportion, and I had selected features as beautiful. Beautiful! Great God! His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes... his shriveled complexion and straight black lips” (43). As Victor is retelling this creation, after it happened, he is already alluding to the shattering of his expectations. Yet as he created the creature he thought he was beautiful, until it was given life. Then his expected beauty, perhaps a hope at normalcy through aesthetics, was defied in the creature’s “birth.” Shelley writes “now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart... I rushed out of the room” (43). The creature did not uphold the standards Frankenstein had, and did not match his planned beauty. His body was a source of othering, a dissonance not unfamiliar to the

experience of transgender individuals. Victor immediately fears the figure he gave life to, Shelley writes “fearing each sound as if it were to announce the approach of the demoniacal corpse to which I had so miserably given life” (44). The word corpse here not only references the literal logistics of the creature’s creation but also cements him as something that Victor does not view as a person but an other, a demon, already dead and damned. This damnation stemming from the creature not fitting the expected visual aesthetic of his creator. The dissonance of the creature’s appearance haunts him throughout the novel not only fueling Victor’s rejection but also that of Felix (123-124) and the creature’s own hatred of his physical form as Shelley writes “with a figure hideously deformed and loathsome; I was not even the same nature as man” (108). This internalized and externalized hatred of the appearance of the creature mimics the hatred visibly Queer people receive from hetero and cisnormative society and the possible internalization of that hatred. Society and the creature’s own creator enact isolation and violence against the creature in their rejection leading to similar experiences to rejected Queer youth.

In “Conditional Families and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Youth Homelessness: Gender, Sexuality, Family Instability, and Rejection” by Brandon Andrew Robinson he concludes:

Poverty and instability in conjunction with heteronormativity and the gender binary can shape particular experiences of negotiating gender and sexuality within conditional families. Within underresourced families, being LGBTQ, especially being gender expansive, may result in ambivalent familial ties as well as conflict and strain. (12)

This conclusion, especially in the noting that instability and heteronormativity as influences on Queer homeless youth is relevant to *Frankenstein*. Shelley reveals potential familial instability through Victor’s guilt and hesitation to return to Geneva after William’s death (60-62). Victor fears the family will discover the creature and thus reveal his blame in William’s death, which in itself is a point of great instability. Furthermore while Victor comes from an affluent family, he is a student and natural scientist who appears to get his wealth from his family and not any independent means making him reliant on their approval and in a strenuous economic position. All of these further set Victor to continue his abandonment but considering his economic situation and immediate repulsion to the creature may help explain his rejection. This rejection ultimately, like for Queer youth who according to Chaplin Hall have a “120% higher risk of experiencing homelessness than youth who identified as heterosexual and cisgender” (13), leads to the creature’s homelessness. The creature, after his rejection, experiences this state as Shelley writes:

It was dark when I awoke; I felt cold also, and half frightened as it were, instinctively, finding myself so desolate. Before I had quitted your apartment, on a sensation of cold, I had covered myself with some clothes, but these were

insufficient to secure me from the dews of night. I was a poor, helpless, miserable wretch; I knew, and could distinguish, nothing; but feeling pain invade me on all sides, I sat and wept. (90-91)

Due to Victor's immediate abandonment of the creature he is forced into homelessness. The creature not only notes his poverty and suffering but his inexperience with the world and his youthful ignorance from just being created; just as Queer youth are pushed into immense suffering while they are still young, making their suffering all the more dreadful. We continue to see the creature's struggles with homelessness both through the forest and his time squatting in the hovel near the DeLacey family. Upon being discovered for what he is, the creature is again rejected and must continue on this plight like a Queer youth evicted from a squat or tent city.

The creature's plight is spurred on by this societal rejection, repeatedly being persecuted. This othering, persecution, and alienation placed on the creature ultimately due to Victor's rejection of him takes a drastic mental toll. As previously mentioned the creature begins to hate himself and his inability for conformity. We can see he craves domestic conformity as Shelley writes "I longed to join them, but dared not. I remembered too well the treatment I had suffered the night before from the barbarous villagers" (98). This demonstrates the creature's desire for belonging in a domestic unit, a family that he has been denied. Ultimately this responsibility was due to him not by the villagers or the DeLacey family but firstly by Victor. The creature knows this and by the end of the novel so does Victor. The creature articulates this when Shelley writes "[n]o father had watched my infant days, no mother had blessed me with smiles and caresses" (109) and "[a]ccursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even *you* turned from me in disgust" (115)? The creature was denied the familial comforts that Victor as his creator, his only true parent, owed him and this is what lead to his anguish filled life and eventual death.

Similarly parental rejection causes mental anguish in Queer youth. In "Transgender and nonbinary young adults' depression and suicidality is associated with sibling and parental acceptance- rejection" by Bosse et al. they find that depression and suicidality increase in Queer youth after familial rejection (87). They also assert "[e]ach individual family member's acceptance- rejection is uniquely associated with depression symptoms" (99). As Victor was both father and mother to Frankenstein the anguish he faces makes sense through a Queer analysis. More parallels between the creature and Queer youth's suffering from parental rejection can be seen in "Parental Rejection After Coming Out: Detachment, Shame, and the Reparative Power of Romantic Love" by Hye Min et al. They write "parental detachment may encourage sexual minority individuals to find solace and secure attachment in the embrace of their romantic partners as adults"(6). This can create a deeper understanding of the creature's need for a romantic partner due to a positive relationship mending rejected gay men's mental health. While the proposed partner in *Frankenstein* is a woman (134), the potential restorative nature

of this union is noted by the creature when Shelley writes "the love of another will destroy the cause of my crimes... I shall feel the affections of a sensitive being and become linked to the chain of existence and events from which I am now excluded"(137) creating a connection to Hye Min et al.'s work. However the creature is not afforded this relief and as such his rejection based struggles continue. In Taylor and Neppi's "Sexual Identity in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer or Questioning Emerging Adults: The Role of Parental Rejection, and Sexuality Specific Family Support" they find that "[t]his means more rejecting behaviors that parents exhibit to their sexual minoritized children is associated with an increase in identity struggles" (422). This supports a Queer understanding of the creature both through his previously mentioned hatred of his own body but also through his existential crises seen as Shelley writes "[a]nd what was I? Of my creation and creator I was absolutely ignorant, but I knew I possessed no money, no friends, no kind of property... I was not even of the same nature as man" (108) and "[w]hat was I? The question again recurred, to be answered only with groans" (109). Shelley not only creates a miserable subject but one who struggles with forming an identity mirroring the struggles of rejected Queer youth. Bose and Chothani find similar conclusions in their paper "Sexual Health and Alienation Among Gay and Transgender Adults" although they note this effects Queer individuals with STDs to an even larger extent writing "The level of alienation of the sexual minority, specially the ones suffering from sexual diseases is so high that it often results in suicides" (94). The suffering in rejected Queer youth continues to add depth to Shelley's creature as, after a life full of anguish due to Victor's rejection, he ultimately suffers death at his own hand. Shelley writes:

I shall collect my funeral pile and consume to ashes this miserable frame, that its remains may afford no light to any curious and unhallowed wretch who would create such another as I have been. I shall die. I shall no longer feel the agonies which now consume me or be the prey of feelings unsatisfied, yet unquenched...

I shall die, and what I now feel be no longer felt. Soon these burning miseries will be extinct. I shall ascend my funeral pile triumphantly and exult in the agony of the torturing flames. The light of that conflagration will fade away; my ashes will be swept into the sea by the winds. My spirit will sleep in peace, or if it thinks, it will not surely think thus. Farewell. (212-213)

To escape the pain of parental rejection and societal persecution the creature ultimately plans his suicide. Within the text there is no reason to doubt he will complete this as the creature has always acted true to his declarations. This reading adds a weight and call to personal and societal change around how Queer youth are treated.

The creature in Shelley's *Frankenstein* suffers throughout the novel despite being the antagonist. His tragedy and the violence he enacts on others stems from societal rejection but importantly from the rejection of his creator and parent Victor Frankenstein.

It is not Frankenstein's hubris that causes the horrors in the novel but his rejection and cruelty towards the creature who he, above all, owed compassion and companionship to due to his creation. Instead, due to his own expectations being tarnished, he rejects the creature and this can be read as similar to many antiQueer prejudices that may cause a parent to reject a child. Recontextualizing *Frankenstein* in this way continues to allow Shelley to push readers to question their society and how it treats marginalized people. A society that excludes others from family and community inflicts great suffering on those it holds social obligations to support.

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AND NOW

introducing

Esteemed

guest

Jelly Diver

Now readers,

Give them a round of applause

What name do you produce music under?

Jelly Diver

Thanks for doing this with us, Jelly Diver! What type of music do you produce?

Instrumental video gamey internetty fast music that often has drum breaks. But I also make digital hardcore beats for use in Girl Brutal sometimes

What got you into producing that music specifically? What are some main sources of inspiration?

I hit the breakcore/hardcore breaks/etc pipeline in 2020 with sewerslvt, goreshit, and machine girl and the rest is history. Mix that in with my love of video game music (Jun Ishikiwa, Toby Fox, Lena Raine to name a few) and some webcore (what even is that) and you've got Jelly Diver.

Do you feel your scene has been accepting of Queer artists? I Do!

Do you feel digital/EDM music is generally accepting of Queer musicians and people?

I think it is in general yes. I think there is a bit more queer representation in scenes (especially as artists) with more digital hardcore/hyperpop esque bands as opposed to like just a rave scene with DJs. Charlotte specifically feels like it leans more heavily to the latter, whereas I see scenes in places like Chicago with a lot more electronic performers doing shows as opposed to DJs doing dances/raves

Do you feel your scene fosters a sense of community within it, both in general and Queer community specifically?

It does, but it's more inadvertent than maybe I'd like it to be. You see the same people at shows and at raves and there are certain cliques of artists that generally play together and the cross-pollination of their fanbases. There are a few collective-ish things that sorta foster community but again it's slightly loose.

Do you feel your scene currently has political involvement/organization or that it has the potential to?

There are occasional benefit shows for charities (ones that I'd say are politically charged such as abortion funds) but not much organizing.

What does or could this look like?

It's hard. Sometimes I feel like music is a medium I can use for political engagement, but sometimes it feels like an escape, the one good thing happening in the world, and there's an apprehension to intertwine it with all of the doom we feel, especially in queer spaces. ... On the other hand, these spaces are very leftist and are a good space for social people who all want change and are frustrated as to how to enact it. Maybe it just takes someone/some people to really attempt to blend the music scene with activism. Or maybe that's a bad idea and will ruin the escapism or create divides. I don't really know.

Do you feel the medium of electronic music offers any unique aspects to community building?

That's a very interesting question. I think it's unique contrasted to the medium of like, punk/hardcore bands in a lot of ways. Electronic music doesn't have to be angry or aggressive, you open the door to people who are into different sounds and flavors of music. I don't know if I can speak to any specific distinctions that an electronic scene will definitely have, but it does tend to attract people who are more online for example.

What advice would you give to new people on the scene?

If you want to be a performer, really working hard on your performance and put effort into it being a show that you want people to be entertained by. Doing this will catch more established people in the scene's eyes and boom you're getting put on their shows.

What do you want to see more of in the scene?

An emphasis on performance of original electronic music. Raves are fun and DJs are great, but I'm much more interested in seeing someone present the music they created out of thin air, tweaked endlessly, and got to a finishing point to present it to the world. I think there is too much of a separation of the two when many people who enjoy going to a rave to hear a bunch of IDs are probably a great audience for someone that's making original stuff that lives in their city.

GASP!

**A second esteemed
guest?**

HUZZAH!

Readers! you know the drill!

**A second round of applause has hit the
southern Scum Collective Third Edition Zine**

**Introducing
RAGE BUNNY**

What name do you produce music under?

R4GE BUNNY

What type of music do you produce?

Happy hardcore, hyperpop, and techno

What got you into producing that music specifically? What are some main sources of inspiration?

I've always been creative. I started making music when I was 10. In my late teenage years making music as R4GE BUNNY was a really important outlet for me to express myself on a personal level. I've been in other bands, but making EDM felt like I could cultivate my own space for self-expression. I'm inspired by artists like Aphex Twin, SOPHIE, 100 gecs, Skrillex, and J Dilla. At least when it comes to aesthetics and an approach to the creative process. I got into Hardcore through the members of 909 worldwide like 99jakes, Maple, Alice Gas, and lil kevo 303. I've taken in a lot of Gabber music and culture too. Their creative freedom in the scene is so freeing to watch. I'm also very inspired by my experiences with being queer in the rural southern US. I started writing songs with lyrics as a way to get those feelings out there, hopefully to reach other queer people in a similar part of the world as me.

Do you feel your scene has been accepting of Queer artists?

I think the scene is very queer accepting! EDM, IDM, and Hyperpop are all genres built upon the work of queer musicians. And of course, the electronic music landscape would look incredibly different if it weren't for the work of Wendy Carlos. I have a different view of the scene than a lot of DJ's, producers, and ravers, since I don't get the same opportunity to engage with the scene in person the way they do. A lot of my relationship with the scene has unfolded through the internet, and for that I'm fortunate. For queer EDM artists, the internet has created a way for us all to stay connected and to engage with each other outside of a club, rave, or festival. The times I have gotten to attend raves and parties, I've consistently seen the EDM scene lift up queer artists, as well as cultivate an environment of relentless self-expression and acceptance. For people outside the rave scene, ravers have a kind of code of ethics called PLUR, which stands for Peace, Love, Unity, Respect. It's a non-negotiable part of being a real member of the community. It's a dedication to loving and respecting your fellow human beings, both in and out of the scene.

Do you feel your scene [in this case the online scene around digital/EDM music] fosters a sense of community within it, both in general and Queer community specifically?

Definitely. Rave culture is built on acceptance and community. I think the same worldview and mindset applies to people who aren't able to engage with it in person, when they don't live in a place that has a big EDM scene. There's a palpable closeness in EDM scenes, total strangers will treat each other with love and respect at a rave. I think EDM culture brings queer community close together in similar ways. At raves, everyone's there to express themselves and have a night of fun. It's historically been a place where queer people can express themselves and find other community members in a judgement free space.

Do you feel your scene [in this case the online scene around digital/EDM music] currently has political involvement/organization or that it has the potential to?

I think the culture cares a lot about activism. The principles of PLUR extend to a lot of current human rights struggles and a lot of ravers are politically engaged because of that. I think the EDM community is really good at getting a large group of people in a room together, all from different social and economic classes, and that is really well suited for political organization. The EDM community is really diverse, and has historically been a safe haven for oppressed groups in the US.

What does or could this look like?

As stated earlier, the EDM scene is really diverse, and the through-line of liking the same music brings a lot of very different people together, sometimes from really far away. I think there is certainly a place for political organization to happen at a party, rave, or festival. I also think that a lot of the DJ's and producers within a scene are able to reach a lot of people, by virtue of playing music to mixed crowds every night, as well as gaining online followings. It's important for people with such a wide reach to be politically active, and to share resources with their fans and fellow artists.

Do you feel the medium of electronic music offers any unique aspects to community building?

I think electronic music encourages self-expression in a lot of really unique ways. In a lot of alternative subcultures, there's some fierce gatekeeping that keeps people out when they could be a part of a thriving and otherwise accepting culture. I think the environments in which EDM is enjoyed leads to a lot of people being able to leave their judgement at the door and dance with people they don't know. I think it's a subculture built on love, respect, and accepting others, which is why I think it's been such an important subculture for the queer community.

What advice would you give to new people on the scene?

Be kind to everyone. Embody PLUR in every way you can. The online EDM world is really nice, and the accessibility of the internet has opened the EDM community up to a lot of people who aren't physically or mentally capable of going to raves, clubs, and DIY venues. The internet has broadened this beautiful and accepting culture to people who weren't able to engage with it before, and I think we should all celebrate that. That being said, my other piece of advice is get out at any chance you can to meet others in your scene. It's really intimidating to get out to a digital/EDM show on your own for the first time, but you will be welcomed with an outpouring of love and acceptance from everyone, and you'll make new connections quickly

What do you want to see more of in the scene?

I'd like to see more DIY raves in areas with small and still-growing EDM scenes. Living in the rural American south, I have to travel at least an hour to engage with EDM in a live setting and that makes me sad. It's up to the community to help each other out and start hosting and organizing events that aren't for profit, and are just a celebration of the community, and an opportunity to get people in a room together to share a love for music.

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Thank you for

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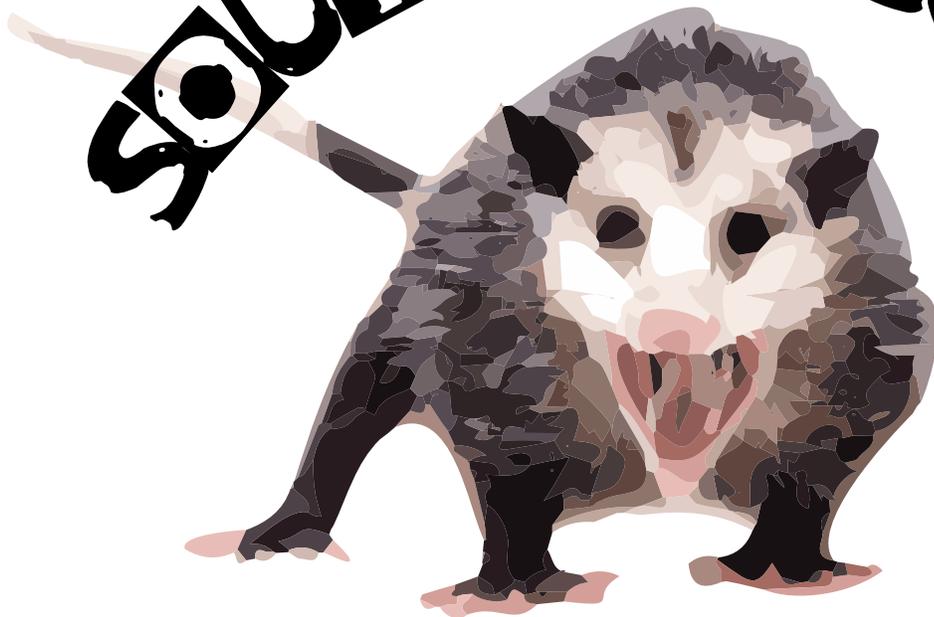
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previous editions here

SOUTHERN SCUM



COLLECTIVE

c u again soon?