TRANSFORMING MASCULINITIES IN CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE OF THE SOUTHERN CONE

by

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(Under the Direction of Betina Kaplan)

ABSTRACT

This project analyzes literary representations of men from the LGBTQ+ community in Chile and Argentina from the period of 1990 – 2016. I intend to show that through the works *Mi amado Mr. B* (2006) by Luis Corbacho, *Sudor* (2016) by Alberto Fuguet, *Tengo miedo torero* (2001) by Pedro Lemebel, "La tan compleja y heterofóbica historia de Juance" (2015) by Mhoris eMm, *La razón de los amantes* (2007) by Pablo Simonetti and *Vos porque no tenés hijos* (2011) by Osvaldo Bazán that writers are challenging traditional masculine subjectivities from an LGBTQ+ perspective. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, literary representations of gay or queer men have generalized them as pathologized figures in need of help or as deviants. Following the demands from activists of the Gay Liberation Movement, men from the LGBTQ+ community are taking control of their own visibility and proposing new possibilities of masculinity in the process. They are challenging the derogatory visibility regimes that have controlled negative images of them and worked to disempower them as citizens and people. Through an analysis of the literary works listed above, I will demonstrate how new regimes of visibility from authors of the LGBTQ+ community are changing the way LGBTQ+ men are constructing their own versions of masculinity, thus giving rise to an empowered gay

masculinity, queered masculinity and gay fathers that challenge hegemonic masculinity as the desired expression of masculinity for men. These men are no longer concerned with justifying their existence but instead focus on constructing their own masculine subjectivities.

INDEX WORDS: Masculinity, queer, queer studies, gay, gender studies, sexuality studies, *Mi amado Mr. B* (2006) by Luis Corbacho, *Sudor* (2016) by Alberto Fuguet, *Tengo miedo torero* (2001) by Pedro Lemebel, “"La tan compleja y heterofóbica historia de Juance" (2015) by Mhoris eMm, *La razón de los amantes* (2007) by Pablo Simonetti, *Vos porque no tenés hijos* (2011) by Osvaldo Bazán

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DEDICATION

To my life partner Izzy and son Xavi for your love and support through everything.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This project explores transformations in the representations of masculinity from an LGBTQ+ perspective in the literary cultural production of Chile and Argentina during the period of 1990 – 2016. I intend to show how they are bringing a positive visibility to the LGBTQ+[1] community. I focus specifically on the construction of a positive regime of visibility of men through literary cultural production. I have chosen this time period and region because they offer a unique and inciteful look into the transformation of gender roles that has come into sharp focus around the world with the rise of Feminist Studies and Gender & Sexuality Studies. Latin America as a world region has passed some of the most progressive and expansive legislation in regard to LGBTQ+ rights and protections yet the rates of discrimination according to statistics kept on violence, hate crimes and murder of members of the LGBTQ+ community have not subsided with these legislative pushes (Rocha 2018). Argentina has been at the forefront of writing laws offering freedom of marriage and adoption to the LGBTQ+ community while also enacting the first law that allows individuals to change their gender identity to match their own self-identification without the need of a judge or medical appointment. Chile has not acted in the same way, but the influence of their neighbors has prompted debates and protests from activists demanding similar rights and protections. The time period represents a transition from a repressive militaristic dictatorship to democracy in both Chile and Argentina. At the center of these advances is the presence of activism and activist voices of which all of the authors

[1] I will use the term LGBTQ+ to refer to the community of people who challenge heteronormative standards of sexuality and gender by embracing their own Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans or Queer identity.

discussed in this project participate in various degrees in their local communities. The rise in activism pushing for rights and recognitions from the LGBTQ+ community has moved Latin America into a position of being at the forefront of the debate on rights and protections for the LGBTQ+ community. A cornerstone of their struggle is to attain visibility as citizens and people. I contend that they are able to gain a high degree of positive visibility through literary representations that challenge traditional conventions of masculinity in Chile and Argentina.

My research is guided by questions of how men who are part of the LGBTQ+ community formulate their own versions of masculinity when dominant hegemonic versions of masculinity exclude them because of their non-heteronormative sexual orientations and/or gender identities that do not conform to the man/woman binary prevalent in Chile and Argentina. How do men who pertain to the LGBTQ+ approach masculinity? Do men who identify as gay construct their masculinity the same way as men who identify as queer? Do they utilize aspects of a hegemonic masculinity in their own version of masculinity? I explore how the authors Luis Corbacho, Alberto Fuguet, Mhoris eMm, Pedro Lemebel, Osvaldo Bazán and Pablo Simonetti are participating in creating an empowering regime of visibility around LGBTQ+ men and challenging traditional notions of masculinity through their novels and short stories. The authors under analysis here engage in a project of visibility of the specific male subjectivities of gay men, queer men and gay men as fathers. A close reading of their works through the lens of social visibility, I also use an intersectional approach from Masculinity Studies, Gender Studies and Queery Theory to show how they are developing new forms of subjectivities related to the LGBTQ+ community that challenge monolithic ideas of masculinity as patriarchal and heteronormative[2] in Chile and Argentina. Those who self-identify as gay, lesbian, queer,

[2] The concept of heteronormativity states that people fall into natural and complementary categories of male and female and should have a heterosexual sexual orientation in order to participate in reproduction and reflect the

transsexual, transvestite, intersexual or any other sexual orientation considered deviant or unacceptable in society still face the risk of discrimination in both countries through institutional systems like health care because of the social stigmas that still exist (Rocha 2018). Gay, queer and trans citizens are far more likely to face conditions of poverty, work exploitation and public shaming because of perceived differences coded as deviant by the hegemonic societal norm that has established a heterosexually based default for everyone (Brindle 2018).

My dissertation is divided into four sections. In the second chapter, I give a brief overview of recent scholarship on literary representations that come from LGBTQ+ authors and the process of making visible the literary history of such works. The focus on representations of men who are part of the LGBTQ+ community challenges heteronormativity and the perceptions of LGBTQ+ citizens as deviants and pathologized, invisibilized members of society. A perception that heterosexuality is the default sexual orientation for everyone in a given society has led to the marginalization of those who fall outside of its boundaries such as members of the LGBTQ+ community who do not engage in exclusive heterosexual relationships and participate in the reproduction of offspring to expand the nation (Subero 2014). It has also been influenced by ideas of masculinity from a patriarchal point of view that labels women as inferior to men and promotes competition amongst men to be strong, stoic, sexually active and willing participants in violence to prove their manhood (Connell 1995). Gay and queer men are often labeled as effeminate and "less than men" for their perceived deviance and sexual preferences. I then engage in theoretical perspectives about masculinity from R.W. Connell and other well-known Masculinity Studies scholars to guide my readings in understanding and analyzing the concept of masculinity in contemporary works by gay and queer authors in the Southern Cone. I discuss

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perceived natural order of things. Michael Warner states in his introduction to *Fear of a Queer Planet* that "het culture thinks of itself as the elemental form of human association, as the very model of intergender relations, as the indivisible basis of all community, and as the means of reproduction without which society wouldn't exist" (xxi).

visibility from a social theory perspective as developed by Andrea Mubi Brighenti to provide a theoretical framework. Brighenti's theory of visibility that informs my discussion of how masculinity has been used as a hegemonic gender model to enforce a heteronormative expectation for men and women that has often been used to silence and make invisible the LGBTQ+ community in both Chile and Argentina from the early days of each country's independence until the 1970's and the global rise of the gay liberation movement.

The third chapter explores the development of gay identity in the 21st century with a focus on a defined performance of gay masculinity and how it functions as a way of reconciling previously held hegemonic notions of masculinity that having same sex desires for men signified that they were "less than" men or as deviants incapable of upholding the strong characteristics of manhood (Connell 1995). The men at the center of my analysis exist in a space where enactments of masculinity studies and gay studies intersect. The development of gay masculinity in Western countries and Latin America "was and continues to be an overwhelming task for the individual as well as for the community at large" (Halkitis 132). The representations of the men who exhibit this gay masculinity are not seeking to upend the social order as much as claim their place in society as men. They recreate many of the heteronormative and patriarchal attitudes of masculinity while maintaining their open and proud sense of being gay. In this chapter, I analyze two novels, one from Chile and one from Argentina, that follow the lives of openly gay men in modern day Chile and Argentina and how they enact similar ideas of performing masculinity while also recognizing and satisfying their same sex desires. From Argentina, I analyze *Mi amado Mr. B* (2006) by writer and journalist Luis Corbacho and from Chile *Sudor* (2016) by writer and journalist Alberto Fuguet. Corbacho's novel centers on magazine editor Martín Alcorta and his torrid love affair with Peruvian TV star and author Felipe Brown. Martin and

Felipe occupy different social classes and lifestyles but see themselves as strong men who are not held back by the heteronormative world in which they live. Fuguet's novel recounts three days in the life of Alfredo, a book editor who must entertain the son of a wealthy client. The reader is taken on a journey of Santiago's gay spaces, Alf's frequent hook-ups via the *Grindr* app and his love affair with Rafa. The ability and freedom to be able to take on exclusively gay masculine identities in which gay men make their own decisions free of the imposition of other's expectations on them is important to the protagonists in these novels. Both novels explore themes of how gay men navigate the heteronormative based active/passive dynamic amongst each other, the way in which they actively differentiate themselves from women and how they behave in public spaces coded as heteronormative. Both main characters, Martin and Alf, display a lot of similarities and some differences in how they think of themselves and present themselves to the world as gay men who do not see themselves as having compromised their sense of masculinity due to their non-heteronormative sexual orientation.

The representation of the (gay/queer male) body and its representation as pathologized and as a site of societal sickness has been discussed at length by Foucault (1975, 1976), Connell (1987, 1995), Mosse (1996), Balderston and Guy (1997), and Melo (2011). They have each delved into the way it has been represented as the ills of society and a psychological sickness at odds with the heteronormative expectations. Some have focused on a philosophical debate of representations of the body from a gendered point of view and others, like Balderston and Guy's collection *Sex and Sexuality in Latin America*, focus on the body in a Latin American context. In one chapter, Oscar Montero outlines a historical perspective of how the homosexual body is described as "the source of metaphors of illness and social contamination" (102) which proved to be "a lasting portrait whose outlines are still very much a part of our cultural and political

landscape" (103) in Latin America. Montero finds that "disease was now seen as making its mark not only upon the body but upon the human character as well" (27) as a concept forged in 18th century Europe and continued in cultures influenced by Europe such as in Chile and Argentina. Michel Foucault states that the negative image of gay men is a "stereotypical portrait of the homosexual or invert: not only his mannerisms, his bearing, the way he gets dolled up, his coquetry, but also his facial expressions, his anatomy, the feminine morphology of his whole body, are regularly included in this disparaging description" (18). He connects the way that gay male bodies are portrayed as all being linked to a disparaging description. These images are not seen as positive and exemplary of a person who identifies as a man but rather a point of shame. Alan Petersen confirms that "by the 1930s, it was widely accepted in medical and scientific circles that homosexuality was pathological" (60).

Mosse states emphatically that these negative portraits of the gay male body have long lasting effects on the images and stereotypes of men as constructed in the Enlightenment and passed on to modern day conceptions of men masculinity. Medical practitioner's knowledge of the body and disease bestowed upon them, whether intentional or not, a status of power to write and create ideas and beliefs about the body that would last for centuries. Mosse develops at length the creation of a countertype body, that of a diseased person, homosexual or other degenerate of society, that offered hegemonic masculinity a foil to its strong man image[3]. The gay male bodies of the works under analysis here are generally active bodies as well as strong, positive representations of gay male subjectivities. They even challenge the image of passivity in the way it is discussed and acknowledged to exist, but it's not part of the representation of the

[3] A countertype body as described by Mosse was a body that could act as an opposition to the masculine ideal as femininity has done. Mosse states "this idea of masculinity, indeed modern society as a whole, needed an image against which it could define itself. Those who stood outside or were marginalized by society provided a countertype that reflected, as in a convex mirror, the reverse of the social norm" (57). The homosexual body was one of several countertypes that became popular in modern societies around the globe in the 19th and 20th centuries.

male bodies in these works. According to Connell "patriarchal culture has a simple interpretation of gay men: they lack masculinity" (Connell 143). This is an important starting point to gay men taking charge of the representations of their own bodies to change the regime of visibility about them. By understanding the negative and demasculinized manner in which they are viewed, they can begin to find a starting point to constructing their own positive representations. Throughout Melo's historical geography of gay literature in Argentina, it's the body and figure of the gay male that appears as "una de las metáforas paradigmáticas del sexo anómalo y peligroso, del sexo improductivo que no produce generación" (15) and prevents the prosperous rise of a nation. It's a body that's seen as having no value to the nation due its perceived sterile and fruitless nature. For gay men who want to be fathers, this position is brought into question as they find other ways of performing the role of father.

The fourth chapter explores the identity of queered masculinity which I define as different from gay masculinity in a sense that it is more politically charged and has a more destabilizing aspect with respect to gender norms. Whereas the men in the second chapter are seeking to belong to the dominant order of men, the queerly masculine men do not seek to replicate it but rather challenge its validity. In this chapter, I scrutinize how two authors and represent queered versions of masculinity. From Argentina, I have chosen an author who is a writer/poet/performance artist that goes by the name Mhoris eMm. Mhoris actively participates in slam poetry events in Buenos Aires and has won several competitions over the past five years. He has published several collections of poetry and short stories and it is his short story "La tan compleja y heterofóbica historia de Juance" (2015) I analyze. His short story tells of a young heterosexual man who suffers from heterophobia that critiques dominant heterosexual homophobia. The story is a queer take on the common effects of homophobia (which is also

accompanied by transphobia and other phobias of sexualities considered deviant) and creates an absurd account of how one can be phobic of one's own sexual identity. The other literary work I have chosen is the novel *Tengo miedo torero* (2001) by Chilean artist/activist/poet Pedro Lemebel. In his novel, the narrator brings together a queer character with the revolutionaries of the Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez that tried to assassinate Pinochet while on a trip to his country retreat in Cajón del Maipo. By bringing together themes of queer men, revolutionaries and the possibility of changing the future of Chile by removing Pinochet from power at the hands of a group that is open and accepting of a queer citizen, Lemebel provides various ways to see the possibility of a queer inclusive Chile (Lewis 2010). One notable difference between the representations found in the chapter on queer masculinity is the discernible difference in social class. Men who self-identify as queer in these literary representations are noticeably poorer and come from more economically deprived sections of their respective cultures. For these queer men, they enact a type of masculinity that is meant to disturb and shake the foundations of hegemonic masculinities, including its connection to images of wealth and power as necessary to enacting masculinity. Their bodies become objects onto which acts are carried out that can challenge and change the perception of what masculinity can be. This perspective of Queer Theory looks at the performative aspect of gender. Through a queered masculinity, the idea of what it means to be a man will be challenged and questions asked of how masculinity could ever be limited to just enactment of itself as a way for men to express themselves as men. While queered masculinity is not exclusive to the Southern Cone, the use of queer ideas by activist writers and artists has inspired many representations of queered men to emerge in literary cultural production in the region.

Performativity as a way of viewing gender and sex as a social construct was developed

by Judith Butler in her famous work *Gender Trouble* (1990), a key voice of gender and queer studies. In it, she uses drag as a way to show that categories of men and women are not as stable as they may appear and the ability to effectively perform one set of gender roles by a person of the opposite gender and play with them puts into doubt the stability of the categories of men and women. She defines performative acts as such: "acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of an internal core or substance but produce this *on the surface* of the body" (185). These acts and gestures are "*performative* in the sense that the essence of identity that they otherwise purport to express are *fabrication* manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means" (185). Butler makes clear that in her description of *performative* acts that they are not representative of some desire that is a part of the essence of our identity but rather a fabricated act that seeks to call itself and define itself as an essence of identity. It produces the effect it seeks to represent through the performance. Performativity is also linked to visibility as it is in the performance of gender norms and sexuality norms that a subject can make their place in society or their queerness known. Hegemonic discourses from Chile and Argentina have often been pushed forward by the Church and adopted by the State as purporting men and women exist to procreate (Bazán 2004). From a Butler based perspective, this line of argument has often been used to code the body and its corporal actions as a natural representations of an inner essence but by looking at how drag undermines this through the performance of gender, it creates a lens of seeing gender as performative with the body as the site where this performance takes place. This production *on the surface* of the body does not, for Butler, show any sort of essence from within the body but rather a use of the body's external surface to purvey the appearance that the gesture comes from within. The behaviors labeled as inherent to a person's gender are then reiterated on a daily basis to perform them and reify them as having always existed even though it is the

performance of them that gives them meaning. A queer perspective then argues that behaviors are nothing more than a learned social construct repeatedly performed. To reify its claim as an essence it employs the use of corporeal signs that are repeated over and over. This repetition becomes a performance of behaviors produced, as Butler states, on the surface of the body in an attempt to appear as if it comes from an internal essence but it is produced by the language used to describe it. This process naturalizes a behavior and assigns it to people categorized as men and women and becomes known as gender roles that are presented as normal functions of society.

Butler's work on performativity is a response to heteronormative expectations of gender that have classified reproductive heterosexuality as the norm for men and women and codified anti-normative behaviors as aberrations against nature. This creates an "Other" of gender for those who fall outside the norms of heteronormative sexuality and produces a reality in which engaging in anti-normative behaviors causes a tension with the dominant discourse of compulsory heterosexuality. Two prominent Latin American voices that also discuss this problematic nature of gender and sexuality and propose a queer perspective about Latin American ideas of gender and sexuality are Maria Lugones and Gloria Anzaldúa. Lugones argues that "gender is a colonial imposition, not just as it imposes itself on life as lived in tune with cosmologies incompatible with the modern logic of dichotomies, but also the inhabitations of worlds understood, constructed, and in accordance with such cosmologies animated the self-among others in resistance from and at the extreme tension of the colonial difference" (748). She further explains that the "men/women dichotomy as a normative construction of the social - a mark of civilization, citizenship, and membership in civil society - was and is constantly renewed" (748). The colonial imposition of a man/woman binary has structured the societal rules and expectations in Latin American countries and the constant renewal to which Lugones refers

is part of its performance to reify itself as an essential part of the identity of people within the man/woman binary. Anzaldúa also discusses gender from a decolonial perspective and proposes the idea that "there is something compelling about being both male and female, about having an entry into both worlds" (41). She further elaborates that "what we are suffering from is an absolute despot duality that says we are able to be only one or the other. It claims that human nature is limited and cannot evolve into something better" (41). From their perspective, the binary man/woman is too limiting and the Latin American context has been no exception to needing a queering process to challenge the limits of these categories and push the boundaries of how people can express themselves both sexually and in their daily lives as something not limited to a categorical man or woman.

The fifth chapter examines the issue of whether gay men can reconcile the dual role of gay men as fathers. For this chapter, I have chosen the novels *La razón de los amantes* (2007) by Chilean author Pablo Simonetti and *Vos porque no tenés hijos* (2011) by Argentine writer/journalist Osvaldo Bazán. Both novels and their characters reflect a cultural expectation that family life belongs to people who see themselves as part of the heteronormative and dominant world. Veronica Schild notes that in Chile "heteronormative families have been the explicit object of social regulation over the years" (212) and have provided a justification for the State to need "to regulate not only sexuality but also norms femininity and masculinity" (212). This is linked with visibility as Bernstein and Reimann note that "the issue of visibility, and who can be visible, is intimately linked to whether family politics are tied to acceptance or transformation" (13). The difference in accepting someone doesn't necessarily signal a transformation of the basic familial group, but a move towards transforming what comprises a family can be a spark to change the institution of the family that can't be undone. Preserving the

institution of the heteronormative family is often the basis of pushback towards the LGBTQ+ community engaging in family life and having the freedom marry and adopt children. The men in the two novels also reflect the same higher social class standing gay men portray as opposed to being seen as queer. In two countries where LGBTQ+ activists are fighting for State recognition of their ability to adopt and raise children, the literary cultural production suggests that legal recognitions aren't the only obstacles LGBTQ+ communities have to face in terms of their abilities to be fathers. Both novels were written by authors who are openly and proudly gay yet the realities they represent in them are anything but positive about the state of gay fatherhood. They explore themes of fatherhood and being gay to show the constant tensions of trying to reconcile fatherhood and a gay identity. While the visibility of gay men as fathers is not as empowering as in the other works, the visibility brought to issues reconciling gay man as fathers means the authors are visibilizing this problem within the LGBTQ+ community. By looking at these representations of LGBTQ+ men in Chile and Argentina from a literary perspective, it becomes possible to see how literature is able to explore themes and problems in ways that more prominent media in public discourse is lacking. These works represent a new turn in LGBTQ+ literary output from the previous century of gay/queer/transvestite characters that have been more melodramatic, tragic and challenging to the heterosexually dominated cultures of Chile and Argentina.

The visibility of gay father figures has been thrust into view as LGBTQ+ rights regarding adoptions by same sex couples come into existence in Chile and Argentina via various laws enacted since 2010 in both countries. Unfortunately for many gay men who want to be fathers, “the phenomenon of gay fathers in society is not new; the openness of their presence and existence at all social levels is” (Miller 224) and its lack of development contributes to a negative

visibility regime about them. A public perception of gay men and children tends to paint the pairing of the two together as a recipe for sexual abuse of children. Abbie Goldberg states that "whereas parenthood is culturally accessible, socially valued, and even expected among heterosexual married men and women, gay men who wish to parent are subject to societal scrutiny and questioning" (27). If they engage in adoption instead of seeking out a surrogate, they often find themselves encountering guides and perspectives based on heterosexual couples who are unable to have children the "natural way". Many gay men have to not only face resistance from the hegemonic patriarchal culture but from their own community as well. For many queer activists and scholars, imitating the heteronormative patriarchal family is looked down on and a source of tension amongst members of the LGBTQ+ community. With gay and lesbian parents becoming more visible, they are questioning and at times redefining what the family can be. The family unit as it has been defined in patriarchal Latin American countries functions in a manner that "the senior male controls and protects everyone in the household - male and female" (Dore 105). Patriarchal masculinity's position of hegemonic power means it has a central role in guiding how men to be socialized to see themselves as fathers who must repeat this pattern and continue to populate the nation and it's a role that many gay men also want to take on and perform. The father as a symbol of strength, power and order of the nation is one that has been present for a long time in Latin America and its literary cultural production. Connell connects masculinity and fatherhood in *Masculinities* (1995) stating that "masculinity, it would follow, is the social elaboration of the biological function of fatherhood" (52). This connection of the social with the biological is an important point of emphasis because it shows that they can be seen as separate aspects of masculinity that have been tied together to create a monolithic category of the father figure. It is also the visible manifestation of one's arrival at the

pinnacle of manhood in a patriarchal society, recreating the familial unit in which the man rules. The categories of men and fathers is so tightly bound that it is almost impossible to see one without being reminded of the other and these tensions and pressures are challenged in two novels in question in that chapter.

Through their various experiences with enacting masculinity and the challenges they face being linked to the LGBTQ+ community in Chile and Argentina, the men under analysis in these novels challenge the basic tenets of patriarchal masculinity and opens the possibilities of what men can be. With the movement towards democracy and the rising rainbow tide of activism around the world of communities coming together to demand equal rights, protections and freedoms to marry, adopt children and form families, the LGBTQ+ movement is challenging the very notion and limits of what masculinity is.

CHAPTER 2

MASCULINITY AND THE CASE FOR VISIBILITY

Visibility and Queer Literature in the Southern Cone

Activism as a way of using action to bring about swift political and social change in Latin America is an important part of the political process. As the second decade of the 21st century comes to a close, activism in Latin America reflects a global trend of using large groups of people, and oftentimes organized via social media to disseminate information, to demand rights and protections each group feels are overlooked by governments. The authors and artists under discussion in this study have some connection to activism in favor of the LGBTQ+ community in their respective countries of Chile and Argentina. Buenos Aires is home to the famous Plaza de Mayo where mothers of disappeared children started protesting in 1977 under the military junta. In Chile under the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, activists such as Pedro Lemebel started to stage protests towards the end of his reign to call attention to problems plaguing the Chilean people the government either willfully ignored or were unaware of. In the case of Lemebel, he spent time drawing attention to the plight of the LGBTQ+ community that was ravaged by AIDS and suffered from discriminatory practices that they had little legal recourse to fight back against. Pablo Simonetti started his career as an engineer but quickly transformed into an important writer and activist for the Chilean gay community. He along with Luis Larraín Stieb and Antonio Bascuñán started the ONG Fundación Iguales to promote the inclusion of gender and sexual diversity into Chilean social life and politics. One of their biggest projects to date known as “la ley de Acuerdo de Vida en Pareja” advocates for the rights of

people of the same sex to enjoy full protections of marriage, inheritance rights and ability to raise children as any heterosexual couple does. In Argentina, Mhoris eMm represents an emerging generation of activists related artists who use artistic and literary mediums to challenge traditional ideas of gender, sexuality and the family structure to show a more inclusive possibility for a queer future. It is not surprising that the activist centered ideas of Queer Theory have made their way to the Southern Cone as a way of forging a path to more inclusivity of sexual and gender diversity beyond the limits of heteronormativity.

Activism in Latin America helped spur on the pink tide of government rule in the late 20th century and early 21st century to combat widespread income inequalities and flagrant abuses of human rights (Gatehouse 2019). Under the leadership of Bachelet in Chile, the Kirschner government in Argentina and Morales in Bolivia, Latin American countries have been able to change the trajectory of their respective countries that spent much of the 20th century under the control of military dictatorships influenced from abroad by foreign entities like the United States. They focused on social ills like reducing extreme poverty, providing protections to natural resources and human rights. Under the umbrella of human rights, feminist activists marched and demanded access to jobs, financial freedom and a trajectory towards a future that meant their reliance on men for survival was reduced (Morris 2019). It is now allowing a new set of voices from the LGBTQ+ community to create what Ali Rocha describes as "the rainbow tide" in *Voices of Latin America: social movements and the new activism* (2019). Until 1999, homosexual activity was still criminalized in Chile. The progress has been rapid and the laws and protections for the LGBTQ+ community in Latin America are so advanced in some cases (Argentina's gender identity law) that they are the only ones of their kind. Despite the advances, violence still occurs because legal changes do not necessarily stimulate social attitude changes as

Rocha points out. She states that "in Europe there were 123 killings of trans people between 2008 and 2017, the same period saw 2,048 killed in Central and South America" (52). Argentina saw one of its most high profile trans activist, Diana Sacayán, brutally murdered in October 2015 by a man later sentenced to life in prison. This continuance of violence shows how important the work of activists pushing for changes is and how important a queer approach is towards transforming our conceptions of gender and sexuality to challenge the way we think of them and utilize them in our daily lives beyond just the realm of the legal.

In academia, queer theory and ideas often form a basis for activist-based ideas towards gender and sexuality. As a formalized discipline, studies began in the early 1990's as a continuation of challenges to gender norms instigated by feminist scholars to further challenge the generally accepted ideas of gender and sexuality as given identities based on biological sex at birth. Queer thinking and queering projects have expanded in recent years and will be discussed further in Chapter 4. It has more recently in the 21st century been used by many critics and scholars to engage in a project of showing the queer history of nations, bringing visibility to LGBTQ+ communities and legitimizing sexual identities deemed deviant by dominant cultural forces. Queer literature and queer readings of literature are also a key aspect of this queer turn in examining history and culture through this new lens. A key question often asked when using queer theory to analyze a text is whether it is the text that is queer or the reading of it. This perspective change can go both ways and is best utilized on a case by case basis of whether it is the text or the reading that is queer. Teresa de Lauretis' claim that "a queer text carries the inscription of sexuality as something more than sex" (244) is a good starting point to propose a crucial question for readers who want to utilize a queer theoretical approach and her statement addresses the process of queer reading. It also utilizes Derrida's notion that the reader can

deconstruct the text by finding hidden meanings in the connotations of the text. Her statement that one should ask whether it is the text that represents sexuality as something more than sex is advising the reader to ask themselves if there is something more to the representation of sexuality than meets the eye. Approaching a text from this perspective confronts the issues and stigmas associated with queerness in many cultures and the manner in which authors have inscribed queer meanings to characters, objects, places etc. in texts was to go beyond the diegetic level with allusions and insinuations. Queer readings are possible with works involving homosexual characters, but homosexuality is not the only way of being queer. Queer studies have absorbed gay and lesbian studies under its inclusive term meaning that gay and lesbian are often classified as queer and sought out in queer readings of texts, but queer doesn't only mean gay and lesbian and queer readings don't only argue that characters are gay and/or lesbian (Foster 1997). Queer readings function on a level of connotations in a text as Jake Pitre argues in his queer reading of *The Legend of Korra*. He defines a queer reading as "the act of recruiting certain signifiers present in the text to be read as subtext for a queer implication" (23). The reason queer spectators and texts are still operating on a connotative level is that a fear factor of acceptance still exists but there is a hope that the connotations of a queer text can be transformed into denotations that would create a more visible identity and place in society. Queer is meant to be disruptive to set systems of gender and sexuality to propose that nothing is actually set in stone or naturally occurring.

The decade of the 1990's and subsequent first decade of the 2000's have seen a plethora of queer readings throughout Europe and North American with some Latin American countries also participating in this process. One of the early scholars of gay and queer writing in Latin America is David William Foster whose 1991 study *Gay and Lesbian Themes in Latin American*

Writing looks at bringing together texts "concerned with the semiotics of homosexuality and its representation, both in the social text in the first instance and in the literary text in the specific case of the novel" (5). He also acknowledges the tension between heteronormative culture and gay and lesbian writings as being a primary point of emphasis in many works of fiction. Literature from the Spanish speaking world has also experienced a rereading of the canon with works like *¿Entiendes? Queer Readings, Hispanic Writings* (1995) and *Queer Iberia: Sexualities, Cultures and Crossings from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance* (1999) as prime examples of looking again at well-known literature through a queer lens. In both Chile and Argentina, queer revisions of history have been done to include the LGBTQ+ community in the historical account. With the reorganizing of gay rights movements during the transition to democracy, the push to make visible queer voices in the historical and literary canon has seen more input into the process of visibilization calling attention in a positive manner to empower, accurately represent and promote equality amongst everyone regardless of sexual orientation or identity. In Argentina and Chile, these voices intersect in literary and activist circles.

Juan Pablo Sutherland, well known queer academic and activist in Chile, assembled *A corazón abierta: Geografía literaria de la homosexualidad en Chile* in 2002. In his collection, he brings together numerous expressions of gay and queer writing in Chile throughout the 20th century to visibilize a literary geography of queer characters and themes in Chilean literature. Chilean activist Victor Hugo Robles was one of the first to publish a historical account of the MOVILH[4] movement and establish himself as a voice of the Chilean LGBTQ+ movement demanding rights and protections in his work *Bandera hueca* (2008). Óscar Contardo followed

[4] MOVILH (Movimiento de integración y liberación homosexual) was formally organized on June 28, 1991. It was made up of various people from different social and educational backgrounds. Their primary goal was to bring visibility to the realities of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transsexual members of Chilean society in both public and private spaces. They designed legal, social and cultural actions designed to stop the violation of human rights members of the LGBTQ community had suffered for decades.

soon after with a project covering Chilean history, *Raro: una historia gay de Chile* (2011). In Argentina, Flavio Raspardi and Alejandro Modarelli put together a history of the underground gay circuit during the years of Argentina's military dictatorship in their 2001 work *Fiestas, baños y exilios: los gays porteños en la última dictadura*. Osvaldo Bazán published the first edition of *Historia de la homosexualidad en la Argentina* (2004) and has seen the book expand with three subsequent editions. Adrián Melo wrote *Historia de la literatura gay en Argentina* in 2011 to analyze the figure of the homosexual throughout the history of Argentinian literature. Even though not all of these books are literary productions from Chile and Argentina, they represent a project that literature is also participating in itself, the act of making visible the long invisible queer subject by bringing the subject of the character's gay desire or homosexual identity to the forefront of their studies.

The importance of the process of visibilization to the current movement in which LGBTQ+ writers and artists has contributed to a period of increased literary and historical production in the Southern Cone region. In both Argentina and Chile, authors of these important works of the queer/gay/transvestite/homosexual figure have expressed openly that they are engaging in this process of visibilization. The works by Contardo and Robles offer historical perspectives and more personalized histories as related to the gay and queer community as a whole. Contardo states in his introduction to *Raro* that "la referencia habitual de la prensa de la época sobre los homosexuals se puede comparar con la que se hace sobre una especie zoológica que no tiene voz para hablar sobre sí misma" (23). Newspaper headlines often used words alluding to a secret society of homosexuals that could not be trusted and risked corrupting the whole country. He also recognizes that the transition period to democracy was the point in Chile's history when the LGBTQ+ discourse finally found a sense of visibility within the

country albeit not the positive one it needed to shape for itself. He states that “la homosexualidad entendida como un ‘tema’ o más bien como un ‘problema’ sobre el que había que pronunciarse, comenzó a filtrarse en el discurso público de distintas personalidades en los primeros años del retorno a la democracia” (25). Contardo is referencing the type process of visibility Brighenti describes and the struggle between of the processes that go into making a subject visible by either its own will or outside forces. He points the finger at how the press represented the LGBTQ+ community instead of allowing them to represent themselves. Members of the press are not in the business of providing positive images of marginalized social groups as much as creating stories that will sell their product. This neoliberal influence of needing to sensationalize a story to sell copies and generate capital often proves problematic for the LGBTQ+ community as the history of *Los 41* demonstrates. The control of an image is of the utmost importance to how the LGBTQ+ community is perceived by the public at large and how the myths of the past such as the pathologization of homosexuals can continue. Jorge Salessi mentions the same problem existed in early 20th century Buenos Aires in *Medicos, maleantes y maricas* (1995) that had a negative effect on the homosexual community. He states that “esa nueva visibilidad de los homosexuals en el Buenos Aires del período 1895-1904 era muy similar a la que habían logrado los activistas de la C.H.A. a mediados de 1989, gracias a un debate que ocupó grandes espacios en los periódicos de mayor circulación” (182). For Contardo, an important motivating factor in his work is to show that Chile is a country that has taken issue with its queer population that has always been present and actively engaged in a process of (mis)representing them.

The future looks promising as more LGBTQ+ voices come forward and take control of their own visibility regime, but the works and activists that garner the majority of attention are men. Issues regarding lesbian or queer women are not as easy to find as works about men.

Contardo's work, in the vein of the other books referenced, has a gendered tone to it as men are central to the representation of problems between society and their sexual outlaws. Putting *Raro* through a Gender Studies lens demonstrates how gendered his gay history of Chile is as men become the focal point for the fight against homosexuality and the status of men's masculinity is often used as the justification for punishment against performances of non-heterosexual versions of masculinity. Often a key argument against homosexuality is its association with not having children and a family, a crucial aspect of a socially constructed manhood. Contardo states that "en Chile – y en otras sociedades similares –, el argumento principal para castigar a las personas que se relacionan con aquellos de su mismo sexo es que en dicha relación no es posible la reproducción y, por lo tanto, se pone en peligro el porvenir de la comunidad" (51). Reproducing children is a show of manhood and the ability to contribute a commodity to the community in the form of a new person who will contribute to growing the numbers of said community and help it become more powerful. Moving forward, the medical discourses in European countries spurred by scandalous trials such as that of Oscar Wilde arrived in Chile and created the idea of homosexuals as having some sort mental disorder. Gregorio Marañón was one such medical professional from Spain that claimed homosexuality stemmed from an endocrine problem, adding to the list of biological based reasons for discrimination. The burgeoning promise of the more liberal minded Allende government did not bring any changes for the LGBTQ+ community as the influence of Fidel Castro's anti-homosexuality rhetoric had made its way to Chile. Chilean communist Rodrigo Rojas commented on the problematic presence of too many *maricones* on the Cuban island and this attitude was reflected in Chile with their lack of interest inhibiting a gay rights movement gaining traction in the capital. Rojas' comment about the presence of too many men he perceives as homosexual demonstrates the issue of (in)visibility the LGBTQ+

community has faced throughout the 20th century in Chile and the continuance of the discrimination promised to continue despite which end of the political spectrum the ruling class is on.

Robles' work *Bandera hueca* (2008) discusses what he argues is a gap in Chilean history in regard to the homosexual community. He tells the story of the gay liberation movement (MOVILH) in Chile and describes the symbolism of his book title as such: "hueco es un espacio a llenar y la demanda homosexual es una demanda hueca mientras no esté resuelta en nuestra cultura" (93). The reference to a hole symbolizes the obvious lack of inclusion of members of the LGBTQ+ community in the history and public discourse of the country. Robles captures important moments of tension where the thresholds of two worlds come into contact. At a conference in which MOVILH announced its intent to participate in a human right's march, all thirteen different news stations, minus one with direct links to the Church, appeared to film the declaration. This was a key moment in which "el hecho representó una conquista clave para la causa política del MOVILH por el efecto multiplicador que provocó la visibilidad gay en la opinión pública" (46). His perspective contrasts sharply with the opinion of "Movimientos por los Derechos del Hombre" whose members "criticaron la visibilidad de los gays" (46) stating that a society that allows them to be seen "sólo sirve para confundir más" (46). The political and social goal of MOVILH is to bring visibility to the community of sexual minorities with the end result of promoting a cultural and social change in attitudes and acceptance towards members of the LGBTQ+ community. The first step in this movement is to make the community visible to the public eye but in doing so, previously separated social spaces were brought together, and the encounters have been tense. Robles highlights the goals of MOVILH leader Roberto Pablo who became the first gay man to run for a public office (a city council position). One of his most

important points in his campaign was that he didn't just want to sit in a seat of power to feel important, but because sitting in that seat would allow him to “visibilizar el tema homosexual” (100). Unfortunately, in those elections of 1996, the pro-gay politicians, instead of making the homosexual movement more positive visibility, “contribuyó a desarticular la lucha social” (101) according to Robles. It was this political stagnation and lack of progress that inspired Robles to action and the creation of his alter ego “El Che de los gays”. He states “estas acciones, aceptadas por unos y rechazados por otros, contribuyeron a dar visibilidad a la lucha homosexual de Chile” (103) through the use of the image of Che. It's interesting that he chose to adopt the persona of Che, a man known for his stance against homosexuality, in order to bring a voice and visibility to the LGBTQ+ community. It shows the complicated nature of the decisions that members of the LBGTQ+ community face when they need a recognizable revolutionary figure in order to gain the attention to promote change.

Robles’ use of the figure of Che in his performances has generated success in bringing visibility to his community that he feels has been silenced and made to be invisible from the public view. Part of his reasoning in taking on the persona of Che Guevara is a question he has been asked frequently and his response is that he found himself as being an instrument of Che’s intense desire for cultural reconfiguration. It was due to this that “tal vez en esta loca encarnación busca ajustar cuentas con su propio pasado, integrando ahora las luchas sexuales e identitarias que en su tiempo no pudo o no quiso librar, sea con incomprensión machista o por carecer de un contexto politico – cultural propicio” (Interview w/ Carolina Espinoza, 2017). For Robles, he is able to parse the homophobic aspect of Che’s ideology from the rest of his aura of cultural revolutionary who did not mind taking the hard road to push for change he felt was necessary because he feels Che would have evolved his stance over time. In the same interview,

Robles describes being in Madrid, Spain for the 2017 Pride Celebration that paid homage to the Stonewall Riots of New York as the flashpoint that set off the Gay Liberation Movement. He views that moment as important as Carlos Jáuregui does, and a moment in the likes of Che, a violent reaction necessary to push back against the hegemonic ideals that closeted and silenced the LGBTQ+ community. He not only confronts the heteronormative world he sees as not gay friendly through a revolutionary yet polemical figure, but his own community as well to ensure it holds itself accountable in making positive progress. Robles is using the visibility of Che's international image as someone who provokes real, lasting revolution to sustain and support his cause fighting for the legitimacy of the LGBTQ+ community. In Gilda Luongo's chapter "Memorias de *Bandera hueca:* osadía de nombrar", her title itself alludes to this push for visibility as Robles is daring to name what has been known as the love that dare not speak its name. She states that the politics of his book "posibilita la reconstrucción de fronteras sociales y culturales a partir del reconocimiento de las reivindicaciones del movimiento homosexual y de sus agentes politicos y culturales" (132-33). Even though Luongo uses a different theoretical approach than my own, she too is drawn to the obvious project of bringing recognition and visibility to a community that has been cast to the margins of Chilean society for most of the country's existence. The voices of Robles and Contardo come from a more artistic and historical perspective but that of prominent author and literary critic Juan Pablo Sutherland is taking up the case of bringing visibility to gay literary representations.

Sutherland considers the gay identity to be one in transition from the days of the 19th century clinical definition to the modern person who is more likely to create their own self-identity. As his secondary title alludes, he is creating a literary geography of homosexuality in Chile by mapping out territories and showing a well-developed canon of literary works. He is

bringing the public to places they may have not seen before, and he is charting all of this in a manner that shows it is there and has been there all along. In the introduction to *A corazón abierta*, Sutherland states categorically in answering his own question as to why he has brought all of those texts together because "quizá la respuesta se ligue profundamente a la necesidad de mirar hacia atrás, leer los textos, visibilizarlos desde un nuevo ejercicio y, sencillamente, construir una panorámica que nos otorgue señales y nuevas visiones sobre la representación e interpretación en la historia literaria chilena" (9). In the following paragraph, he explains the problems the LGBTQ+ has faced from negative visibility regimes in that "las circunstancias que rodean la producción de esta antología aluden principalmente a la temática de una sexualidad periférica que, aunque naturalizada por completo en nuestra sociedad, es condenada aún a la estigmatización, la censura, la distorsión y el rechazo" (9). These sentiments parallel those in Sedgwick's declaration that a rereading of any literary canon specific to any culture that has never taken into consideration the influence and presence of a queer or gay subjectivity needs to be carried out. Through his collection, Sutherland demonstrates that one only need to look back to see the plethora of examples to find the presence of queer characters throughout the literary production of the Southern Cone. Sutherland points out that each author has a different manner in which they represent homosexuality, and this is what inspired his look at the literary geography of how homosexuality has been represented in literary form. Despite its availability to the public, many of the texts "permanecen ocultos a las lecturas actuales del gran público" (10). Some of the representations engage in what Brighenti suggests is a negative aspect of visibilization and "lean towards and are always dangerously close to stereotyping" (87). Others offer a more intimate first-hand knowledge of life as a homosexual in a culture that does not openly accept its existence or presence. The fact that both are present shows the challenges

writers face when creating representations of queer characters as some tend to reinforce the notion that they are tragic figures.

The first selection in Sutherland's anthology is the poem "Manifiesto (hablo por mi diferencia)" from the chronicles collection *Loco afán* (1995) by Pedro Lemebel, a prominent voice from the LGBTQ+ community and one who did not hold back in showing the negative consequences and impacts the invisibility on the queer community. In the opening lines the poetic voice declares "No soy un marica disfrazado de poeta, No necesito disfraz" (35). This statement removes the mask of poet from the socially labeled position of being a *marica* but also clarifies he is not hiding his queer identity behind the words of poetry. He is making himself visible, separating himself from the connotations of the past and encoding himself openly as a queer voice for the reader and the public to notice. The literary voice of "Manifiesto" must become visible and cross the threshold of poet/writer with his own queer identity and leave behind the space of othered invisibility where these queer voices spent most of the 19th and 20th centuries. The speaker unmasks his perceived difference and reframes it from the position of someone within the community instead of the hegemonic heteronormative culture. It is the symbol of a mask that marks a situation of invisibility. It is an invisibility that is self-imposed to hide queerness and imposed from the heteronormative culture to show queerness does not belong.

An interesting aspect of Sunderland's collection is its gendered nature. Whether intentional or not by Sutherland to do this is not a topic I wish to spend much time analyzing here. It speaks more to the issue of the freedom bestowed to men to engage in careers as writers and not confined to the space of the private life. It also reflects the public obsession with the male queer body more than the female one. Sutherland chose fragments of novels, short stories

and poems from thirty (Jorge Onfray has two examples included) authors. Of these thirty authors, four of them are women. He does include in his introduction an explanation of the copyright issues encountered trying to publish several poems by Gabriela Mistral in his anthology but it's hard to argue that a fifth woman would have somehow tipped the scales towards a more balanced representation that four did not achieve. Of the four women, two date to the early 1960s and the other two are from post Pinochet years. This does suggest a gendered view of homosexuality throughout the 20th century in which it was more often used to shame men because of its perceived threat to manhood and the nation. That is not to say that homosexual shaming of women did not take place but rather that it did not garner as much public attention. Looking to Argentina and how academics there have broached the same subject shows similar project of literary production and historical presence of the LGBTQ+ community. It's not just in literature where a process of reexamination of the past is occurring as some authors are looking at historical processes that have kept voices from the LGBTQ+ community silent and invisible.

One of the first authors to tackle this recovery process of Argentine queer memory is Osvaldo Bazán in 2004 with *La historia de la homosexualidad en la Argentina*. Like Contardo, he traces the roots of discrimination against people who would identify today as LGBTQ+ but has had not always had such a clearly defined identity. Sexuality is not a complete representation of a person, but it was often used to call attention to and isolate those whose sexuality did not reflect the socially accepted norms established by the Spanish who took over the lands of Argentina. He tells the story of Balboa arriving to the South American continent and finding a group of indigenous men engaged in sexual relations with each other. He was stunned, appalled and inspired to feed them to his hungry dogs as illustrated by Théodore de Bry in 1594. Moving

forward to present day, Bazán tells of the many issues of discrimination faced by those that did not conform to the dominant narrative of masculinity. Despite the changes to aspects of this dominant masculinity, one thing remained constant: not to engage in sexual relations with other men. The active/passive binary imposed from a heteronormative stance was also enforced and used to classify sexual relationships between men and is a subject I discuss in Chapter 3. Bazán also discusses important authors such as Manuel Puig, Roberto Arlt and Oscar Hermes Villordo and the impact their works have had on the mainstream of the literary cultural production of the country. His vignettes are generally three to five pages and meant to show a small moment in time of resistance by or discrimination against members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Focusing more on literary representation of gay figures, Adrián Melo published a comprehensive review of Argentina's gay literary canon with the goal of discussing its major works related to gay characters and representations. His *Historia de la literatura gay en Argentina* (2011) analyzes the various themes of a canon of gay literature in Argentina throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. His use of the term gay canon is informed by what he sees as one that "fue construido por homosexuales de cultura iluminista, en una época en que especialmente se puso en el centro del debate la relación entre sexualidad e identidad" (10). He echoes the importance of constructing a category of literature that challenges the pathology and negative attributes that the gay community has endured. As with the other authors I have already mentioned, Melo makes clear his project has several objectives in mind, one of which is "visualizar cómo se va construyendo y delineando la noción de homosexualidad en los escritos literarios fundacionales y en las ficciones argentinas del siglo XIX" (14). Despite Melo using the verb to visualize, in doing so he is visibilizing a canon of gay literature that shows a marked and developed presence. Melo starts his work with a discussion centered on perceptions of

homosexuality as deviant and abhorrent behavior from various perspectives such as: religious, political, social, familial and scientific. His goal is to show that “la figura del homosexual aparece como una de las metáforas paradigmáticas del sexo anómalo y peligroso, del sexo improductivo que no produce generación y que por lo tanto viene asociado a la idea del fin de una comunidad, de la degeneración de la especie y de la imposibilidad de hacer prosperar un proyecto de nación” (15). With so many attacks on the validity and acceptability of homosexual desires, it's not surprising that literature became a popular medium of creating and expressing positive and negative representations of gay culture and lifestyle. Melo insists that he does not consider "*la literatura gay un género sino una categoría política*" (11). By referring to gay literature more as a political category than a genre alludes to its recognition that the category of gay literature often pays homage to the political battles gay characters have had to engage in in order to advocate for and demands the same rights and freedoms as their heteronormative counterparts.

Melo poses that gay and queer literature cannot be separated from its political tone because of the connection of politics of the body to the activist movements like the Gay Liberation Movement. Within Feminist Studies and later Gender and Sexuality Studies, the body has been transformed into a site where politics are contested. This was a key point of the women’s and gay rights movements and literary cultural production has reflected this struggle. This also reflects the bio-political nature of visibility that Brighenti mentions in that “visibility oscillates between recognition and control, between an enabling and a disabling pole” (41). Those supporting the rights and protections of the LGBTQ+ community argue for the right of the individual to express themselves through their body as they see fit while a dominant heteronormative culture pushes back to try and disable the queer body from being recognized as

a valid entity and expressing itself openly in public. It is the focus on the movements and the social signals relayed by the LGBTQ+ body that have come into focus as well as the interaction with heteronormative bodies and the challenges towards its legitimacy as the only acceptable state of the body. Another important aspect of his study is making clear that most of the literary production he discusses comes from a masculine point of view written by elite men that have access to a certain type of culture they present in their works. Melo states that including representations of lesbians in literature within his study would be problematic due to what he claims is a tendency to represent a space out of the public view, the private home life women have often been consigned to in their literary representations. He describes this space as "las cartas eróticas entre amigas y amantes, es decir al campo de lo privado, fuera de la escena pública monopolizada por la masculinidad" (11). Melo does not blame women for this tendency but is convinced delving into the depth required to explore the space limitations present in literary lesbian representations would derail the focus of the work he is trying to do.

I cite these works and authors to show the power of visibility and the focus on making the marginalized communities a central focus of academic study. They demonstrate the present scholarship on representations of gay and queer men in literature of Chile and Argentina and how that scholarship can often find itself intersecting with community activism. The collection of a multitude of stories, novels and other literary forms together demonstrates that LGBTQ+ representations in Argentine literature has a broad scope and presence throughout the 20th century. They also show how these counter constructions play off of the constructed hegemonic model of excellence, the white, heterosexual bourgeoise man. It is generally against this figure that queer figures are represented and their tragedy, as Melo claims, is put on full display for all to see. The value of Melo's collection of a gay literary corpus and his review of it shows how

openly or discreetly writers have attempted to represent alternative masculinities and homosexual characters throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries. By doing so, he manages to demonstrate how the themes of the *invertido*, the psychologically disturbed invert character, transform into a more tragic character towards the end of the 20th century. He starts with the images of the nation presented in "El matadero" and moves forward to the naturalist novels such as *En la sangre* (1887) by Eugenio Cambaceres where certain aspects of sexuality were being shown to be dangerous to people and therefore, the future of the nation. The naturalist representation of (homo)sexuality in *Los invertidos* (1914) is the apogee of the style but leaves a mark on the representation of characters who are afflicted with such a pernicious desire. In 1959, Carlos Correas published "La narración de la historia" in various installments in the magazine *Revista Centro* and caused such a scandal with his outright homosexual subjects that the magazine was shut down. The reaction towards an identity meant to be invisible brought to light with an intersection of bourgeoisie young men with a member of the lumpen class was met with a swift and decisive end. In another example, "La invasion" (1967) by Ricardo Piglia, a politically charged piece shows the development of homoerotic desires and bodies invading spaces where homosexuality was not supposed to exist. The story has a jail as the setting, university students who've been conscripted to military service and deserters of the military. In an important moment, the main character, Renzi, makes the conscious decision to avert his gaze to a sexual relationship between two men that symbolizes to the nation to not turn and face its existence. These examples show the power of visibility and the manner in which the characters in the novels display the first hand of effects the tension between the thresholds of the heteronormative world and the "other" world. By bringing the many stories, novels and other literary forms together in his collection, Melo develops an overview of homosexual

representation in Argentine literature and also shows how these counter constructions play off of the constructed hegemonic model of excellence, the white, heterosexual bourgeoise man. It is generally against this figure that queer figures are represented and their tragedy, as Melo claims, is put on full display for all to see.

The works discussed whether literary, historical or sociological are all participating in a common project that is taking place in the Southern Cone in the 21st century, the visibilization of the LGBTQ+ community from a positive and often activist centered perspective. The emerging LGBTQ+ visibility seeks to construct a positive and empowered representation of men who self-identify as gay or queer. The voices and discourse of activists fighting for protections and legal recognitions for members of the LGBTQ+ community have brought this struggle the forefront in both Chile and Argentina. Presidential campaigns in the 21st century include plans to either further traditional bans and restrictions on the rights of the LGBTQ+ community or to proposals to further expand protections and guarantee a push towards equality. A promising starting position for members of the LGBTQ+ communities in Chile and Argentina is the manner in which they dialogue with and challenge the heteronormative representation of masculinity prevalent in both countries. The importance and significance of masculinity and men's self-perceived importance and value to their respective countries was a crucial element of the military dictatorships and serves as a starting point to challenge and redefine ideas of gender in the Southern Cone.

Masculinity and the Southern Cone Region

Masculinity is often defined as "what men out to be" (Connell 70) but this open-ended definition creates images of men with characteristics and behaviors negotiating power and dominance from men amongst themselves and towards women in many societies throughout the

world. The category of man is one that has been complicated by Feminist Studies questioning the social construction of gender. Literary representations of men in Latin America have often been taken for granted and left unattended to with regards to an in-depth analysis of how masculinity is constructed in works of literature with some emerging in the early 21st century. Simone de Beauvoir's famous opening line to the second volume "Lived Experience" in her work *The Second Sex* (1949) states "one is not born, but rather becomes, woman" (283). Her ideas that follow up this famous statement elaborate further the significance of her claim. "No biological, psychic, or economic destiny defines the figure that the human female takes on in society; it is the civilization as a whole that elaborates this intermediary product between the male and the eunuch that is called feminine" (283). She thus posits the category of woman as a socially constructed one into which people born biologically female are thrust to place them in a subordinate position with respect to the "first sex", man. Her calling attention to woman as a secondary sex to man acknowledges that a category of man exists. It too is governed by a socially constructed ideology that teaches men how to think, act and desire in order to prove one is a man. One is also not just born a man but rather becomes one by complying with social demands on how one behaves and acts as a man. This transforms a common cultural perception that "masculinity and femininity are quite easily interpreted as internalized sex roles" (Connell 22) to a more socially constructed set of behaviors that are must be learned from previous generations and societal expectations. The challenge to masculinity's place as a given from Feminist and Gender Studies scholars has opened the door for questioning not only women's roles in western societies of Europe and the Americas but men's also. Behaviors have not only been assigned to women and labeled as feminine to create a category of woman but to men as well. "'Masculinity' does not exist except in contrast with 'femininity'" (Connell 67) states the

oppositional nature of gender roles and shows why men are apt to use behaviors to separate themselves from being categorized as a woman. Masculinity's oppositional roles to femininity though are often defined around strength, stoicism and ability to be sexually dominant. There also exists an acute awareness to noticing feminine behaviors in other men that often results in them becoming the subject of ridicule, facing rejection and enduring a questioning of their masculinity.

Men from the LGBTQ+ community are often targets of acts of discrimination because of their sexual orientation or sexual identity being defined as lacking an embodiment and ability to publicly perform the socially accepted hegemonic form of masculinity. This masculinity is generally patriarchal in Argentina and Chile society and has tended to be directly related to patriarchal discourses in which men are in charge of the key parts of society such as governmental positions, private companies and other important areas of society like the medical field in which decisions for a whole society are filtered through a masculine point of view (Connell 77). Masculinity Studies have appeared as a by-product of Women's Studies and Gender Studies in the universities of Europe and the Americas as a reaction to men's rights movements proclaiming a crisis of masculinity after feminist challenges to its authority and examines the effect and influence of masculinity in society. Critiques by feminist scholars like Gloria Anzaldúa and Nelly Richard of men's behaviors have provoked questions of what masculinity is and shown why defining masculinity along essentialist ideals of attributes regarded as inherent in men cannot adequately explain the complex nature of masculinities. Inspired by Jacques Derrida's procedure of deconstruction, scholars of Gender Studies and Queer Theory such as Judith Butler, Eve Sedgwick, J. Jack Halberstam and José Esteban Muñoz have complicated essentialist arguments that masculine behaviors are natural manifestations of

inherent traits of men and argued they learn from other men, demonstrating how "it is crucial to recognize that masculinity does not belong to men, has not been produced only by men, and does not properly express male heterosexuality" (Halberstam 241). Some of the boundaries of gender roles being pushed have led some scholars to ask questions of whether women can possess masculinity or not[5]. Gender has come to be seen as a performance based on socially constructed notions of how men and women should behave more than a natural expression of masculinity and femininity. This fundamental change in approach to how men and women act has also brought a new perspective to analyzing literature, thus changing the way in which academics explore representations of gender.

A key concept many feminists and gender studies theorists take aim at in cultural representations of men and women is patriarchy. Patriarchy is closely intertwined with dominant forms of masculinity and "gayness, in patriarchal ideology, is the repository of whatever is symbolically expelled from hegemonic masculinity" (Connell 78). Gerda Lerner takes an in depth look at the history of patriarchy in her book *The Creation of Patriarchy* (1986) and defines it as such: "the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general" (239). Despite this definition sounding quite definite and static, Lerner warns that "the problem with the word ***patriarchy***, which most feminists use, is that it has a narrow, traditional meaning – not necessarily the one feminists give it" (238). Lerner tracks the origins of patriarchy to Greek and Roman law and the absolute power male heads of household held over everyone else. Her warning to other academics is that the practice has a more complex history than most accord it,

[5] Jack Halberstam posed the question of women's claim in the LGBTQ community to masculinity in his book *Female Masculinity* (1995) in which he explores examples of film in which women have more masculine traits than the men and the space of the bathroom as a central location for drawing lines along gender roles and policing spaces that people who do not identify as traditional male/female role problematize who belongs in which bathroom.

and that it has a historical precedent that has shifted and changed over time but still maintains a dominance of men in society. Patriarchy has become a central focus of discourses on gender in the 21st century and its use acknowledges the differences in equality between men and women.[6] Patriarchal masculinity in Chile and Argentina has shown a similar dominance as *Mundo de mujer: continudad y cambio* by the Centro de Estudios de la Mujer in Chile argues in relation to the fields of health, law, work, politics and culture. The concept of patriarchy is important to this project due to its influence and closely intertwined relationship with masculinity in Argentina and Chile and the manner in which it affects how these authors from the LGBTQ+ literary community acknowledge and interact with their own representations of masculinity. As a starting point for challenging notions they must conform to patriarchal masculinity (often presented from militarized perspectives in the latter 20th century of Chile and Argentina), patriarchy is both challenged and interwoven into LGBTQ+ representations of masculinity. Their breaking with traditional form of masculinity challenges the essentialist arguments yet at times incorporates certain aspects of it as their work redefines what masculinity can be. These questions and ideas are central to how they are transforming masculinity as represented in literary cultural production of the Southern Cone region of Latin America.

An important component of studies of masculinity in Latin America has been defining masculinity itself and several critics have offered suggestions on how to conceive of masculinity. Studying men and masculinity in a Latin American context has been a relatively newer development in the early 21st century. Defining masculinity in the Latin American context "has faced the challenge of recognizing and analyzing what it means to be a man and the

[6] I use the term discourse thinking on Foucault's ideas of what constitutes a discourse. It is a social system created from a historical process that produces knowledge and meaning. Discourse not only organizes knowledge but produces "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (1969). Discourse is produced by power effects within a social order that often masks its own construction by treating the rules that govern its creation as existing before its own creation.

consequences of being a man within a Latin American context" (Vigoya 29). In 2002, anthropologist Matthew Gutmann put together the anthology *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America* with a collection of both literary and sociological studies solely focused on men and representations of men in Latin America, a category that has often been taken as given since men as a category was not thought to need further explanation. He opens his anthology with the declaration that "we need studies that concentrate on men and masculinities, on men as engendered and engendering beings in Latin America" (1) because of a dearth of understanding of what men and masculinity are in this region. He states that the study of masculinity in Latin America has generally been approached by conceiving of it as such: "anything that men, think, say, and do" (3), "what men think, say, and do to distinguish themselves as men" (3) and "a quality that certain men have more than other men, either because they were born that way or because of some personal kind of achievement" (3). The definitions of masculinity Gutmann outlines are consistent with essentialist approaches that naturalize masculinity as inherent by comparing the strength of certain aspects of masculinity more present in some men over others. This demonstrates just how much the category of man has been taken for granted in the Latin American context and should be challenged by examining masculinity through a lens that considers it a category that is socially constructed. Gutmann also notes the importance of "the overriding significance of women to the negotiation of masculinities for most if not all men at most if not all times in their lives" (3). This last approach to masculinity reflects a central tenet of both Beauvoir's and Connell's assertion that the image of masculine men is often constructed in opposition to the image of women. In thinking of these various approaches that Gutmann has identified as common to the study of masculinity in Latin America for the purposes of my analysis here, I define masculinity as a set of behavioral ideals ascribed to men that are

performed through their behaviors, attributes and societal roles as a way of confirming their societal gender role and that helps them understand their place in society. Gutmann also notes that the actions, attributes or other signals that a man performs to show he possesses masculinity are external factors. Robert McKee Irwin in his book *Mexican Masculinities* (2003) says of masculinity that "while masculinity is not easy to define, everyone knows what it is" (xix) referencing the actions and behaviors associated with men. For many men, their masculinity is often measured by comparing themselves to women and other men. McKee Irwin's statement that masculinity is not easy to define alludes to the many definitions that can arise from socially constructed images that change from culture to culture. The exploration of the flexibility of masculinity opens the possibility for men from LGBTQ+ community to construct their own representations in literary cultural production of masculinities within societies that have traditionally held patriarchal ideals of masculinity in high regard.

Raewyn Connell's book *Masculinities* (1995) has been seminal in the field of masculinity studies and is well known for the development of the concept of hegemonic masculinity. Her term describes a dominant form of masculinity that sits at the top of a system of hierarchized multiple masculinities. Connell defines hegemonic masculinity as "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (77). Hegemonic masculinity operates in relation to three other types of masculinity: complicit, subordinate and marginalized. Connell argues her definition reflects a tendency in many Western cultures of dominance of men towards women in which a central aspect of those societies is men are viewed as being in charge, possessing power and thus empowered to treat women as they see fit. She acknowledges that there is a fluid nature to the

power relations involved amongst men in how they enact their own masculinity. In Chile and Argentina, the influence and power of the Church and State has reinforced this patriarchal form of masculinity being the hegemonic form of masculinity by supporting essentialist arguments of men as superior to women and needing to be in positions of power and influence[7]. It is within Connell's category of subordinated masculinity that "an unavoidable politics of masculinity in and around contemporary men's homosexuality" (219) arises. Subordinated masculinity is a practice in which "gay men are subordinated to straight men by an array of quite material practices" (Connell 78). Through a nuanced reading of these practices, LGBTQ+ men are seen by patriarchal culture in a simple manner, that "they lack masculinity" (143). Gay men do however seek out power through creating their own gay masculinity, at times performing aspects of hegemonic masculinity to empower their status as I will discuss at length in Chapter 3. For men who see themselves as queer, their challenge to the legitimacy of a binary system of gender attempts to weaken the power of a singularized hegemonic masculinity on their lives. There are many examples in the literary texts I analyze that show representations of LGBTQ+ men enacting certain behaviors or performing certain acts to show they are capable of performing masculinity in spite of having been categorized as marginal to hegemonic masculinity. Into the 21st century, the hegemon of patriarchy is still seen as the default image of what a typical masculine man looks like and men from the LGBTQ+ community have found that they can gain a sense of empowerment by appropriating aspects of it in their own performance of masculinity or weaken the hegemonic notion of masculinity for all men..

The concept of hegemonic masculinity is not without its own set of complications and

[7] Connell states that the State is a masculine institution because "state organizational practices are structured in relation to the reproductive arena. The overwhelming majority of top office-holders are men because there is a gender configuring of recruitment and promotion, a gender configuring of the internal division of labor and systems of control, a gender configuring of policymaking, practical routines, and ways of mobilizing pleasure and consent" (73). In many instances, the State worked hand in hand with the Church to set behavioral expectation of men.

limitations and I will address some of the concerns other critics have posed. Since the publication of *Masculinities*, Connell has had several prominent responses, critiques and debates as to the limitations of her categories of men and the concept of hegemonic masculinity. Demetrakis Demetriou's "Connell's Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity: A Critique" in 2001, Sofia Aboim's *Plural Masculinities* (2010) and Chris Beasley's chapter "Re-thinking Hegemonic Masculinity in a Globalizing World" from the reader *Gender Identities in a Globalized World* (2008) are examples of well-constructed arguments that demand a clearer definition of the term hegemonic masculinity as they question its limits and purpose. As recently as 2018, the reader *Queering Masculinities in Language and Culture* uses the concept of hegemonic masculinity as a reference point of comparison to queered masculinity. The term was originated in Connell's *Gender and Power* (1987) as a contrast to what she described as an emphasized femininity, which is "defined around a compliance with this subordination and is oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men" (183). Connell along with James Messerschmidt revisited her ideas on hegemonic masculinity in a 2005 article in which they expand on the meanings of the term and clarify its usage. They state the existence of a plural nature of not only masculinities in general but hegemonic masculinity itself citing what they see as an emerging "transnational business masculinity" as a challenge to patriarchal masculinity as a hegemonic form in certain instances. A key aspect of hegemonic masculinity she clarifies is that "hegemonic masculinities can be constructed that do not correspond closely to the lives of any actual men. Yet these models do, in various ways, express widespread ideals, fantasies, and desires" (838). Connell and Messerschmidt argue that the term can reference a different type of masculinity from one culture to another and exists more in the realm of the public imaginary than real life situations. It is the mythic element of hegemonic masculinity that empowers it. Proposing that this type of

masculinity exists more as an ideal than a reality for most men reinforces social constructionist ideas of masculinity and demonstrates how it and men are two separate entities that exist only in the way they interact with and influence one another. Masculinity's materiality, especially in literary works, is based on men giving it meaning through their performance of it. Connell uses a historical account of hegemonic types of masculinity to justify her previous assertion of hegemonic masculinity as a monolith and argues there exists a plurality of masculinities that have taken on the role as hegemon in Western cultures. This is part of the critique from Aboim that too much focus is put on masculinities instead of men and she suggests "by focusing on men rather than masculinities we could perhaps more easily avoid the trap of reification" (43). The danger for Aboim is assigning a negative connotation to an entire social group through a social theory of masculinity and not focusing on the actual men in a given society. For many men though, performing masculinity is an integral part of their identity that confirms to them that they are men. A focus on how man is constructed through embodiment practice is important to Masculinity Studies.

The critiques of Beasley and Demetriou focus on the term being too broad and generalized without a firm, narrow definition that gives a clear meaning. According to Beasley, she views the term as having too much of a slippery slope of meaning and unclear of how one type of masculinity can become a hegemon. Beasley demands that a narrower definition of the term is necessary because of how freely it can be applied to any social group of men who are perceived to be dominant. In Demetriou's critique, he proposes that the term is problematic and simplistic in only referencing heterosexual white men. He expands on the idea of hegemonic masculinity as "a hybrid masculine *bloc* that is made up of both straight and gay, both black and white elements and practices" (348). He further explains that the white male-based version of

masculinity to which Connell refers does not reflect the nuance and complex nature that recognizes the "internally diversified and hybrid nature that makes the hegemonic bloc dynamic and flexible" (348). Demetriou's critique has merit in trying to not just white wash the concept of hegemonic masculinity but it is difficult to argue how much black and brown men have influenced hegemonic definitions of masculinity with white men often in positions of cultural and political power. In the case of Argentina and Chile, both cultures have patriarchal based societies with hegemonic forms of masculinity based on patriarchal ideas as being the ideal demanded of men. Patriarchy and masculinity in the Southern Cone of the 20th century have often been intertwined with military dictators projecting strong man values and the Church supporting what they see as "traditional men" with "traditional families" to build the nation. The reality of patriarchy as the default ideal and its position of hegemony influences how many men and women think of their places in society and how they view themselves within a system of hierarchized relationships. For the purpose of my study here, I use the term hegemonic masculinity to refer to a type of masculinity in Chile and Argentina based on patriarchal rule of men in society that not only subordinates women but also men who do not conform to heteronormative standards.

The field of masculinity studies has traced back the emergence of masculinity's overriding importance in society with studies on men and how visions of masculinity are closely tied to images and representations of nations and their ideals. *The Image of Man* (1996) by George Mosse, *Mexican Masculinities* (2003) by Robert McKee Irwin and *The Nature of Masculinity* (2016) by Steve Garlick are a few of the important studies in addition to that of Connell that take an in-depth look into what constitutes the category of men and historical developments of masculinity. In studying masculinities of Mexican culture and literature, McKee

Irwin also challenges essentialist arguments and poses separating masculinity from the body socially labeled as man stating it "is determined more by the judgments of others than by an intrinsic quality" (xviii). His statement is a rejection of assumptions in Mexican works of fiction that seek to represent masculinity as "a natural aspect of maleness" (xix) and ignore the contradiction of a belief that "men were assumed to naturally have certain characteristics. At the same time they needed to learn them" (48). Even though McKee Irwin is focusing solely on Mexican literature to analyze this representation of masculinity as being an innate part of men, it is common in the literary cultural production in many Latin American countries including Chile and Argentina[8]. McKee Irwin and other academics also confirm that a singular version of masculinity as a monolithic discourse is not possible as masculinity as a socially constructed set of expectations will be met around the world in the innumerable cultures it finds itself operating with different expectations and demands placed on people (and not just men as J. Jack Halberstam has argued). So, if masculinity is a multi-faceted plurality of behaviors, attributes and societal roles that are ascribed to men but also capable of being enacted by women, then can a singular form take a position of hegemony amongst the possible manifestations of masculinity and how would a hegemonic masculinity operate within such a context? It is the power of the myth of how men should behave and act that influences cultural expectations and in the 20th century that led to a patriarchal based masculinity establishing itself as the form that writers from the LGBTQ+ community make reference to as a hegemonic masculinity because of its function as the default source of expectations of how men should act.

The connection of the State, or the imposition of a politicized governmental body, with

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[8] The collection of essays *Modern Argentine Masculinities* (2013) edited by Carolina Rocha offers analysis of various models of dominant masculinity present in Argentine letters in the 19th and 20th centuries. *Masculinidades incómodas* by Nestor Artiñano also looks at the impact of socially constructed norms of masculinity as they impact the world view of young men growing up in Argentina.

images of men within the society occurs when said State shows a political interest in regard to the behaviors, appearance and actions of the male body. In Chile and Argentina, men were put in positions of power throughout the governments during the respective military dictatorships with Isabel Perón overthrown within two years of Juan Perón's death. The rights of women to protect themselves against sexual harassment, rape crimes, participate in politics or even divorce their husbands were heavily limited in both Chile and Argentina until the latter half of the 20th century reflecting a heavy emphasis on the power and importance of men in the respective societies. In her history of the transformation of hegemonic models of masculinity, Connell states that the movement of masses towards cities, the beginnings of the industrial revolution and the expansion of European kingdoms into new parts of the world also brought with it a development in what we now know is the nuclear family and a strengthening in "domestic authority over women, though the women were actively involved in making and maintaining the network of alliances that tied the gentry together" (Connell 190-91). It is later that images of men became more concerning to the State as Mosse argues and the image of a strong man came to be dominant in the public imaginary. The projection of a strong nation started with strong bodies of strong men within the nation. Mosse claims that "true manliness had symbolized an essentially healthy society, and this society, in turn, did not merely posit manliness as an ideal to be reached but made it an integral part of its function" (133). This function led to images of male bodies being regulated by a small hegemonic group in power who controlled what was acceptable and was not in terms of the image of a man.

Athletes became popular figures as they exhibited the strong masculine physique and determination that all men of the emerging nations in the 19th and 20th centuries should want to emulate. In her response to Connell, Beasley also references the appearance of men with strong

bodies as an image that can promote the ideal man. This preference for strong muscular bodies as the de facto image of men is also prevalent in Argentina as Eduardo Archetti's discusses in his book *Masculinidades* (2003). In it he analyzes the state of masculinity in Argentina in regard to men who engage in football, tango and polo focusing on the strong body, corporal movements and the right way to be manly as having a position of influence and power throughout the country holding the image of these strong men up as an ideal. In addition to demands of strong bodies from men, Mosse notes they were often shamed from touching each other in any intimate manner and discouraged from giving any sort of thought to homoerotic dalliances with other men. This also influenced representations of heterosexual relationships as McKee Irwin notes in his study of 19th century Mexican literature. He clarifies that there was a fear of sexuality in general with heterosexual relationships not being represented as an ideal and seen as a bit dangerous but never as dangerous as what homosexuality might invoke. Steve Garlick's critique offers a more contemporary take on Masculinity Studies and the images of men put forth through sex industries such as pornography.

Garlick proposes looking at masculinity as a technology that is developed and implemented by men to control the world around them and feel as if they have control of themselves. In other words, masculinity is a control mechanism and the male body is where it plays out its method of controlling the self and the world around it. Masculinity for men, Garlick argues, works as an intermediary between the human subject and some natural essence to bridge the gap between the two and create the illusion that it is a manifestation of human nature rather than a socially constructed technology. The end result of masculinity then is to empower men to not only control themselves but also makes them feel empowered over women. He states that "masculinity, then, is a technology of embodiment that limits the potentials of men's bodies to

affect and to be affected and that produces habitual ways of being oriented toward the dispelling of ontological insecurity through achieving and maintaining control or domination over nature and one's world" (96). Garlick's idea of what constitutes a technology is not that of a mechanical device, but rather is informed by the ideas of Martin Heidegger. Garlick defines technology as "a certain mode of disclosing or bringing forth beings" (73). This implies that even before young male babies are born, society (including the child's nuclear family, extended family, religious institution, schools and other social actors) formulates a method to teach and show young men the technology appropriate and adequate for understanding their bodies and themselves that brings forth a functioning and socially acceptable adult man. Throughout his book, Garlick develops in depth critiques of pornographic material that he views as a method in which men create their idealized sexuality and reify it with an image they can point to and claim as the way men are hard wired. Pornography becomes an ideal medium as it takes on so many various functions and representations that provide men with endless ways of expressing a dominance through their sexuality and constructs an example that they can utilize in their own life to develop a sense of sexual being. These men and their bodies take on a mechanical nature with the way they approach sex as some sort of consumerist object that must function correctly and efficiently in a neoliberalized culture such as Chile and Argentina[9]. This portrayal of masculine bodies in a neoliberal setting leads him to a similar conclusion as Connell in her follow-up 2005 article that there are multiple hegemonic masculinities and the newest emerging one that competes with patriarchy is that of consumer-based man whose power comes from his personal

[9] In the edited volume *Social Change and Contested Governance in Contemporary Latin America* (2013), many of the essays look at the impact of neoliberal economic systems in Latin America and take into account how those systems were implemented. Cerrutti and Grimson state that "Argentina was one of the countries where neoliberal reforms were implemented in the most radical way, and because of this, both the social structure and the structure of labor opportunities were transformed" (109). Schild notes that the neoliberal transformations in Chile "reveal [an] active involvement of the neoliberal state – in its present, 'enabling' form – in the configuration of a fully-fledged hegemonic project and social reorganization characterized by a commitment to the 'aggressive re-regulation, disciplining and containment' of targeted populations" (195).

wealth and ability to consume goods and bodies.

Homosexuality has been documented throughout many cultures but was first defined as an identity in the mid-19th century in Europe and was soon thereafter met by medical discourses that sought to portray homosexual encounters between men as a pathology and used the homosexual body as a counterimage of a weak, defective body to the strong man. This is discussed by Michel Foucault in *The History of Sexuality: Vol 1* in which he claims that "sexuality was carefully confined; it moved into the home" (3) and that "on the subject of sex, silence became the rule. The legitimate and procreative couple laid down the law. The couple imposed itself as model, enforced the norm, safeguarded the truth, and reserved the right to speak while maintaining the principle of secrecy" (3). It was in this process that homosexuality "appeared as one of the forms of sexuality when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of interior androgyny" (43). It brought with it the negative associations and stigmas of sodomy that quickly labeled the homosexual figure as a negative entity in society. In Europe, literary representations with characters named Don Pederasto who were openly homosexual had weakened bodies that reflected their inner problems caused by homosexuality[10]. It quickly turned into an outright attack on any sort of perceived effeminacy or other non-masculine behavior in men and the public was warned to take notice of these dangers to good society as the public reactions to the trial of Oscar Wilde demonstrated. Sigmund Freud's studies on sexuality and the perceived expertise he had on matters of psychology and sexuality exacerbated the tension against this enemy of the people by continuing a discourse based on defining non-heterosexual expressions of sexuality as strange. The assumed link between gender and sexuality with biological justifications linking the two into a one size fits all category was assigned to children

[10] *Scenes from the Life of Aristocratic Pederast* was published anonymously in 1833 and portrayed homosexuality as a corruption of the male body that could threaten the nations of Europe and the world.

at birth, boys or girls who later become men and women. Connell develops her hierarchy of masculinities as based less on the experience of women being oppressed by hegemonic forms of masculinity and more that it "grew directly out of homosexual men's experience with violence and prejudice from straight men" (831). In Latin America, the story from Mexico of the infamous *Los 41* brought to light the homosexual lifestyle in full bloom in Mexico City at the turn of the 20th century. The fall-out from the public awareness and sudden visibility of a lifestyle that men were living became a national scandal.[11] The men were shipped off to the Yucatan to join the army, a space where they could learn to be men again. Argentina nearly had its own scandal in the late 1930's when several military cadets were invited to a party in which scandalous photos were taken of them in provocative positions and used to blackmail them into bringing others to parties (Bazán 2004). The cadets complied with the blackmail demands because they knew what sort of public humiliation they would face if their behavior became public since it went against the tenets of the patriarchal demands of men.

Patriarchal masculinity's demand on the everyday lives of men that they be strong, fearless, stoic and the main providers of a family unit while also holding positions of privilege and influence in society are overbearing and impossible to be performed continuously. Despite the impossibilities of this embodiment of masculinity, its power and influence continue to be a cornerstone of Chilean and Argentine society in the 21st century. Its continuous presence of is why Connell is correct in identifying it as being a hegemonic masculinity in Western cultures. It is reproduced and reinforced at many levels of society in both countries under examination here as the norm to which everyone should be operating. In a sociological study of men in Santiago de Chile, José Olavarría's found that for many young boys their expectations reflect patriarchal demands to grow up "trabajar, ganar dinero, ser padre, establecer una vida sexual" (23). These

[11] Robert McKee Irwin explores in great detail the scandal of *Los 41* in his work *Mexican Masculinities* (2003).

expectations reflect the demands of patriarchal masculinity in terms of the man being seen socially as one who must work in order to provide for those he is in charge of, to have a woman he is in charge of and will have sexual relations with her that lead to his becoming a father figure and thus continuing the cycle of his father. In her introduction to *Modern Argentine Masculinities* (2013), Carolina Rocha notes that "from its inception as a nation, Argentina was established as a patriarchal society in which gender discourses exalted the public role of men and emphasized the private realm as the ideal place for women" (4). Homosexual men were cast off as *maricones*, *putos*, *pederastas, invertidos* or a host of other pejorative words that sought to not only reduce their ability to lay claim to some sort of masculinity but also to label them in such a derogatory manner as to shame them into hiding their own wants and desires from public view. They became the men that faced backlash and discrimination from State actors (i.e. police officers or government officials) as public codes (as discussed in Chapter 3) such as those present in both Chile (where homosexuality was illegal until 1999) and Argentina outlawed behaviors deemed against the good public morality. Despite this effort to codify into law that their behaviors went against public morality, the explicit naming of specific behaviors was often left out of the laws and entrusted to the discretion of the police officials set loose in the streets to protect some members of society and publicly harass and arrest others.

Rocha offers a detailed and well thought out progression of masculinities in Argentina throughout the 20th century to support her claim that Argentina was founded on a central focus of patriarchal masculinity as an ideal for men. She states that Peronism influenced a "revival of a hegemonic model of masculinity" (8) in which men regained a more established presence in public while women were encouraged to return to the domestic life in order to raise future generations of good citizens for the nation. A result of the cataloguing of the transformations of

masculinity from the macho idealization of the *gaucho* that came to symbolize the essence of Argentinian men in the late 19th century to the more well-to-do men that viewed themselves as the builders of the nation to Peron's traditional militarized patriarchal masculinity shows that the patriarchal form has not always been the hegemonic form of masculinity but it has taken over that role in the 20th century. Throughout *Modern Argentine Masculinities,* the various chapters reveal the gradual transformation of expectations as to what the ideal man should be as more commercialized and neoliberal based ideals of men emerged. Paola Ehrmantraut discusses the militaristic masculinity of Perón and the manner in which military junta's failure is tied to the defeat in the Falkland Islands War. She further elaborates that the Galtieri government used the war to distract the country from the failing economic situation and brutality against the public brought, thus ending to a more militarized image of man. In Karina Vázquez's analysis of male characters in the novels of Rodolfo Fogwill, it becomes apparent the transition from a military strongman as the de facto example of what a man should be changes to the neoliberal consumer who is more individualistic, driven by having an ability to consume and favoring private spaces over political ideology. After the fall of the dictatorships (1983 in Argentina and 1990 in Chile), a new generation of men has been emerging with a growing cohesive identity in the modern LGBTQ+ community that reflects a similar pattern within the globalized movement of the Gay Liberation Movement. This unified movement has taken on a global tone with both Chile and Argentina seeing a rise in activist groups forming to demand more rights and protections for persons who experience discrimination because of their sexuality or gender identity. In both Chile and Argentina, the presence of traditional forms of masculinity is difficult to ignore for gay/queer/trans men and even though they still have to contend with the societal demands of these predominant forms of masculinity, there are signs that transformations are on the horizon.

Gustavo Subero's investigation of queer masculinities in 20th century Latin American cinema confirms the assertions of Rocha that patriarchal masculinity has a favored position of power in Latin America. He, as the present study undertakes, proposes a constructivist perspective stating "the social construction of Latin American masculinity is modelled within a patriarchal system that defines the types of behaviours that are accepted and expected from a man. Masculinity not only offers men power over women, but it also offers a range of power hierarchies amongst different groups of men, especially those whose behaviour does not correspond to the idea of power and domination that masculinity entails socially" (13). Some of the types of patriarchal behaviors include demonstrating sexual prowess with women, independence, engaging in competition with other men, aggressiveness, obsession with success and status, fathering children and displaying certain ways of walking and talking that confer their manliness to the social world around them (Hopkins 98). The goal of displaying these and other behaviors by men is for them to demonstrate what they believe and are told is the internal essence of possessing manhood. These behaviors, and more specifically the predilection for aggressiveness and competition with other men, is a product of patriarchal ideals that pit bodies against each other in a mixture of violence and dominance to prove one's strength and manhood. This shows the importance of performing behaviors that masculinity demands of men, that "all the modes of domination, submission, and subjugation are ultimately reduced to an effect of obedience" (Foucault 85) not just for others towards them but for each individual man.

The 21st century shows signs of transformation for men across many Latin American countries. A large factor in much of the change to this image of the macho man as the breadwinner of the family is the arrival of women in numbers to the labor force. Film scholar Constanza Burucúa has stated that the "symbolic order of patriarchy is visibly challenged" (87)

in the period starting after the fall of the military junta and continuing on as more women came into film representations, director roles and society at large. Nestor Artiñano notes in his book *Masculinidades incómodas* (2015) that in interviews conducted for his study on how young people learn gender guidelines in Argentina that the general responses of young men towards behaviors that threatened hegemonic masculinity, those defined as acting like a woman, being homosexual or a transvestite, were generally negative with some exceptions made on an individual basis (79). This suggests that even if a young man has a friend or family member who fits into a category of man related to the LGBTQ+ community that they still feel a certain obligation to separate themselves from the lack of masculinity displayed by this friend or family member in order to reassert their own claim to possessing a strong sense of masculinity. Yet these claims to this form of a hegemonic masculinity are showing signs of change as more voices emerge rejecting this patriarchal based masculinity for every man. This massive change coupled with Latin American activists utilizing the momentum and cohesion of the Gay Liberation Movement has begun a process of normalization of gay and queer citizens. This does not mean that patriarchal masculinity is being totally cast aside in the gay community. As my analysis will show, they incorporate parts of it into their own gay masculinity to empower themselves as men. This utilization of aspects of hegemonic masculinity against itself to unseat it from a position of power suggests that there cannot exist a representation of masculinity without one type being a hegemon. In other words, by taking an in depth look at the various aspects of hegemonic masculinity, those same aspects can be used to show the constructed nature of it and used to dismantle its aura of power and authority.

Despite scholars having argued that the practice and institution of hegemonic masculinity (or masculinities) has flaws, there is still an undeniable structure formulated by dominant

patriarchal masculinity in literary representations of men. The constant associations of them to positions with dominance and power within a dynamic of jockeying to be the best or most respected man possible is ever present in Argentine and Chilean letters. The momentum and influence of the Gay Liberation Movement and the development of Queer Studies and Gender Studies in universities has proposed questions of studying the gender construction of men and masculinity that are challenging these ideas. It may be a surprise to some that some voices from the LGBTQ+ (and as I will argue in Chapter 3 primarily gay men) are not outright rejecting these notions of dominance and power but finding ways to adopt them as part of their own masculine subjectivities. This occurs because power often begets access to power. To better understand how these voices and representations have made their way into the public consciousness, I use Andrea Mubi Brighenti's theory of visibility in *Visibility in Social Theory and Social Research* (2010) as a theoretical framework. By using a framework that shows the tensions between visible and invisible objects, it becomes clear how making visible these queer forms of masculinity are central to transformations of masculinity taking place in the Southern Cone. This framework will help ground my analysis of works after the dictatorship periods when, as Sutherland notes, "por cierto que a comienzos de los noventa habría que destacar la visibilidad homosexual en algunos medios escritos pioneros" (12). These pioneering voices started a visibilization movement that opened the door for more people to step forward and bring visibility to the LGBTQ+ community. Soon after, the conversation turned to actually enacting laws, protections and guarantees of rights and freedoms. By men from the LGBTQ+ community parsing apart hegemonic and other forms of masculinity to create their own self representation of how they see themselves as men, the constructed nature of masculinities in general comes into focus. The importance of making visible these alternative forms of masculinity demonstrates the power struggles in negotiating the

meaning of masculinity in the lives of men in Chile and Argentina.

Towards a Project of Visibility

Visibility is an important aspect of any modern society. Visibility is to see someone or something, to be seen by someone or to have a presence that is important or problematic as part of a visibility regime. Visibility empowers people to become an agent and by having agency they can gain power to express themselves. Brighenti uses the situation over the past thirty years in the United States of the (in)visibility of immigrants as an example to demonstrate how it is both important and problematic in regard to the control of how their representation forms part of a social theory of visibility. They can often find themselves invisible in daily life to many people until some force, a major event or news story breaking, pushes them past the threshold of invisibility to the visible world where they become overly visible, monitored closely and unable to live their normal invisiblized life. Suddenly, an immigrant's involvement in the death of another person provokes a reason to scrutinize their lives, their presence and the process by which they enter the U.S. and they have little to no control over the images and stories that circulate about them. This demonstrates, according to Brighenti, how controlling the visibility of one's own social group or another's social group is an important aspect of modern societies. Immigrants are an interesting choice of example of visibility regimes as they often challenge and cause problems for public images of the nation and what the group in power promotes as the ideal citizen. Images of people from marginalized social groups in the Latin America often appear in literary production and take on an important role in legitimating claims to their marginalized status. On the other end of the spectrum, social groups with power and influence often create more positive images of visibility for themselves to reinforce their constructed position of hegemony. It is often the social group with the positively controlled presence and

visibility (white, male, heterosexual) in Chile and Argentina that have the gained the most both economically and socially in terms of freedom of movement, expression of one's ideas and lack of discrimination because of one's perceived difference to the cultural norm. This whiter and wealthier group often espoused close ties to the Church, direct European lineage and controlled the land and resources in the newly independent countries. The (in)visibility of those classified as sexual deviants has also been an important visibility regime at work in Chile and Argentina and controlling the perception of them and influencing their own perception of themselves has been part of the public discourse of certain non-heteronormative sexualities being deemed pathological and defined as being part of a self-identity disorder. In other words, it has denied agency to those who do not embody the tenets of the heteronormative cultures of Argentina and Chile.

By employing a framework involving visibility, it's important to have a clear definition of what visibility is. Brighenti defines it as "neither a thing nor a symbol. Rather, it is an element within which procedures for visibilization and styles of visibilizing are enacted, repeated and contested" (70). Visibility then creates a space for processes that produce actions that work towards either creating a visible subject that is empowered or surveilled or a subject that is made invisible and hidden from the public view intentionally. It is an element in the sense that it is not a sociological category but rather plays a part in determining how "social relationships are stabilised and power effects are determined" (39). In regard to people of sexual orientations that fall outside the boundaries of heteronormativity, there is often a two-fold purpose, to make the subject visible enough to supervise their behavior and make them invisible from the public eye in order to pretend they are not a normalized and acceptable subject. Brighenti states that "the issue of the visibility of ethnic, sexual and moral minorities and marginal people reveals how social

representations lean towards and are always dangerously close to stereotyping. For minorities, just as invisibility can easily lead to lack of recognition, supervisibility can easily lead to misrepresentation, distortion, disempowerment and inferiorization" (87). He makes clear that subjects who find themselves labeled as minority of some sort face a constant battle in the process of being visible or invisible. Visibility applies to both the individual and social group as a single person can often be made the example to represent an entire social group. Using a process that causes these types of minority people, of which LGBTQ+ men are one, to be misrepresented, disempowered or distorted helps keep their identity under the control of the cultural hegemon. The process of making them visible often comes loaded with the end goal of pushing them back into a place of invisibility. This can be seen clearly in the Argentine naturalist drama *Los invertidos* (1914) by José González Castillo in which the homosexual dalliances of Dr. Flórez are made visible in order for those around him to engage in a process to justify why homosexual men should not be visible. Through a process of visibilization, his relationship with a lover, and thus his homosexuality, is found out and brought to a level of supravisibility for the public to see and witness the consequences of this aspect of his identity. Through Clara's words and use of the image of a stained family honor that must be saved and protected at all costs, Dr. Floréz's desires and actions are visibilized and used to disempower him and make him feel inferior as a man who has engaged in sexual acts with another man. This distorts his own self-image in order to make him appear to be less than what constitutes a socially acceptable man. This demonstrates how "visible homosexuality was meant to be expelled from a national fabric that could only see itself as tenuously constructed, in view of its immense social, racial, and ethnic inequities" (Quiroga 13). The validity of Dr. Flórez's masculinity is questioned since what has been made visible is deemed to be a performance that does not reify one's masculinity but

works to diminish it.

Visibility often works through a visibility regime. In literary based representations visibility regimes control the representation of a specific social group and seeks to control not only its own image, but the image of other groups so that it can control the distributions of power and access to resources. Visibility is important to both the individual and the group as a whole. The manner in which a person sees themselves as a person but also as part of a social group often causes a constant state of self-policing and evaluation to ensure one is complying with the visible image of themselves they want others to see as well as the image as part of a social group they must maintain to continue as a part of that social group. The focus on their visibility builds a regime of power that controls how they intersect with mainstream culture via "configurations, connections, events, forces, mechanisms, associations, regimes, strategies, practices, rhythms and situated activities" (38). Brighenti further elaborates on the importance of and defines visibility regimes stating that "the notion of 'visibility regimes' aims to capture such ordered, but also changing and always partially indeterminate, effects of empirical visibilities: visibility regimes account for the systematic and routinary set-up of visibilities in contemporary social-technological complexes, as well as their contingent positions" (39). Anna Ferrante also discusses visibility regimes (termed regime of visibility) in her discussion of drag culture gaining visibility through the television show *RuPaul's Drag Race*. She defines visibility regimes as "the set of norms governing the representation of certain subjects" (156). At stake is the positive or negative aspect of these regimes and who controls them. Ferrante argues that even though visibility regimes can normalize a marginal group in a disciplining fashion, there is a method in which queer bodies can "rebuild these new bio-political configurations of control and global exploitation" (157). It is in this positive, reaffirming and (re)building process that I ground my

own definition of a visibility regime as a set of norms that not only governs representations of a certain subjects but can replace, as is the case of LGBTQ+ men, negative representations of them with positive, empowering images.

In terms of power granted (or not) by visibility, Brighenti states that "the effects of visibility swing between an empowering pole (visibility as recognition) and a disempowering pole (visibility as control)" (39). This way of approaching visibility regimes makes it clear that they are implemented and utilized to influence the visibility of a social group as positive and empowering or disempowering and controlling. It is the control of these visibility regimes in dominant culture to either empower a certain group or disempower another and the voices behind them and who gains and who loses from them that gains and loses at the center of my focus of LGBTQ+ men in the Southern Cone. It is a common occurrence throughout countries in the Americas to find people of indigenous ethnicity or people of color in both socially and economically poorer conditions than their whiter counterparts with countries like Bolivia only recently bucking the trend electing officials that reflect their more indigenous heritage and starting to enact protections for indigenous peoples in 1993. It is not just communities of indigenous peoples or others of African descent that have encountered these negative visibility regimes in Latin America, but other social groups marginalized because of their racial classification and members of the LGBTQ+ community as well. Gay and queer people of marginalized social groups not only face being made invisible to the mainstream culture, but within their own social and cultural group as well because of their sexual identity. They face a visibility regime both on a macro scale where both their sexual identity and their physical appearance leave them invisible and on a micro scale where their own social group does not always allow them to engage in being openly visible in their sexual expressions. Often times,

marginalized social groups may display stricter controls of behaviors and identities labeled as deviant by the dominant social group so as to not create additional ways in which they face discrimination. For those who self-identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community, this double bind creates an additional layer of invisibility. This position of (in)visibility is not the kind of visibility that is positively empowered in regard to positive types of visibility.

Foucault's work in *Discipline and Punish* (1975) on the panopticon illustrates the manner in which visibility regimes exercise a form of control on the subject who has become visible. Even under a watchful eye, activists and members of the LGBTQ+ community have had to fight for their own empowered visibility in which they create their own self-image and wrest control from the powerful hegemonic systems of power that have created crippling visibility images about them. The ideas of Brighenti about visibility and social theory discuss the complicated ways a subject can still be visible while having an aspect of invisibility that is meant to hide the subject from the public view yet keep it visible enough to monitor it in the fashion of Foucault's panopticon that surveils the movements and actions of a subject. The visibility regime that often appears in literary form in both Chile and Argentina in terms of queer bodies has been to put them into a position of invisibility in order to attempt to control them or propose eradicating them from the public imager as seen at the end of *Los invertidos*, Dr. Floréz's wife Clara hands him the gun she has just murdered his male lover with and tells him the honorable thing to do in order to save the family's dignity and public standing is to kill himself, which he does. The subject is coerced into self-surveillance as well as surveillance of others to uphold the demands of the hegemonic group, in the case here, those of heterosexual white male masculinity. Brighenti describes visibility's connection to the social by calling it "a social dimension in which thresholds between different social forces are introduced" (4). Thresholds represent the limits of

social forces and a space where one force abruptly ends and the next one suddenly begins. These thresholds can manifest as social territory where one neighborhood ends and another begins. In another example, bodies present in spaces where they do not belong show the threshold between the space it is in and the space it comes from. When they clatter into each other, there is a jockeying for position of power and influence that affects how each one reacts to the other, how subjects perceive each other and negotiate power amongst themselves.

Thinking in terms of representations of men and masculinity, the heteronormative expectations put on men to possess desires and urges of compulsory heterosexuality, to be willing and able to show displays of power and dominance over others, to maintain a stoic attitude and reproduce offspring as a sign of one's virility occupies a significantly larger social territory than that of men whose profess an LGBTQ+ identity. It has been seen in the real world and the literary world that when the thresholds of these two worlds meet, it often can be violent and reactive. An example of this can be seen in a novel by gay Argentine author Oscar Hermes Villordo, *La otra mejilla* (1986). In it there are many violent clashes when the threshold of the heteronormative world perceives a threat from a queer/gay body that has entered its space. The narrator and his friend Vicente are treated with violence and detained in a police station where Vicente is sexually assaulted by a police officer after his arrest for public indecency which occurred after the two men were seen walking together in public. The sudden social visibility of bodies perceived as queer causes a swift, decisive and violent reaction. Ultimately, Vicente is killed at the novel's end as the threshold of heteronormativity shows that it cannot support the existence of a recognized and visible queer body invading its space as reflective of the time in the late 1960's and 1970's during the resurgence of Peronism and the military junta government. Thinking of this social aspect of visibility constructed within Chilean and Argentinian societies,

this type of violent reaction is predicated on the expectations those societies have developed to handle invisible subjects breaking through their thresholds and becoming more visible.

A key aspect of the social dimension of visibility according to Brighenti is that it is "crucially connected to social territoriality. The importance of looking and being looked at is important" (5). Social territoriality describes the spaces within cities, such as Santiago de Chile and Buenos Aires, as places where social groups define what is acceptable or not within them. From neighborhood to neighborhood, the different barrios have traditions and cultural connections to the past that help form certain expectations of the type of people they will see. The openness and acceptance of LGBTQ+ culture found in Santiago's Bellavista neighborhood or Palermo, San Telmo and Villa Crespo of Buenos Aires will not be found across town in La Boca or similar neighborhoods in Santiago. When a person is in public walking up and down streets of certain neighborhoods or entering different social spaces within those neighborhoods, they become visible objects to the world around them. They are allowing themselves to be seen and the way they present themselves to the world is a manner of controlling their own visibility. These spaces and the people that inhabit them have their own process of reacting to this visibility by engaging with, ignoring or reacting negatively to the visibility of an object. Two men walking hand in hand will not be met with the same reaction depending on where they are. This is a changing aspect to the visibility of LGBTQ+ community in that there are more defined open spaces to be gay or queer and visible in public. Technology also works to redefine the spaces in cities as will be seen in *Sudor* where many parts of Santiago are shown to have many men interested in meeting men and not just in LGBTQ+ friendly areas. Technology operates in a gray area of both visibility and invisibility by helping men hide themselves in certain spaces but made available by using certain technological apparatuses to those who would be looking for them, i.e.

dating sites and apps geared towards gay and queer men. The clashing of social worlds and territories creates a tension that can has been developed in literary examples from the 20th century such as José Donoso's *El lugar sin límites* between La Manuela and the socially accepted men of honor don Alejo and Pancho Vega.

A body labeled gay or queer becomes visible by its difference from the socially defined and accepted heterosexual body. The body of a queer man or a homosexual man has been looked at with disdain and discomfort by prominent and powerful voices in Latin American societies since the arrival of the first Spaniards from Europe (Bazán 2004 and Contardo 2011). The gender systems and sexual practices of the indigenous groups found in the lands of current day South America were labeled with harsh terms of deviance and practices against God and the sanctity of the body. The strict religious practices of the conquistadors led them to quickly use their Catholic faith to impose a negative visibility regime of same sex relations already in existence back in Spain to justify oppression towards the indigenous peoples in order to stamp out the behaviors that were deemed against nature in various European countries at the time (Bazán 2004). Bazán recounts in the opening story of his historical account of how homosexuality in Argentina came to be represented and visibilized in such a negative light. "Mientras los españoles decían que únicamente había que tener sexo para engendrar hijos, los arahuacas, los indígenas de La Española, no habían llegado a relacionar la idea del coito con la de reproducción. ¿Cómo iban a comprender aquello que tanto preocupaba a los conquistadores?" (12). Establishing an association of sex acts strictly with reproducing was a first step towards creating a negative visibility of homosexuality and those that engaged in its practices. From there, a standard of referring to homosexual acts that involved sex or even the suspicion of sex came to be met with strong social rebukes and even corporal punishment for those accused and the establishing of a

process of invisibilizing these acts and those that participated in them had to keep an important aspect of their lives from being seen. As a result of this change in perceptions, those who enjoyed sexual relationships with people of the same sex had to form underground communities and keep their activities invisible from the watchful public eye.

The body of the queer subject in Latin American literary production has maintained a precarious position of visibility and invisibility. It is invisible in the sense that the hegemonic institutions of power, such as the Church and the State, do not want these bodies to be seen or take part in public discourse. In the well-known work from Argentina *El beso de la mujer araña* (1976), the gay character Molina engages in debates about bodies deemed ordinary and homosexual bodies in regard to which has acceptability in public spaces. When the body of the feared homosexual comes into view, it sparks panic, fear and sense of anxiety that must be quelled swiftly. To demonstrate the control exercised on it, the conversation takes place inside a prison where he has been arrested for corrupting minors. Even though he is made visible by having a voice and agency, it is a visibility the State attempts to silence by separating him from the outside world in prison. Outside of the boundaries of the literary, laws existed that allowed police and other officials to arrest or harass anyone who came across as queer, strange or homosexual. At the height of the military dictatorships in both Chile and Argentina, these bodies were disappeared even when they weren't the subject of an investigation or search. Santiago Joaquín Insausti describes four hundred known homosexual people that were disappeared in Argentina during the seven years of terror and disappearances that weren't necessarily sought out exclusively because of their sexual orientation. Insausti states that "las fuentes evidencian que la experiencia de las «maricas» en estas décadas es de absoluta vulnerabilidad. Apresadas por la policía por el hecho de estar pronturiadas como «amorales», se alternaban entre la calle y el

pabellón de homosexuals de la cárcel de Devoto, al cual la mayoría de las veces eran remitidas con treinta días de arresto" (63). When they were found by chance as one man was when the authorities knocked on the wrong door or intentionally, their sudden visibility cast them into a state of danger, both to the State and themselves. The bodies of these four hundred members of the LGBTQ+ community passed from their invisible status to visible with the judgment accorded to them because of their actions, their body language or any other movements labeled as *marica* or effeminate and back to invisibility through a process of institutionalized terror. This lack of visibility is discussed by Modarelli and Rapsardi who also explore the hidden gay culture during the dictatorships. They state that "nada suficientemente nítido aparece aún, sin embargo, de aquello que querrá llamarse 'comunidad gay'" (31). The cultural hegemon succeeded at maintaining invisible communities of marginalized people they did not want in the public imagery of the country unless they controlled it to show the negative impact members of the LGBTQ+ community had on the nation.

Visibility, though, is more nuanced than just making something be seen or hidden. Visibility finds itself at an intersection, according to Brighenti, of being both *socio-technical* and *bio-political*. The socio-technical aspect of visibility means it takes into consideration a realm in which "thought comes to be inscribed and projected into materials and concurrently, materials become thoughtful or, more fashionably, 'smart'" (41). The use of the socio-technical aspects can be seen in how masculinity ascribes meaning and visibility to the male body. Masculinity as a set of ideals becomes projected onto the body, creating a material subjectivity present in many works of literature that treats the manifestation of masculinity in men as a natural given about their character. A recent development of drag television shows such as *The Switch Drag Race* in Chile broadcasts competitions amongst drag queens in a manner in which these conceptions are

being challenged as these performers change the acceptable appearances and performances the male body can engage in publicly. This socio-technical aspect is contrasted with its bio-political nature that concerns itself more with populations. He states this aspect is distinct and important in that “it is exercised within a multiplicity in which subject positions are created on the basis of the place they occupy within the relationship itself, the paths they are allowed to follow in an open space and the possible events that are envisaged” (41). Through this bio-political aspect of visibility, Brighenti argues that visibility is then able to participate in a process of classifying, sorting and ranking whatever materiality is in question. Brighenti himself uses the human being as an example of an object used in social theories of visibility. The human being and body are not the only subject put under the lens of visibility. It is the way the body is used with markers that are made public such as clothing that sends signals to others about the self-perception of the body, a social identification of the body and a possible expression of sexuality. Masculinity is another point of visibility at the intersection of this visibility regime that is both bio-political and socio-technical. Masculinity is inscribed onto the body so that it will be seen publicly and then is used to create systems of classification and categorization based on one's ability to perform the various demands. Within this classification, as Connell has discussed, there is a hierarchized masculinity and men labeled as queer find themselves marginalized because of a perceived lack of masculinity.

Masculinity, I argue, is an important part of the process by which visibility or invisibility is defined in social spaces. I am referring to masculinity as a part of the process because it is separate from the body and is used to codify a body with certain traits and characteristics. Outside of the demands of masculinity are those who are intended to notice its features shining for all to see as McKee Irwin referenced. Its adherents have historically always been men (even

though women have laid claim masculinity and its traits too) intending to make visible their strength, their control of emotions, their ability to be dominant, their ability to fulfill the role of breadwinner and their virility. As an example, a man can be categorized as lesser than other men if he is unable to father children since showing one's ability to father offspring is a key component to patriarchal masculinity. Masculinity also works to make invisible other aspects of the male body by hiding any sign of weakness (whether physical, mental or spiritual) or expression of emotion that may make one appear effeminate since effeminacy is believed to weaken a man's masculinity. Context is important to these social rules, for example a man crying at an emotional event like his daughter's wedding or the birth of a child may be allowed to pass while simply crying because a child is married could be labeled as strange and a sign of weakness. This boundary between what is made visible and what is kept invisible is an important aspect of how social "others" are seen from a bio-political perspective. Brighenti states that visibility "is the element in which social sorting of people takes place, relegating some social groups into invisibility. Basically, all types of minorities and exploited classes experience the effects of invisibility as lack of recognition, but it is not only the marginal people who are invisibilized" (51). From a literary perspective, it becomes clear that representations of marginalized men who do not reflect the standards of masculinity remain invisible and lack any way of appearing in a more prominent role in the public imagination in Chile and Argentina throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. These are men who do not feel they can appear in public and are accorded the same respect by their peers as other men whose visibility is more in line with the heteronormative lifestyle. Pablo Simonetti's short story "Sin compassion" (1999) shows this dynamic well as new employee Arturo Bossard openly mocks and disrespects his boss Claudio because he perceives Claudio has gay tendencies. Despite this heteronormative

expectation that gay men remain hidden, it is their body language, their clothing, their gestures, the way they speak and the way they live their daily life that draws attention to them since masculinity creates a code of how men's bodies should look, behave and present themselves in public.

As a last point, it is important to think of visibility in regard to the pioneering voices of queer theoretical ideas like those of Butler, Sedgwick and Muñoz. Through their work, they have pushed forward the conversation on what constitutes a body and readings of bodies in literature and perceptions of them in the real world. Judith Butler's theories of the materiality of the body in her work *Bodies That Matter* (1993) is important to the process for creating a method of visibilizing hegemonic notions of masculinity and the cultural force influencing men's thoughts and ideas on how men are supposed to act because of their biological sex. Eve Sedgwick's seminal work *Epistemology of the Closet* argues there exists a gaping hole in many aspects of Western literary culture because of a lack of incorporating a homo/heterosexual definition. In other words, there is an entire segment of representations present in literature that remains unknown because of prevailing ideas and anxieties around gender and sexuality. Muñoz's work *Disidentifications* (1999) focuses on how those outside the racial and sexual mainstream (queer bodies) negotiate their own relationship with majority culture to create their own type of visibility. The word queer has an interesting history itself as it entered the English language in the 16th century originally meaning something strange, peculiar or eccentric. At times it was even employed with a suspiciousness of something not quite being right. It should then be of little surprise that this type of definition would be applied to those labelled by one of the numerous words used to describe effeminate men at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th who displayed behaviors that went against the strong man image being tied to the idea of the

nation. It made its way into Chile and Argentina in the 1990's with the emergence of Queer Theory. By attaching the label of queer, or in the case of Spanish speaking countries *raro* to these men, they were making a statement intended to distance these men from the mainstream and mark them as abnormal. These words have been used at great length and to great effect in many Latin American cultures. Queer identity marks moments of visibility for men who are actively showing their resistance towards hegemonic notions of masculinity and playing with the fluidity of gender representations.

Even with pressure mounting, it was the flashpoint in New York City on a hot night in June 1969 that set off a firestorm of change that spread around the world. In the vein of *Los 41* in Mexico City, a subgroup that had been socialized to keep itself invisible suddenly found themselves thrust into the limelight. Argentine gay rights activist Carlos Jáuregui would use the Stonewall Riots of 1969 as his own inspiration to push forward activism and demands for legal protections and to change the visibility regime around the LGBTQ+ community in Argentina. Since then, not only in the public eye but in the literary cultural production of both Chile and Argentina has a reexamination of the past occurred to claim their own queer histories and to also empower the newer generations to move the fight for visibility forward. Contemporary authors are starting from a different perspective than those of the past like Puig, Donoso and Villordo. Empowered by feeling more visible within their own communities, cities and countries, they are creating their own identities and exploring the possibilities of living them out in the open instead of hidden from public view.

CHAPTER 3

GAY MASCULINITY

Carlos Jáuregui, the famous Argentine gay rights activist, author and professor, in his book *La homosexualidad en la Argentina* (1987) posed just four years after the fall of the military junta that governed Argentina the following questions: "¿Existe una identidad gay? ¿No será acaso, peligrosa, si su existencia fuera probada? ¿Los homosexuales no estaremos cayendo en una trampa resaltando nuestra propia autoestima?" (11). These questions form the basis of his exploration of the history of homosexuality in Argentina and how the negative associations of the word homosexual have passed through a transformation process under the more modern, positive and Anglicized word "gay" that was empowered by the Stonewall Rebellion of New York City, an event Jáuregui hoped would happen in Buenos Aires. He concludes that "me invade una certeza: la identidad gay no existe. Pero es necesario construirla. Elaborarla. Trabajarla" (12). His assertions reflect a need to construct a positive identity from within the gay community that controls its own visibility regime and starting with the question of gay men as being able to perform masculinity is an important starting point. Performing gay masculinity is a way for gay men to gain access to visibility as the visibility regime about them has changed in a positive manner since the early 1990's (Bersani 1995). Jáuregui's acknowledgment that a gay identity needs to be constructed also recognizes that the homosexual identity constructed both from within and from outside carries the negative meaning of pathologization[12] from the past and causes the advancement of LGBTQ+ rights in Southern Cone countries to encounter continuous

[12] See Jorge Salessi's *Medicos maleantes y maricas* (1995) for a history of discourse portraying non-heterosexual men as abnormal and deviant members of society.

setbacks. Even though critics and academics have worked to compile anthologies and lists of works that could be said to form a corpus of gay literature and/or representations of men engaging in homoerotic acts/romances/relationships in Southern Cone countries, the process is lacking in regard to discussions about the construction, development and establishment of a gay masculine identity from a gay perspective. An important aspect of gay identity for many gay men is how they perceive their own masculinity amid perceptions that they do not possess masculine traits since they are often labeled as effeminate from a hegemonic perspective. By creating a positive visibility regime for themselves, they are aligning themselves more with Connell's concept of complicit masculinity rather than being marginalized. In this chapter, I analyze two recent novels, *Sudor* (2016) and *Mi amado Mr. B* (2006), from Chile and Argentina respectively that share commonalities amongst the gay male characters that develops a gay masculinity.

The emerging visibility of gay masculinity in Chile and Argentina relates to the recent development of gay identities in Southern Cone literature of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Both are important and interconnected aspects of the project of visibility of the gay community. Critics such as David Halperin argue that studies of gay men's subjectivities are lacking in academia. He states the problem is intentional and that "the silence of queer studies on the topic of gay male subjectivity -- the inner life of male homosexuality, what it is that gay men want -- is no accident" (1) because the focus has been more on redefining the terminology of gay and homosexual to dispel the notions that they are deviants and psychologically abnormal. There are more and more literary voices emerging as groups come together to promote LGBTQ+ rights and push for visibility in countries like Chile and Argentina and these voices are constructing gay subjectivities from a more gay centric and positive perspective. Even though the experiences of the LGBTQ+ community are different in these two countries due to geographical and cultural

differences, “it is possible to locate a common ground for identity formation since most homosexual men have undergone similar experiences in their own territories. Gay identity is formed on the basis that all subjects share the same sexual desires, surrounded by stigma, along with a history of sexual repression, and the overt rejection of any sign of feminization in their external behavior” (Subero 5). Throughout the twenty-seven-year period (1990-2016) in question, there are more openly gay writers creating greater visibility to the lives of members of the LGBTQ+ community. Both Chile and Argentina were thrust into neoliberalized economies during their respective military dictatorships and the continued presence of profit driven economies combined throughout the transition to democracy has opened the door for more marginalized voices to find a space in which to sell their messages and representations of the gay community. This has allowed for the development of gay centric markets and reading publics that can produce and consume literature that focuses on their lives. While most of the authors in question here likely find their main public to be a part of this LGBTQ+ centered public, there is also hope that readers outside of the community participate in the consumption of their works.

The two novels I have chosen for this chapter, *Mi amado Mr. B* (2006) by Luis Corbacho and *Sudor* (2016) by Alberto Fuguet both develop a distinctive and markedly gay masculinity through representations of their main male protagonists. As discussed in Chapter 2, masculinity can be used as a technology that brings visibility to the male body. The development of a gay masculinity provides a way to engage in a positive gay male subjectivity that is controlled and developed by members of the gay community itself while retaining a sense of feeling masculine. In *Mi amado Mr. B*, the story revolves around the love affair between Martín, an Argentine journalist based in Buenos Aires and his Peruvian lover Felipe Brown, whom he meets doing an interview for his magazine. Felipe is divorced, has children back in Lima and is a famous

television personality trying to avoid public attention which forces their love affair to remain hidden from public view. Their time together is characterized by hanging around upper class social groups and celebrities in Argentina, Chile and Miami with brief sexual encounters that show the two have a passionate, yet highly unstable, relationship. Martín is new to exploring his more open and public gay identity and Felipe is older and more than happy to show him how to enjoy his new-found identity as a gay man. At the novel's end, Felipe breaks it off with Martín after he had convinced him to quit his job and move to Miami with him. Martin is left heartbroken and outed to his pious and socially conservative family as the two men go their separate ways. In *Sudor,* Alfredo, or Alf as he prefers, narrates a three-day period in October during a national book fair and the arrival of an important client to his publishing house. His client's son, Rafa, represents an emerging transnational identity of wealthy powerful men as Rafa has been all over the world, is multi lingual and feels empowered to be more visible about his identity as a gay man. Before meeting Rafa, Alf tells of his own interactions with other gay men in Santiago via the *Grindr* app, a social media network designed for gay men to find each other. While he tries not to fall for Rafa's seduction techniques, he finds himself wildly attracted to him. The two engage in thirty-six-hour affair of sex, drugs and a wild night at Santiago's top clubs. Rafa has a health problem, hemophilia, that leads to his tragic death as he drunkenly falls and bleeds to death in a night club while under Alf's supervision. Irate, his father has Alf fired from the publishing house. The representation of Alf's sexual escapades with Rafa and other men challenge the dominant culture as being the only choice for men to express themselves sexually in hidden dark corners of the city and society and empower gay men to not feel as if they must remain invisible.

The characters represented in these newer works after 1990 come from a perspective that

is different in its approach to non-heteronormative sexualities. They tend to push back against, whether explicitly or subtly against discourses that pathologize and criminalize non heteronormative sexualities classified as marginal. They engage in a process of creating a positive visibility regime in regard to gay characters and challenge negative stereotypes that have led to the negative representations prevalent throughout the literary production of Argentina and Chile before the 1990's. In many cases, the sexual aberration of queer sexualities is tied to their perceived inability to comply with the norms of a patriarchal culture. These norms utilize heterosexual relations where sex is used mainly as procreative action and less for self-pleasure as the default for gender and sexuality behaviors. I chose the two novels mentioned because of the open and frank manner they approach themes of being a man and gay in present day Argentina and Chile and the positive manner in which they establish a visibility regime of the LGBTQ+ community. The exclusive focus of both authors on gay men seeks to develop a gay masculine identity, or a gay masculinity that at times employs certain aspects of hegemonic masculinity to confirm their status to themselves and those around them that they are indeed masculine men. They explore body gestures, gender roles and normalized sexual pursuits of the men in these works as part of the performance of gay masculinity. It also shows gay masculinity as an ideal manner for many gay men to "accent their own masculinity" (Mosse 190) while exploring their sexuality outside of the confines of the closet and creating a positive visibility of gay men through masculinity as a technology of the body. It is in this negotiation of one's differences and similarities to patriarchal masculinity that they are able to challenge and change the visibility regime that has represented them for so long. The male characters in both novels no longer embrace "de-gaying themselves in the very process of making themselves visible" (Bersani 32) but put themselves in a position of a more self-empowered visibility by making their gay identity

more visible.

There exists a tendency in literature before 1990 for same sex male desires and sexual encounters to be represented as if they're an aberration of masculinity, a result of the discourses purporting homosexuality to be a pathology and against the nature of God and man. Sutherland explains in *Nación marica* (2009) how this problem arises with the homosexual/gay subject in Chilean literature. He states that: "la categoría del homosexual es desechada para transformarse en una más popular y denotiva: 'el maricón', sujeto-objeto retirado del imaginario masculino y relegado a una falsa copia del esterotipo de mujer que impone el orden cultural" (73). This was the popular image of gay/queer subjects throughout the 20th century. The stereotype of gay men being like women oversimplifies them and attempts to conflate their sexuality with the idea that their desire for other men sexually makes them like women, thus attempting to deny them any claim to their own masculinity and imposing the active/passive binary on relations between men. Thinking back to the description Foucault's offers of gay men in the Chapter 2, it is of note that the image of the homosexual reveals the frequent problems with representations of the gay male body and its effeminate state as created by public discourses and anti-homosexual authors. It was made visible from a heteronormative perspective that controlled a negative visibility regime of the gay male body and proclaimed the gay male body to be an aberration of nature (Foucault 1974). Even with a decade or two of delay in the Southern Cone due to military dictatorships being in power after the Stonewall Riots in New York City, a movement to change the State's and society's attitude towards its LGBTQ+ citizens and society's misconceptions has gained more traction in the late 20th century and early 21st century.

Jáuregui argues that a person's sexuality is not something that should have to be legalized. Even though there are cases of sexualities that are sanctioned as illegal by States all

around the world, including Argentina and Chile, before the second decade of the 21st century, they still exist in a gray area where harassment and discrimination can take place without penalty. In order to hide persecution against queer citizens, the State often labeled them as revolutionary or undermining the good moral character by not conforming to the predetermined heteronormative national identities enforced for men and women (Contardo 2008). An organized attack targeting the gay community was never formally organized by the Argentine or Chilean government, but citizens in each country perceived as pertaining to the LGBTQ+ community were often targeted by the police. They became victims of disappearings rampant under these dictatorships if they were found by happenstance or out in public and fit the description of someone deemed queer as happened to one man who received a visit from government officials as mentioned in Chapter 2 Insausti 2015). Nevertheless, the assertion by Jáuregui that a formalized gay identity did not exist up until the year 1987 and needed to be constructed, elaborated and worked to change the negative discourse about members of the LGBTQ+ community. In the two novels under investigation, a gay identity is constructed and elaborated as a valid identity for the citizens of Chile and Argentina who see themselves as being part of the LGBTQ+ community and want to claim their own gay masculinity as a way of performing their gay masculine identity.

Jáuregui's choice of words is interesting as some of them can sound dated or possess both positive and derogatory meanings within a North American/European context in the 21st century, but their usage in the Argentina/Chile context is distinct. The word homosexual comes from 19th century Germany and was used to describe sexual relations between members of the same biological sex and created a binary in opposition to heterosexuality. The use of the English word "gay" (sometimes spelled *gei*) is still present in the Southern Cone region today and, still

generally maintains the meaning Jáuregui developed in 1987. He says “esta expresión podría ser considerada sinónimo de homosexual; sin embargo, existe la tendencia a nombrar con ella un determinado estilo de vida, un comportamiento que va más allá de la sexualidad” (131). The focus on the meaning of gay indicates not only a sexuality but a type of lifestyle that isn’t just about men having sex with men but also performing their own gay masculinity. Jáuregui adds another important aspect of the word gay is that “al no poseer ninguna carga peyorativa, contribuye a resaltar la autoestima de las personas homosexuales” (132). The word gay does not carry many of the derogatory meanings it does in the North American and European context. Flavio Rapisardi and Alejandro Modarelli concur that “‘Gay’ significaba un progreso en relación a los estigmas del pasado; apuntaba más a lo lúdico, era una respuesta contra una identidad carcelaria” (210) which was often related to the word homosexual. The word gay has given certain men from the LGBTQ+ community an identity to support, to create a positive visibility for themselves that is separated from the invisibility and negativity of the label homosexual. Gay masculinity is empowering because it is formed within the community and the men of the two novels in question in this chapter will demonstrate how their empowerment plays out. Thus, gay is a word of empowerment in Chile and Argentina. In Argentina, sociologist Adrián Melo employs the word “gay” to describe the category of literature discussed in Chapter 2. They are all referencing an identity that has taken hold in Latin America and has a more positive connotation to it. Due to the importance of the term gay as an empowering word in the Southern Cone context, I use it to describe an empowering form of masculinity for men who see themselves as living a gay lifestyle.

In Chile, a similar history has played out as members of the gay community have also faced the reality that a gay identity was lacking in their social context as the rest of the Western

world seemed to be moving forward. Jordi Diez discusses some of the historical problems plaguing the LGBTQ+ community in Chile that has led to them being the only country in the Southern Cone region to not have same-sex marriage laws in place[13]. He states that "Chile's gay and lesbian movement has been historically weak, and such weakness has impeded activists from forming strong networks with state and non-state actors capable of pushing for policy change" (196). Some of the policy changes that members of the Chilean LGBTQ+ community have pushed for is the repeal of Código 365 that declares sodomy is a criminal offense. While the lesbian community had less to gain from decriminalizing sodomy as their gay counterparts, everyone in the gay community was able to unite behind the desire to repeal Código 373. It stated that homosexuals "de cualquier modo ofendieron el pudor o las buenas costumbres con hechos de grave escándalo o trascendencía, no comprendidos expresamente en otros artículos de este Código, sufrirán la pena de reclusión menor en sus grados mínimo a medio" (Código Penal 373). The open-ended aspect of this law that allowed the police to interpret their own meaning of what good moral standing or modesty meant and this left many members of the LGBTQ+ community exposed to harassment, public embarrassment and arrests with no recourse for legal action. The laws in Chile have never outright offered protections for LGBTQ+ Chileans and while many of the conservative Pinochet government often accused homosexual citizens of being communists, the socialist government of Salvador Allende offered little help politically and legally to the LGBTQ+ community as they followed the lead of Fidel Castro in Cuba who labeled homosexuality as a *bourgeois decadence* (Contardo 2008). Nevertheless, the appearance of gay men in Chilean literature is more common than some may expect, as Sutherland has made clear in *A corazón abierta* (2002). While Sutherland's book does not exclusively focus on gay

[13] Chile does have laws permitting unions between same sex couples with complex issues around same sex adoptions. There are bills in the Chilean Congress in 2019 to change the title of union to marriage and simplify some of the complexities of the adoption rights.

male characters in Chilean literature, it does show many representations of gay men confronting their own sexuality while also trying to maintain some sense of themselves as men and navigating public performances of heteronormative masculinity with private indulgences in homoerotic encounters.

Studies of masculinity that include aspects of gay men have only started circulating in recent years within academia as writers and critics grapple with the idea that "homosexual masculinity is a contradiction for a gender order structured as modern Western systems are" (Connell 162). This is not to say that literary works with gay/homosexual characters haven't existed before now but there is a difference in the gay characters represented by openly gay/queer authors in the region during the final decade of the 20th and early 21st centuries than those from the turn of the 20th century up to the dictatorship period. Jorge Peralta argues in his book *Paisajes de varones* (2016) that gay/homosexual/queer characters and representations have been present in Argentine literature since the publication of *El matadero*, a text argued, not only by Peralta but other critics[14], to have queer implications. Peralta asserts that "la identidad homosexual no se habría consolidado en Argentina hasta la década de 1950, mientras que el modelo identitario gay se afirmó entre las décadas de 1980 y 1990" (11). Two important points in Peralta's assertion are: he differentiates between a homosexual identity and a gay identity and confirms the creation of a gay identity in the late 20th century post dictatorship period of Argentina. The reason, I argue, he differentiates between the two is that the word homosexual, while being able to describe same sex relations, can also carry negative connotations as it was widely used in regard to medical and political discourses that sought to pathologize homosexuals and create a negative imagery of them to the public. Homosexual characters before the last two decades of the 20th century tended to be represented as diseased, strange, mysterious or possibly

[14] "El matadero" is also discussed in Chapter 3 on queered masculinities.

afflicted with some sort of unknowable problem. By marking the creation of a gay identity in the post-dictatorship period, Peralta aligns Argentina with the gay liberation movements at work in various other countries around the world during the latter half of the 1980's and 1990's that followed in the footsteps of the North American Gay Liberation movement sparked by the Stonewall Riots.

An important starting point to an analysis of gay masculinity is to recognize the existence of a hegemonic masculinity that operates in relation to subordinate, complicit and marginalized masculinities as defined by Connell and discussed in Chapter 2. To review, she defines hegemonic masculinity that as "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (77). By defining patriarchy as the hegemonic and dominant form of masculinity, Connell is acknowledging the fluid nature of the power relations involved amongst men and their own conceptions of masculinity. The patriarchal form of masculinity has been, in Connell's opinion, the hegemonic form of masculinity dictating the social norms and expectations for men in most Western countries since the Victorian period. Whether a majority of men exude this hegemonic masculinity does not diminish its influence or power. It is within the category of subordinated masculinity that issues surrounding gay men arise, leading to "an unavoidable politics of masculinity in and around contemporary men's homosexuality" (Connell 219). As my analysis will show for many representations in literature of gay men, their constructed version of masculinity demonstrates that if one cannot overcome the barriers of hegemonic masculinity, then there exists the possibility of trying to mimic aspects of hegemonic masculinity itself as a gay man and incorporate them into the performance of gay masculinity. The subordination of

women is a key point that leads to men's dominance in society and a way that gay men prove themselves as real men despite their sexual orientation. By blurring the lines as Alf, Felipe and Martín do throughout the two novels, it becomes more difficult to see them in terms of the antiquated homosexual trope of possessing diseased bodies and marginalized positions in society. In fact, they have promising careers and access to money that puts them into an economic class of men that is also challenging patriarchy as the dominant form of masculinity.

The use of elements of hegemonic masculinity plays out in another type of masculinity that Connell develops theoretically and argues is staking its own claim as a hegemonic form of masculinity, simultaneously challenging and incorporating elements of patriarchal masculinity. She calls this emerging masculinity "transnational business masculinity" (362). For the purposes of this study, it should be taken into account due to the neoliberal influences in both countries in which transnational business masculinity exists as a type of masculinity in which wealth and control of capital brings power to men. It involves powerful men who earn large salaries and are capable of wielding more power and influence the patriarchal men, and as Connell notes, one "which is achieving a hegemonic position in global gender relations" (362). Vinodh Venkatesh also notes this connection of masculinity with neoliberal economic power in his book *The Body as Capital* (2015). He states that "masculinity enters in a direct relationship with the pervading politico-economic model and is constituted around a capitalization of the body" (6). Not only does money give other men who have access to lots of it a powerful image, but it puts a monetary value on bodies and turns them into a good or service by assigning a value and purchase ability to the male body. Thus, the male body in the late 20th and early 21st century is no longer tied to the image of the caudillo that has control and power over a certain territory but rather is realigned with a globalized economy and the power and influence that accompanies said

economy. This transnational business masculinity can be seen manifested in several characters, some openly gay and others heterosexual, of the works analyzed in this chapter. By taking into account not only the demands of patriarchy but the influence of economic power, we can see the complicated interweaving of the various types of masculinities being enacted as these men define themselves in relation to the world around them. The intersectional aspects of the performance of this transnational business masculinity demonstrate that the gay characters create an emboldened and positive visibility regime for themselves using more heteronormative performances of masculinity when it suits their own need to have agency and power.

Gay masculinity is not just describing men who openly engage in sexual acts with other men. Gay men also engage in discriminatory attitudes and practices towards men they perceive as too effeminate. They are men who openly identify themselves as being gay and masculine. If, as according to Connell, hegemonic masculinity is based on patriarchal values, then the idea that men subordinate women and anything deemed to be feminine is the basis of the homosexual man compared to that of the woman. The problem with denying gay men masculinity on the basis they are feminine due to their homoerotic desires conflates the categories of gender and sex in a strict binary fashion. This is part of the problem Gender and Sexuality Studies has taken on with heteronormative values that ties gender roles and sexuality together. Eve Sedgwick defines gender as "the far more elaborated, more fully and rigidly dichotomized social production and reproduction of male and female identities and behaviors - of male and female *persons* - in a cultural system for which 'male/female' functions as a primary and perhaps model binarism affecting the structure and meaning of many, many other binarisms whose apparent connection to chromosomal sex will often be exiguous or nonexistent" (27-8). The biological sex of a person becomes a foundation on which gender norms and behaviors that pertain to the binary system of

masculine/feminine are constructed and the two are presented as if they are inseparable from each other. Gender and sex have been argued convincingly to be separate categories in the fields of Gender Studies and Queer Theory. From an essentialist perspective, the gender norm of masculinity demands men to be dominant sexually, an aspect hegemonic masculinity denies gay men are capable of enacting. Gay men have begun to refute they lack this aspect that makes them masculine and some members of the gay community have begun constructing an identity that makes them feel as if they possess their own form of masculinity. Gay men have realized they can live their own masculine identity by having "started out within the framework of hegemonic masculinity" (162) and also outside of it. It is indeed "sexuality [that] is the point of rupture" (162) in gay masculinity from the hegemonic masculinity that frees them to engage in constructing their own positive version of masculinity for themselves. Even though it seeks to break apart from the hegemonic masculinity to construct its own identity, it still utilizes some elements of hegemonic masculinity to make visible how similar to the heteronormative meaning of men they are.

Gay masculinity itself has found little formal definition beyond Connell's three points of intersection that form a gay masculinity. They are simplistic and only state that it is: "(a) an engagement with hegemonic masculinity, (b) a closure of sexuality around relationships with men, (c) participation in the collective practices of a gay community" (160). For Connell, not all gay men have to participate in all three aspects, but she sees them as interconnected points that describe any sort of gay masculinity. The reader *Gay Masculinities* (2000), edited by Peter Nardi, delves into how gay men enact ideas of masculinity in their daily lives. Nardi acknowledges the simplified ideas that has dominated the discourse about the LGBTQ+ community from the heteronormative perspective stating that "for some time, the media images

of gay men as effeminate and lesbians as masculine have persisted. They illustrate the conflation of gender and sexual orientation and raise salient questions about the social construction and relational nature of femininity and masculinity" (1). In his introductory chapter, he also explains that "to automatically assume that all gay men contest, modify, or challenge heterosexual masculinity --or for that matter, that they all enact the same masculinity roles --does not take us beyond monolithic concepts of gender" (7). While Nardi's claim that the assumption that all gay men perform similar masculinity roles prevents us from moving beyond monolithic gender roles, it must be pointed out that various chapters in *Gay Masculinities* have moments of imposing monolithic forms of gender since many illustrate that gay men are approaching their own masculinity from the perspective of the dominant discourse instead of their own sexual orientation as gay men. This approach gives little consideration to the question of whether gay masculinities can be constructed and enacted from their own perspective. It may seem a subtlety but the difference in gay men incorporating certain performances of behavior associated with masculinity from a heteronormative perspective and constructing their own ideals from a gay centric perspective are important. This is where my analysis takes a unique approach as I argue that gay men are constructing their own new gay masculinity instead of making monolithic forms of masculinity gay.

Nardi's volume does make an excellent point that one must look at gay men enacting their own form of masculinity within a patriarchal society and the intersection of this subordinate form of masculinity with the hegemonic norm. One must consider how they are different and at what points do they intersect. In a patriarchal society, like the ones present in the Southern Cone, gay masculinity can be "a contradiction for a gender order structured as modern Western systems are" (Connell 162) yet that doesn't cause the negation of their existence for many gay men.

Connell's approach to gay masculinity explicitly places it in a hierarchy of masculinities that inhibits the agency of gay men constructing their own gay masculinity. The main feature of gay masculinity that puts it into a subordinated status to hegemonic masculinity in the hierarchy of masculinities developed by Connell is the same sex attraction. A change in approach to a gay centric perspective that does not start from a heteronormative perspective on masculinity empowers gay men to enact their own performance of masculinity and find their own agency as gay men. Even with this in mind, the issue of identifying as gay becomes muddled when men in Latin America do not always classify them as gay if they choose not to view themselves as homosexual because they believe taking the active sexual role mitigates any ties to homosexuality[15]. For many men in Southern Cone cultures, intersecting masculinity and homosexuality is not plausible. The works analyzed in this chapter demonstrate a complicated reality in which gay men are constructing aspects of their gay masculinity from their own experiences and lives as gay men involved in a gay culture and identity while also incoporating aspects of dominant hegemonic masculinity in order to pass and be accepted as "real men" in society.

Gay men are grouped with women within dominant discourses in order to explain homosexuality as a set of desires aligned with heterosexual women. This subsequently alters the image of these men to be weak and passive since they are portrayed to be like women. Social patterns were set with men and women being opposites of each other and "those who did not fit the set pattern laid down for men and women were the enemies of society; they were considered the foil of true masculinity" (Mosse 55). To reconcile both their recognition of displaying behaviors that are perceived as effeminate and knowing they have a masculine side to their

[15] Lionel Cantú discusses the importance of Latino masculinities and homosexuality in regard to the active/passive dynamic and men maintaining a sense of dominant masculinity by enacting the active role in "Entre hombres/Between Men: Latino Masculinities and Homosexualities" from *Gay Latino Studies* (2011).

identity, some gay men, as shown by the characters in the novels under analysis here, enact certain behaviors of hegemonic masculinity to show their toughness in an attempt to separate themselves from women. In other words, they present themselves as if they aren't so different from the strong men that personify patriarchal masculinity in subordinating women and acting openly misogynistic. Part of creating a new idealized gay masculinity is changing the coding of these behaviors so that they can fit into a new ideal of masculine behavior. Since masculinity is undergoing a process of transformation and social construction from another perspective that is more gay-centered, previously effeminate behaviors can have their meanings altered. In her chapter "Queer Sexism: Rethinking Gay Men and Masculinity" in *Gay Masculinities*, Jane Ward describes the problematic relationship of gay men to women in that "political solidarity with gay men is hindered not only by the performance of masculinity but by the assumption that gay men have special knowledge about women that makes them less inclined to hold sexist attitudes or exercise male privilege in their relationships with women" (15). For many gay men, the problematic aspect of being associated with femininity is that it feeds into the active/passive binary of sexual relations in which gay men are seen as passive because of their desire for sex with a man in which one is penetrated by the literal penis and metaphorical phallus and thus deemed subordinated to the penetrator. Mara Viveros claims that this problem exists in most of Latin America. She states that "there is a tendency to associate masculinity with heterosexuality and to associate homosexuality with femininity and passivity" (48). Her inclusion of passivity paired with femininity reflects a historical representation while the active role of masculinity and heterosexuality has always been taken as a given. This tendency is not only in the dominant heterosexual discourse but is a common issue in gay communities where large numbers of men act macho and dominant in public to display a certain persona of being masculine while playing

the role of receiver in one on one sexual situations. This shows the importance of a masculine performance in public to reify one's masculinity, whether it be gay or not, thus confirming Michael Kimmel's assertion that "to be considered a real man, one had better make sure to always be walking around and acting 'real masculine'" (100).

Outside the space of literature, a lot of the momentum has gained ground in the activist led fights for the rights of LGBTQ+ communities in Chile and Argentina. The rise of activist groups crusading for rights, protections and recognitions under the law has helped spark debates and dialogue in both Chile and Argentina around the LGBTQ+ community. The one-sided repressive power relationship that States maintained with their LGBTQ+ communities has been forced into a public debate and been opened to examination. There have been demands for and laws passed surrounding marriage, adoption rights and gender self-identification rights in Argentina. Chile on the other hand has only adopted civil unions and limited adoption rights. In literature, this has inspired more representations of what constitutes a gay identity for men and challenges the cultural and social barriers in the Southern Cone. From a traditional gender point of view, the many men who identify as gay face boundaries to having their sense of self, whether that be more masculine or more feminine, recognized in public discourses. The influence of science and psychology on the creation of a pathologized homosexuality throughout the 19th and 20th century around the Western world, including in the Southern Cone, was the work of a negative visibility regime that sought to make the gay/homosexual figure invisible yet mark their identity as problematic and behaviors to be noticed so they maintained a certain type of visibility (Bersani 32). Since heterosexuality is made compulsory for men and women to justify a Church and State based demand, men must have sexual relations only with women for the purposes of procreation. Women aren't offered any other status or freedoms as the continuity of the family

and women's place as a child-rearer goes uncontested.

If men are found to be engaging in sexual relations with other men, the only way they could maintain some form of masculinity is by being the active participant. Ravenhill and Visser's 2017 study of constructions of gay masculinity found that several participants had responses that showed "while being a bottom was gay, being a top was closer to being straight. The gay men expressed the view that equating top with masculinity and bottom with femininity stemmed from a heteronormative understanding of sexual roles" (325). This role of the one who inserts himself into another mimics the role of a heterosexual man who penetrates women, thus subordinating her to the power of his phallus comes from heteronormative guidelines of society and patriarchal ideals of men as dominant and women as passive. These representations can be seen in the works *El beso de la mujer araña* (1976) and *La otra mejilla* (1986) in which the homosexual characters in the novels are seen in sexual positions of inferiority and being dominated. When Valentin engages in sex with Molina towards the end, there is little doubt as to his masculine stance afterwards. The male character Vincent is forced to perform fellatio in a prison cell in *La otra mejilla* on a police officer who ironically spends time arresting homosexual men for their threat to the good morals of society and like Valentin, the police officer's masculinity is never questioned. These gay men also are represented as more concerned with fighting for their existence apart from the label of a pederast or some sort of social delinquent as was common for a majority of the 20th century. Villordo, only in his later works like *Ser gay no es pecado* (1993), began to show signs of thinking more constructively towards a gay identity for men and what the implications of that identity could mean.

There are four significant behaviors that the gay male characters of the two novels *Sudor* and *Mi amado Mr. B* enact to construct and perform their own gay masculinity, thus creating a

more cohesive and positive visibility regime around the gay male body. The first is how the men work to undermine the stereotypical dynamic of the active/passive sexual role imposed by hegemonic masculine norms on sexual interactions. Between the men involved in a sexual encounter, they either erase or silence the idea that one of them is passive through the language they use (or don't). The dynamic of the active/passive role in the sexual relationships that develop between men in these works has a commonality, they seek to empower both men while weakening neither. While this dynamic is directly related to the sexual interactions between two men, the intersections of gay men constructing their own masculinity from the ideals of hegemonic masculinity has often complicated how men see themselves in relation to active and passive roles and who will take which one. The gay male characters in these works transform the active/passive binary in sexual terms to reflect their self-perceptions as strong men who aren't passive. In other words, their visibility regime represents both men as active participants in sexual encounters and makes passivity as a weakening force towards them invisible. The language the men use when together and the constant affirmations of one's masculinity work to undo this imposition of heteronormativity despite preferring a sexual position previously deemed passive. Second, there is a focus on men developing an ideal beauty of the gay male body that is sensual, sexual and powerful. The attention given to body movements, smells and actions of other men's bodies is constant and reaffirming throughout the novels. The importance of the male body and even clothing worn to accentuate its form comes into focus when gay men are thinking of ways to perform their own gay masculinity. Third, the gay men actively distance themselves from women in order to show themselves as strong and not effeminate. They do acknowledge their emotions and feelings for one another while pairing them with a strong masculine image of a man capable of feeling emotion but not weakened by them as a stereotype of women purports.

The female body is represented as a symbol of repulsion and disgust while the male figure is praised for its beauty. Some of the men go even further and outright express misogynistic points of view that seek to demean women. By aligning themselves with hegemonic masculine points of view about women's secondary place to men, these gay men choose complicity within the power structure of masculinities in order to show themselves as strong masculine figures. It is here they find their masculinity intersecting with hegemonic masculinity. Fourth, they don't engage in power struggles confronting hegemonic masculinity head on in heteronormative spaces to establish themselves as dominant men. In many instances throughout the two novels, when the gay men find themselves in situations with heterosexual men or spaces generally coded as heteronormative, they do not push their openly gay identity on other men and comport themselves in a way so as to pass as a typical man. There are moments in which the gay characters are less open and forthright with certain heterosexual people they meet about their gay identity. One major difference to pre-dictatorship literature is none of the men display any concern with having their freedoms restricted by actors of the State, but rather by other people who seek to maintain the hegemony of heteronormativity. They do claim their gay identity but do not seek to make it a norm to which everyone else must adhere to as heterosexual based masculinity has done.

Luis Corbacho's novel *Mi amado Mr. B* has a decidedly different tone and development of gay identity from previously published novels of the 20th century involving homosexual characters. Corbacho, an Argentine journalist who became famous for reporting the coming out of his friend and fellow journalist Juan Castro (radio host of the show *El mañanero*), published his first novel in 2006. The novel shows strong similarities to his long term, and sometimes tempestuous, relationship with famous Peruvian TV personality and writer Jaime Bayly. Bayly

himself is famous not only for his on-air TV personality and show *El francotirador* but for his sexually charged and explicit novels he began publishing in the mid 1990's with *No se lo digas a nadie* (1994) that explore issues of young men living in the closet and coming to grips with their homosexual desires. Corbacho has also published two other novels, *Candy* (2010) and *Morir maquillado* (2011). A common thread amongst his works is the main character Martín and his inner conflict to live his gay identity publicly as he does in his private life. In *Mi amado Mr. B.*, the protagonist Martín Alcorta, editor of the Buenos Aires based magazine *Soho B.A.,* is known at the magazine for his propensity to ask interviewees probing questions about their sexuality, which in the past has led to one star confessing "su homosexualidad en un reportaje" (13). Their romantic affair differs greatly from the previous examples mentioned such as between Valentín and Molina in *El beso de la mujer araña* or the unnamed narrator and his pursuit of Lucio in *La otra mejilla* in which the relationships that develop a motif of paranoia and awareness that the State is always watching. In the works of Corbacho, there is no presence of agents of the State looking over the shoulder of the characters to arrest them for suspicion of pederasty or against the good morals nor do they concern themselves with the space of prison. The threat of death or physical violence or the concern of being out in public and accosted by police officers is not of central focus. Instead, his concerns of being seen as gay are tied to family and other members of society who police the good morality in place of the State. Despite the absence of the State apparatus of prison overshadowing the gay character, there is still a surveillance aspect from Martín's family and friends who monitor his performance of masculinity looking to see that he is complying with heteronormative expectations. In dealing with these expectations, Corbacho focuses on the representation of men acting on their homoerotic desires of wanting companionship with someone of the same biological sex, of struggling with their own identity as

a gay subject and navigating the intersections of class and influence in a stratified society starkly marked by social class divisions.

In Chile, a movement to a more open nature of gay identity is taking shape in literary cultural production and developed alongside a gay masculinity within the novel *Sudor* (2016) by Alberto Fuguet. Fuguet, famous for his 1991 novel *Mala onda*, is also a journalist who has taken to publishing literary fiction in addition to his professional endeavors. He, like other gay writers from Chile, has had extensive contact with the United States and its culture, and the influences of the Gay Liberation Movement in the US can be seen as influences in the themes of his writing. In a television interview on the show *El interruptor* about *Sudor*, Fuguet describes the novel's openly gay male perspective and makes clear that for him "[l]e interesan los hombres, como tema" and that *Sudor* "es una novela gay" and "una obra masculina", bringing together a gay masculine identity noted by the presence of many gay men and only a couple of peripheral female characters. Fuguet references a theme present in both novels, the reformulation of the aesthetics of the gay male body as a site for pleasure instead of disgust. Both novels take this need for a redefined aesthetic throughout every aspect of their daily lives, including their sex lives in order to permit the reformulation of gay male aesthetics permeate all aspects of a masculine gay identity. Fuguet constructs his novel around one main character, a gay man named Alf Garzón, and his responsibility as a non-fiction book editor to care for the gay son of the publishing house's most important client. Alf sees himself as a strong gay man and he uses his sexual exploits to satisfy what he sees as an undeniable desire all real men have, the need to have lots of sexual encounters. Alf is distinct from previous representations of strong male characters pursuing many sexual encounters in that he focuses on the pleasure of sex over the use of sex as part of a matrix of power. Despite Alf suggesting he has broken men before, his actual exploits

with other men demonstrate a man focused on pleasure both for himself and his partner without employing hypermasculine ideals of the macho to be dominant. The gay masculinity performed by Alf displays many similarities to that of Martín and Felipe but also differences in the manner in which the reader sees more interaction between Alf and other men.

The ways in which the men in these works are able to engage in openly constructing their own sense of gay masculinity is aided by the less repressive nature of the State but still conflicted by the open rejection from their fellow citizens. In the case of Martín, they are members of his family that object to his gay lifestyle and sexual orientation. By taking away the element of the overreaching State, the relationships, like Felipe/Martín or Alf/Rafa, are allowed to develop more organically and with a sense of freedom unavailable to previous well-known gay literary characters like those mentioned in *El beso de la mujer araña* and *La otra mejilla*. In fact, there are times when these homoerotic relationships are portrayed as more ideal than heteronormative relationships because of the lack of emphasis on monogamy and an associated higher level of freedom to engage in sexual activity. Whether the State's role of repression has been reduced since the transition to democracy is a subject for debate but there still exists a strong belief in traditional male/female roles within the family dynamic and from society at large. Instead of looking over their shoulders for a government agent or police figure, it is the rejection by the friends, coworkers, parents, siblings and other family members that burden these men. Despite their breaking with gender norms by expressing their homoerotic desires, these gay men are still giving acknowledgment to the essential idea that men are more sexually active than women. They do, however, challenge the notion that formal relationships must exist between two people in order for them to engage in sexual activities without an exchange of money or services. The principal concerns of the novels tend to center on how the men will find time to see each

other, how sexual relations will develop and other issues that have generally been reserved for what has been framed in the past as the "traditional" relationships. The narrative structure of a more personalized first-person perspective is present in both works as the narrators employ this point of view and it is through the lens of the narrator that we see their own and the other men's masculinities develop. The first-person narration allows the reader to be drawn into a more personalized account of how these men are engaging in their gay lifestyle. For example, in *Mi amado Mr. B*, the story is told from Martín's point of view and gives the reader more insight into his personal feelings about his own masculinity. It also means when analyzing the masculinity of Felipe that it is filtered through the eyes of Martín. Through my analysis I show how the various couplings of men conduct themselves together in both private and public ways that share the attributes mentioned earlier that construct their gay masculinity.

Masculinity in the Novels

An important aspect of the gay men of the two works discussed here is that their ideas of what entails the role of a man is shaped by the influences of hegemonic masculinity in Latin America. Within this patriarchal form of masculinity, we see "--for instance, homophobia, machismo, and misogyny-- are not simply individual expressions of interpersonal relations in families and households but also pertain to the very foundations of gender inequalities within these societies" (Gutmann 3). In both Chile and Argentina, the influence of patriarchal masculinity carries with it a strong sense of homophobia, machismo and misogyny and helps form a commonality amongst how many men are taught it as the natural and socially acceptable way of acting as men. For gay men, this can complicate one's constructing their own masculinity with internalized homophobia causing conflict between patriarchal masculine demands mixed wirh feelings of inadequacy or not belonging and one's own desires to fulfill homoerotic sexual

desires. Patriarchal definitions of homosexual men as effeminate, a state of having an unmanly softness and delicacy, can provoke even stronger feelings of machismo and misogyny in gay men who can feel pushed even further to prove their manliness (Mosse 9). While they may enact behaviors as gay men that could be viewed from a hegemonic position as subordinate or marginal, it is within their own communities that their machismo and misogyny are seen clearly. The differences of social class between the men of these novels influence how they interact with each other and the way they see themselves as gay men. In *Mi amado Mr. B*, Felipe is wealthy and has access to move within spaces and social groups that a majority of society cannot, and Martín is from a working-class background. Even though Martín gains access to certain famous people because of his job, he doesn't have the same access outside of the boundaries of his job like Felipe does.

In fact, Felipe enacts several different forms of masculinity depending on the social setting he finds himself in as he still maintains a close relationship to his ex-wife in Peru, his career as a successful TV star and his pursuit of gay relationships with men such as Martín. His career, wealth and free spending attitude towards Martin coupled with a lack of concern for personal financial security represent aspects of Connell's "transnational business masculinity". His status as a divorced father shows him to be a man capable of reproducing children, a critical part of patriarchal hegemonic masculinity and allowing him to pass when necessary as heterosexual. Felipe also enacts a gay masculinity with Martín in which he uses the intersecting influences of his own ties with hegemonic masculinity and transnational business masculinity to dominate the relationship with Martín. Even though Felipe has a more dominant role in their relationship, it is separate from their sexual relationship. A similar pattern of intersecting masculinities occurs in *Sudor* as the narrator Alf parallels the working-class social background of

Martín and generally takes charge as an alpha male (alluded to by his shortened nickname for Alfredo) in the many encounters he has over the three days of the novel. Alf likes to spend his downtime looking for flings on *Grindr*. It is through *Grindr* that Rafael Restrepo, the son of his famous client, finds him and seduces him. Rafa is also a gay man who, like Felipe, enacts a "transnational business masculinity" because of his own wealth and connections mixed with his own sense of being a gay man. He views other male bodies as if they were goods and services he can buy at his leisure. He has little concern for monogamous relationships or the feelings of the men he meets and flirts with because for him, the glory is in the conquering of other men, of making them want to desire him. In spite of these interrelated forms of masculinity playing out, these gay men share some commonalities of their own gay masculinity.

Active/Passive Role

It is in contemporary novels of the last decade of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century that gay men are engaging in a process to change this dynamic. They recognize the expectation of the active/passive role and seek to challenge it as the only reality that can exist amongst two men engaged in a sexual relationship. Robert McKee Irwin is one of the few critics to call attention to this change in perception. He states that "there is even a popular belief that there are macho men who play the 'passive' role in anal intercourse in order to prove their manhood by showing that they can take it" (129-30). Changing the idea that one can take it and endure pain as an active sexual participant strips the perceived passive role in sexual encounters as a weakened, effeminate position and confines it to a place of invisibility. The men engaged in relationships, whether monogamous, amorous or a short fling, all have to contend with the active/passive dynamic imposed on gay men in Chile and Argentina from a heteronormative perspective. This active/passive role for sexual relations is related to regulations the Church put

on sexual activities as Wade notes that "sex with the woman on top as counter to nature" (62) became a norm and for men, "penetration was a masculine activity linked to dominance and power" (62-3). Many gay/queer men have what Argentine poet and performer Mhoris eMm describes as *pasivofobia*. He states that "la pasivofobia existe porque existe el machismo, es una homofobia internalizada, donde se ve al homosexual pasivo, más identificado hacia lo femenino, como objeto de discriminación por su femineidad y por esta misma se lo ubica en un lugar de denigración" (Ward 2). eMm's association of a fear of being labeled passive against the cultural expectations of machismo shows that machismo, or exaggerated masculinity and excessive pride in being masculine, is still a problem in Chile and Argentina, and the LGBTQ+ community is no exception. The active participant is seen as the one with power, generally reserved for the man, as Foucault notes that in regard to "sexual behavior, there [is] one role that [is] intrinsically honorable and valorized without question: the one that consisted in being active" (215). As my research has argued, the influence of patriarchal masculinity classifying gay men as effeminate imposes the use of the role of passive/receiver and codes it onto the gay male body

The imposition of active/passive roles on gay characters from others outside of the LGBTQ+ community influences how they see the world and their relationships as was demonstrated in how gay men perceive active and passive roles as related to heterosexuality and homosexuality. The opening chapter of *Sudor* captures an emblematic representation of the active/passive conundrum. A big part of Alf's story is the retelling of his love for El Factor Julian (his humorous nickname for his ex-lover Julian) while he awaits his assignment of babysitting a wealthy client's son. As the novel begins, he ponders to himself before telling of his thirty-six-hour affair with Rafa Restrepo "¿Cómo puedo ser, digamos, pasivo y a la vez activo?" (15). His insertion of "digamos", a subjunctive verb form that makes his thought

hypothetical and outside of the realm of certainty, demonstrates how cripplingly important knowing one's place is within this dynamic. If a man thinks others view him as passive, how can he reclaim the active role? Does reclaiming a sense of activeness alleviate the feelings of powerlessness invoked by passivity? His concern is bordering on a phobic attitude towards passivity as eMm describes and is the start of Alf embracing an active role not just for himself but the others he is involved in sexually that will start to relegate the role of passive to a place of invisibility. In the opening pages of *Mi amado Mr. B*, there is a similar contending with this dynamic as the two men meet at an interview that concludes with Felipe asking for Martín's number and calling him shortly thereafter. Before Martín has time to process what is happening, his colleagues make clear to the reader his subordinate status to Felipe asking, "¿será activo o pasivo?" (21). Even though his colleagues pretend they are harmlessly joking, they also are reinforcing this binary in which Felipe is labeled the active one, thus demonstrating a transfer of heteronormative expectations of power to a relationship that will not operate by the same rules. The reader can see the projection of the heteronormative ideals of a binary dictating dominance and subordination in an active/passive dynamic on sexual relations, but it does not play out as such in private between the men themselves as they turn this dynamic of one having to be a passive feminized participant on its head. By doing this, they establish a reformulation and transformation to the visibility regime of how gay men approach sexual encounters with one another from a new perspective and change the aesthetics of the gay male body by reframing it as a strong, desirable and positively sexualized image.

The gay male characters in these works undermine this active/passive dynamic by constantly presenting themselves and their sexual partners from a more masculinized perspective, one that doesn't label either as passive or reframes the passive role as nothing more

than a sexual positioning preference while still performing his masculinity. It is an attempt to destroy or undo the concept of a sexual passive. This manifests in the way these men establish masculine ideals while performing sex acts in positions generally coded as passive and reframing the passive positions as acceptable by the incorporation of an acknowledgment of pain and the ability to bear it (Mckee Irwin 129-30) or a lack of admission to being dominated. Each work has a distinct approach to this single issue. It is not just the undoing of the passive sexual role by making both participants active that is of note, but also the way in which sex roles are discussed and abstain from an open acknowledgment of the existence of sexual passivity, making it invisible or silenced. This silencing or invisibility reinforces the notion that between each other, these gay men are actively working to undo the myth that one must perform active and the other passive. In *Mi amado Mr. B,* Martín outright asks Felipe "se supone que siempre sos activo, ¿no?" (39), to which Felipe answers he's only been with a few men. Felipe in turn asks an identical question, "y tú, entonces, eres siempre activo…" (39). Martín confesses he's only had sex one other time and that he enjoyed it, but Martín is still coming to terms with embracing his gay identity. Both men label the other as active with the only difference is that Martín uses the popular Argentine you form "sos" and Felipe the common Peruvian you form "eres". By repeating the same word for word statement, they confirm to each other a valuable and changing characteristic of their perception of the performance of the sexual encounter, that they think of the other as active and there exists no passive sexual partner between them even though one may be characterized as more masculine in public it does not affect their sexual relationship.

Despite the heterosexual centered dynamic denoting one must be passive and the other active, Martín and Felipe visibilize their sexual roles as both being active participants in seeking mutual pleasure from each other rather than one dominating the other. The first time Martín and

Felipe have an intimate encounter, Martín complains about the anger involved in sex: “me tiré en la cama, con la almohada tapándome la cabeza, y lloré como una nena a la que habían violado. Lloré, ya no de dolor, sino de rabia” (78). Martín is focusing on his anger as part of showing a more masculinized expression of emotion as his tears become an expression of anger, not pain. Felipe affirms that Martín is not a passive sexual participant in their relationship because it is a challenge to have sex with him. He confirms that “lo bueno de acostarse con mujeres es que todo es mucho más fácil” (39). Following what Connell makes clear in her definition of how masculinity is often defined, Felipe is establishing his masculinity in opposition to femininity by describing how easy sex with women is in comparison to men. Even though some of Martín’s tears could be construed as weakness, they actually work to reinforce his capacity to handle Felipe’s manhood when paired with his emotional response of anger. Not only does Martín prove he possesses a strong form of masculinity with Felipe, but he expresses how unattracted he is towards effeminate men and outright claims that “los maricas más afeminados, con todo el respeto que me merecen, nunca me calentaron ni un poquito” (243). Martín wants nothing to do with men who he sees as too weak to be what he deems a masculine man.

In *Sudor*, the theme of active and passive emerges throughout the story via the profiles seen on *Grindr*, in the sexual encounters he has with some of the men and the arrival of young Rafa to Santiago de Chile. Until Rafa arrives, Alf recounts several sexual encounters with other men he meets via *Grindr*. Through Alf's addiction to *Grindr*, the reader is shown the many ways gay men are able to establish their own masculinity as they search for sexual partners. The active/passive binary is turned on its head again as many men, in spite of acknowledging active/passive code, see it more as a reference to sexual positions than a dominance/submission dynamic. They resignify the word passive to mean nothing more than a sexual position of

pleasure that does not diminish their masculinity. Some profiles that challenge the notion that a passive man signifies a less masculine man read as such: “Parezco hétero pero salí pasivo, pero no por eso menos varonil” (158), “2 pasivo igual macho: hay que ser muy hombre para que entre entera, ¿no?” (225) and “serio, masculino, discreto, pasivo, busco similar” (268). These descriptions confirm McKee Irwin's idea that men playing the role of the *passioive* are showing a preference for sexual positions without giving up their claim to masculinity and its associated power. In other words, they are real men that can take it, enjoy it and lose nothing of their manliness in the process. In addition to the *Grindr* profiles, the engaging in sex acts by Alf with other men before meeting Rafa also lack a focus on active/passive roles. Instead, what is made visible is a focus on the pleasure aspect of the sexual encounter as both participants experience regardless of who is doing what to whom. Both Alf’s encounter with Renato in a bathroom where Alf offers oral sex to him, a generally effeminate action, and another with Gerard, a Belgian man, in his apartment show a focus on the pleasure aspect instead of dominance. During his hook up with Gerard, Alf thinks of sex not as a dominance move but rather as a “juego, es teatro, es actuar, sobre todo cuando no hay lazo, onda o deseo” (277). Instead Alf is showing sex as a performance and the socially constructed patriarchal ideal of dominance that keeps heterosexual norms have imposed on the gay community have no place or need amongst gay men who are seeking pleasure with each other and use active passive words to denote a sexual position more so than a dominating act.

The brief and torrid love affair between Rafa and Alf, ultimately culminating in Rafa’s death, demonstrates clearly the way two strong willed, dominant men used to being in charge navigate the tricky active/passive dynamic with each other sexually. Outside of the confines of the bedroom, they play a power game to test each other’s capacity to be domineering. Rafa

orchestrates his father choosing Alf to be his guide after finding him on *Grindr* and continues to demonstrate to Alf his dominant position to him, mostly facilitated by the power, money and influence of his father's position as a valued client and writer of Alf's publishing house. They speak with each other openly about being dominant with others. Rafa demands of Alf "cuénteme de sus conquistas, de los que le han roto el corazón" (511). Rafa's desire to know both the people Alf has conquered as well as the ones who have broken his heart puts Alf in a place to show both his strengths and weaknesses. Alf responds, though, with words of strength; "Yo los quiebro. Yo los seduzco" (511) and confirms Rafa's statement of him as macho with "puro y peludo, zorrón. Activo y alfa" (511) as his nickname Alf signifies. His use of the verb "quebrar" is strong and reflects his masculinized nature of having strength and power despite his status as an openly gay man but it is not related to his sexual encounters with men. This conversation takes place in a bar and makes it a public spectacle between the two men, talking up their ability to be domineering and strong as a way of performing their masculinity in a publicly visible space. Later, in private when the two are engaging in sex, the tough and domineering routine changes its tone and the active/passive focus on dominating others is made invisible in order to put the act of mutual pleasure seeking into a position of visibility. As Alf positions himself to be the insertor, Rafa signals he must stop to which Alf asks, "¿No eres pasivo?" (518). Rafa confirms "yo creo que sí" (518) but that Alf can't be the insertor because Rafa "[puede] sangrar" (518) because of his health condition as a hemophiliac. Alf concedes and while he takes the receiver position, there is no recognition between the two that some sort of power shift has occurred. Instead, like Martín and Felipe, they focus on the pleasure aspect of sex and simply use the active passive words to refer to sexual positions. Their sexual encounter is part of their passionate night in which Rafa dies in a nightclub after taking too many drugs and bleeding to death after a fall. Despite the

positive aspects to empowered gay men constructing their own gay masculinity, Fuguet does not let the reader pass on a common experience of the LGBTQ+ community, the presence of death amongst the youth.

Through these instances of sexual interactions between gay male characters in *Mi amado Mr. B* and *Sudor*, it becomes obvious the men are changing the heteronormative active/passive dynamic in their own sexual interactions. Even though active/passive words might still be used, they only describe a sexual position instead of assigning power roles and forcing one of the men to make himself inferior to his counterpart. This intentional use of certain words and focus on pleasure is a way that gay men are changing the representations around the active/passive dynamic. It is possible that part of this is due to an inherent pasivofobia present in the gay community and a desire to not be seen as masculine. Regardless, the focus has been moved to pleasure that is found in both positions deemed active and passive. This changes the dynamic of power between them and works to actively erase and, as occurs quite often amongst these gay male characters, erase the idea of sexual passivity from the gay identity.

Redefining the Gay Male Body

The aesthetics of the gay male body have importance as a "site where 'doing' and 'being done to' become equivocal" (Butler 21) in (re)presenting a social group can be an act of defiance to recover and transform an image that has been tarnished, as has occurred with the homosexual body. For many gay men, the visibility regime enacted against them by the dominant forces of society have made them invisible at times and visible at others when they are noticed and to be surveilled and harassed. In addition to changing the active/passive dynamic, the gay male characters of the novels in question (re)present the gay male body as positive and affirming. They praise it and celebrate it for its beauty, strength, look and gayness. The men who engage in

sexual encounters with each other praise the tastes, smells and the touch of their partners. They create a positive aesthetic of the gay male body as an object capable of producing pleasure and excitement as opposed to disgust and mistrust. An act of visibilizing the beauty of the gay male body takes place in these literary works as they seek to glorify the masculine gay body from a positive and empowering perspective. Bodies become a focal point of catching men's attention and they provoke homoerotic sexual feelings that are not only deemed acceptable but turned into a norm for behavior. The gay male body inspires uncontrollable lust between men and depicts the gay male form as an object of beauty like the praised athletic body of the strongman image carved out in the 19th century. It is not only the body itself that is praised but individual parts of the body that evoke strong sentiments of masculinity are placed in positions of celebration. There are excessive and intentional commentaries related to the buttocks, the genitals, and muscular forms of the chest and shoulders that transform the gay male body from previous iterations of the pathological into an object of beauty and desire that is coveted by other men. It should be made clear though that an interesting aspect of beautifying the male body in these two novels is that they don't just praise muscular, smooth bodies but all types. Martín loves little quirks about Felipe's body that empower it even though it is obvious Felipe does not maintain any sort of sculpted, muscular body. In both works, there is a focus on the penis as an object of beauty that confirms its masculine power in a distinct manner, not as an object of dominance towards another but rather an object that brings pleasure to gay men. The penis is an object of pleasure with little focus on emphasizing its size amongst the various male characters of *Mi amado Mr. B* and *Sudor*. In addition to the focus on the body, clothing takes on a central role in defining these gay bodies and works to confirm their masculine attributes. Clothing also serves as a marker of social class with designer clothing labels a focus in *Mi amado Mr. B* and Martín revels in his

newfound ability to enjoy "higher end" labels that his middle-class salary cannot afford him.

In *Mi amado Mr. B.*, clothing attire worn throughout the novel represents an association with money, power and role as a man to be taken seriously because of their wealth and influence. An impassioned Martín kisses Felipe in the elevator during one of their first meet ups as he confesses that "me calenté muchísimo al verlo con ese traje oscuro impecable que acentuaba sus rasgos masculinos" (46). The recognition by Martín that the suit Felipe is wearing outlines a body form he recognizes as masculine affirms the existence of a gendered body in which the type deemed masculine has a socially constructed meaning, a form that gay men tend to elevate to a position of importance. He also remarks on the bodies of well-built men too like the flight attendant on one of his flights. Halkitis describes the obsession with muscular forms as something sought after in the gay community as "an ideology of masculinity that is based on physical prowess and blue-collar appearance" (132). Martín on the other hand is never one to wear a suit but he does enjoy engaging in what he calls "todas esas cosas de marica que siempre me gustaron" (253) like dressing fashionably, having the latest hairstyle from a trendy salon and spending time putting together a look that garners a lot of attention. During the interstices of their time together when Martín finds himself hanging out with friends or cruising at gay bars, it is the clothing of the men around him that catches his attention. Clothing, for Martín, not only functions as an adornment for attractive men to call attention to their "atributos sumamente deseables" (61) but also brings to light the issue of social class. Early on in the novel, Martín notices a guy (Ariel) checking him out at a bar and notes his clothing choices indicated that he "sufría una severa crisis de estilo, que no tenía ni un poquito de onda" (61). Even though he is up for a quick sexual encounter with him, he comments on his vocabulary as "muy limitado; sus temas, predecibles, y su onda…¿quién se había robado su onda?" (61) and he ends up ditching

Ariel when Felipe calls him.

It is in Felipe's circle of colleagues on a visit to Santiago de Chile where Martín finds himself more comfortable with the rich Chileans "vestido de Versace" (214). Javi, the son of a rich Chilean businessman, hits on him decked out in "su ropa y sus accesorios de diva del pop" (215) until Felipe appears and reaffirms that Martín is with him. Even amongst the upper echelon of Chilean elite, Felipe enacts more traditional forms of hegemonic masculinity by staking a claim to a body he sees as his to his fellow male competitors. Aside from this focus on the clothing in *Mi amado Mr. B*, Felipe and Martín also engage in praising each other's bodies as objects of beauty and sources of erotic desire. In their first scene together in a hotel room, Martín's words used to describe Felipe's body creates an aesthetic of beauty about it. He takes in everything from his hair, to his shoulders and even the little pouch of a stomach Felipe has. Felipe tells Martín that he has "un sexo hermoso" (38) and he would like to perform fellatio on him. Martín notes how his body trembles as these encounters happen, both from fear of the unknown with a famous person and his exploratory attitude as he is discovering his sexuality. This contrasts to Martín's traditional upbringing with a father who loves sports and a hyper-religious mother who subscribes to Opus Dei beliefs that teach strict controls of the body and forbids sexual desire between two men. Martín confesses he feels shame towards seeing his own naked body, symbolic of the past in which gay men were made to feel ashamed of themselves. When Felipe prompts Martín to join him in the shower, he refuses stating "me da un poco de vergüenza" (77) and adds "me da cosa estar así, desnudo, como si nada" (77). It takes him several encounters before he finally is able to move beyond the guilt and focus on the pleasure aspect with Felipe as his guide to an empowered visibility of himself. It is through their relationship and the positive visibility of the aesthetics of their gay male bodies that Martín is

able to embrace his own gay identity and masculinity. Both Felipe and Martín engage in constant praising and glorifying of each other's bodies and the pleasures the sight of them produce for each other. The gay male body becomes a site being resignified not as a place of pathology, disease or social deviants but rather a place of pleasure, beauty and sexual fulfillment.

Fuguet's novel *Sudor* takes a similar approach with the plethora of moments glorifying the gay male body and changing its aesthetic to more positive and sensual. In *Sudor,* Alf works to change the perception of gay men by expressing his preference for being gay with his heterosexual roommate Vicente telling him "puta qué lata ser hétero, Vicente. Te veo y digo: Dios me eligió. Soy afortunado" (151). It's not only his own gay body that he enjoys but all of the others around him as well. Alf connects himself to religion by referencing God as gracious in making him a gay man and challenging the common belief that heterosexual men are the norm made in God's image. He is changing the common idea of gay men as an aberration by recasting himself as being a chosen man by God. Alf is also constantly enamored with the sights and smells of the male bodies that surround him. As Fuguet notes in his interview, he hopes his novel, intentionally named to reference a sexy state of being sweaty, works to make the reader feel sexually provoked by the constant references to heat, sweaty bodies and the untamable sexuality of the men that populate its pages. This strategy plays out by creating a sensory enhanced story for the reader that attempts to take them into the apartment of two men having sex, into the bathroom where a chance *Grindr* encounter is taking place or even onto the dance floor where hot and sweaty bodies are dancing with each other on hot Santiago summer nights. This is demonstrated as Alf ponders the many suggestive photos of faces, bodies and other types of sexual selfies sitting around in the heat. He states "están en la misma y con este calor no le parece raro sino esperable. Sudados, en pelotas, duros, por toda la ciudad" (120). He is creating

an aesthetic based on sweaty, attractive gay bodies populating the city of Santiago.

This can also be seen in the *Grindr* conversations between the men using the service. With Esteban, the conversation has the two men expressing desires such as "kiero olerte entero" (349), "yo lamerte todo el cuerpo y jugar contigo en la cama" (349) and "tocarte y sentir lo excitado que estás" (349). Later that night when Alf meets up with Gerard, a Belgian man living in Santiago, he offers a sensual description of their encounter that engages the senses of the reader. Upon entering Gerard's apartment Alf notes "el belga huele a sudor, huele a especies, a picante, a sexo" (274). Gerard himself tells Alf that he "[huele] a coyote, a chivo, a animal en cielo" (275). The two men create strong images of male to male sexual desire and its unbridled possibilities through the olfactory sensations they focus on. The invocation of sensory perception imagery like sweat and smells puts the body at the center of focus as a locus that produces positive carnal desire that should be celebrated and enjoyed as part of the aesthetics. The images of bodies as decayed and pathologized from earlier 20th century representations of gay men contrast sharply to the positive images of hot, sweaty bodies engaging in pleasure filled acts of the men in *Sudor*. Between Rafa and Alf, a very similar scene occurs as the one between Felipe and Martin, an exalting of the male anatomy. When trying to figure out how they can engage in sex because of Rafa's hemophilia, Rafa explains why he wasn't circumcised, to which Alf tells him "tu pico es precioso, lindo, así; déjalo, mucho mejor así" (518). Even though his words are meant to comfort and reassure Rafa, he is celebrating the gay male member and gay male body as it is in an unaltered state. He is using words to discuss what had previously been unmentionable in literary representations about openly gay men. They are not only claiming their desires as gay men but as masculine men too and their bodies are the focal points where they are able to enact these desires without past feelings of guilt or repression. The visibility of the gay

male body is clear for the public to see and it celebrates instead of demonizes this male form. Even though these gay male characters are participating in a project of creating their own gay masculinity, they also fall back on essentialist type arguments often in regard to the sex drive of men. Their focus on their own bodies and the process of masculinizing them while recognizing their gay aspect as well has led to another critical aspect of gay masculinity, the process of distancing oneself from women.

Differentiating Oneself from Women

There is a tendency amongst gay men to define their masculinity in the same way as hegemonic masculinity dictates in opposition to femininity. As mentioned earlier in the quote from Jane Ward, gay men and their relationship to women has been depicted as a given from the dominant heteronormative discourse because of pseudo-scientific thinking that gender inversion accounts for the homosexual desires of men. This can be seen not only in literature but television shows that feature out and open gay men such as the remake of the popular television show in the 2000s *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy.* In 2018, Netflix released a new version with a shortened title, *Queer Eye,* but under the same premise, giving men a lifestyle makeover that will help add style and substance to their lives. Whether gay or not, the participants are constantly reassured by the five different hosts of the show that they are keeping in mind that these men want to be portrayed as masculine despite the queer touch to their look. This affects the choices made for decorating their houses, the clothes bought for them or even colors chosen to paint furniture to help these reworked men maintain a sense of feeling masculine. As referenced earlier by Sutherland, the dominant culture insists on categorizing homosexual men as women because of the influence of heteronormative discourses that refuse to allow the classification of gay men as “real men”. In spite of the waves of gay rights and Gay Liberation Movement, there is still a

demand in the public discourse traditional views of gender to see gay men as gender inverts. Even Butler notes the problematic nature of assuming homosexuality is merely gender inversion "and that the 'sexual' part remains heterosexual, although inverted" (79). For the gay men in these works, there is a strong sense of differentiating and separating oneself from the image of the woman. It is not just that these men want to separate themselves from being perceived as women but that they do not want their own behavior and desires to be classified as only feminine.

They are engaging in a process of changing the visibility regime about their own lifestyle and desires as being their own as men. They (re)present themselves in a way such that "gay male culture embraces the disqualification of femininity" (Halperin 381). Even though there are moments where some of the men recognize that some of their behaviors may be seen as feminine, they want to control those perceptions and code them masculine if possible. In some instances, they will label certain behaviors as "marica", but in a similar way to how the word queer has been reclaimed by the LGBTQ+ community to strip it of its pejorative meaning. To separate themselves from women they speak their separation into existence in the text a separation from the feminine that the dominant discourse has tied to them. Not only is the active/passive dynamic that attempts to code gay men as a penetrated and dominated woman thrown out the window, but the men engage actively in reifying themselves as "real men" to the point of outright misogyny. It is here that their masculinity intersects with the hegemonic masculinity demands of enacting behavior and discourse that subordinates women to men and can often be an action that separates gay men from other members of the LGBTQ+ community.

The gay men of these novels are breaking with the dominant discourse that codes them as effeminate because of their sexual orientation and at the same time they are reifying their own

masculinity by upholding hegemonic tenets of treating women as insubordinates and socially inferior. Of the two novels in question, Alf in *Sudor* possesses the most outright misogynistic attitude towards women. During their short time together, Alf shares with Rafa his disdain for women to which Rafa responds "Qué misógino, Alf" (505). Alf simply remarks "siempre. Debemos cuidarnos" (505). The use of "cuidar" with the verb "debemos" confesses an obligation instead of suggestion that gay men should take care of their own ahead of women. His thoughts that men must take care of each other is just the beginning of his anti-women sentiments. He elaborates further that "la verdad, Rafa, es que no me junto ni tengo amigas mujeres. No me gustan, no confío, me parecen excesivas, gritonas y siempre terminan enamoradas o celosas" (510). This conversation takes place between two gay men free from the influence of heterosexual perspective. His assessment of the essential traits of women is related to dominant patriarchal discourses of women as hysterical, emotional creatures that are weak when it comes to controlling their emotions. This leads to classifications of women as not trustworthy as people because of their status as women which implies an inability to contain one's emotions. His statement that he lacks trust in women is an attitude that aligns him with heterosexual men taking advantage of the hegemonic dividend and look at women as inferior. In Ward's chapter, she makes clear that in the past "texts in which gay men speak openly and extendedly about women are limited" (161) which makes the instance in which Alf not only talks about women but goes out of his way to make the comments he does about women and express his disdain for them an obvious differentiation process from women. Even though as a gay man he may be considered by many heterosexual men to be more like a woman than a man, his actions reflect those demanded by patriarchal masculinity that women be viewed as inferior objects to be controlled and not trusted. Through his speech act, he is relegating women to a secondary position to his

masculinity despite its gay aspect. It is not just amongst his fellow gay men that Alf is active in differentiating himself from women.

Alf also shows his misogynistic and sexist attitudes that differentiate him from women with his roommate Vicente, a potential representative of hegemonic masculinity as a heterosexual man or complicit in the power dividends of hegemonic masculinity. Alf finds out Vicente is looking for a date on *Tinder* to which he laments that he has to date women instead of men. Vicente tells him "puta, *Grindr* me parece más digno, Alf, más directo" (149). Alf responds affirmatively "es que entre hombres somos más dignos, directos, básicos" (149). Alf again compares himself and gay men to what they are not, women by upstaging Vicente's comments about looking for a hook-up on *Tinder*. His comments also reflect a discourse that treats sex as a manipulation game in which women are said to be more involved in manipulations than enjoying sex. By default, women don't enjoy sex because their only purpose for having sex is to manipulate men or procreate while men have sex because they enjoy it and are hard wired to want it. Even though Vicente makes a joke about Alf's preference for a penis, Alf continues to attack women and their sexuality. He states "hueón, somos hombres, somos más animales. Me parezco a ti, sólo que tiro más. Son las minas las que cagan el juego" (149). He shortly thereafter comments that despite some of the setbacks for Vicente, at least women cook well. He reifies an image of men's sexuality that has been crucial to hegemonic masculinity, when it comes to sex, men have an unbridled biological drive to have sex and they will turn into wild animals to get what they need. He also reinforces the notion that women's worth is tied to their value in domestic labor. The frustrations he expresses to Vicente about women and sex mimic those repeated by heterosexual men and also reinforce the social attitudes demanding women be both chaste and willing to engage in sex in a more private setting. Vicente complains he was denied

oral sex by a woman who called him disgusting for that to which Alf expresses gratitude again of possessing a gay self-identity. He tells Vicente "un gay nunca [le] diría eso" (143). Through the character of Alf, a man of strong sexual desire and drive is created in *Sudor*. Alf confirms the sexuality focused nature of gay masculinity with his reassurance that a gay man would never turn down an opportunity to engage in fellatio. The overtly sexual aspect of gay masculinity is hard to overlook because aside from wanting to have sex with men, but these gay men are emulating hegemonic masculinity in many other ways. They are showing that "hegemonic masculinity must embody a successful collective strategy in relation to women" (Connell 185-86) that engages in any behavior that is deemed acceptable as long as the end goal is subordinating women to men. Alf isn't alone in his anti-women sentiments as Martín and Felipe also show they're not related in any fashion to women either because of their gay identity.

The constant affirmations that women serve no purpose in their life and have little value for gay men is a recurring theme and manifestation of gay masculinity in *Mi amado Mr. B*. From the beginning, Martín makes clear his distance from women and the feeling of disgust that is always lurking just beneath the surface. Early in the novel when Martín has just met Felipe and is thinking about him, he remarks how he did not participate much in the conversation when his female friend Lola is discussing her multi-orgasmic nights and how well her clitoris works. This conversation is part of the beginning stages for his further differentiation from women. Later in the book he and Lola attend a gay nightclub together. At this point, Felipe and Martín have spent a lot of time together and Martín has engaged more in his differentiating himself from women. At the club Lola spikes their drinks to lower their inhibitions and ends up performing oral sex on Martín and he enjoys it. When she asks him to return the favor and perform oral sex on her, he obliges but states that "la escuché gozar, pero ni sus primeros gemidos de placer pudieron contra

mi naturaleza. Sentí asco, repulsion" (181). His repulsion leads him to run out of the club where he confesses that "empecé a vomitar" (181) because he had to come into contact with the female body. In talking about Lola, he only references a direction to down there instead of naming her body part, a distancing of himself from the vagina. He confesses he was too impacted by the drug's effects to make her quit satisfying him, but the interaction of his tongue and her vagina cause such a repulsion that he is able to overcome the drug and run outside to vomit. The transformation in his only sitting out conversations involving women and sex escalates to a point of physical revulsion throughout the novel as noted by these two moments that bookend the novel. In the midst are various moments where his differentiation process is strengthened once his relationship with Felipe is started.

Martín struggles with his sexuality throughout the first half of the novel but through his relationship with Felipe, he is able to find more confidence and strength to embrace his gay identity. This empowerment comes from his process of differentiating himself from women to feel like, in spite of being gay, he is a man. His problematic nature with his own sexuality comes from his religious family background. He discusses his mother's connections to Opus Dei, an extremely strict Catholic group with zero tolerance towards homosexuality. Not only does his family have a connection to this group but a former girlfriend of Martín had familial connections to the group to the point he assures a friend that they weren't allowed to even say the word "gay" in the house. His sister calls him disgusting when she confronts him about his homosexuality and charges him with a traditional masculine expectation for men asking "¿No pensás casarte, tener hijos?" (192). Her attempt to reduce his gayness to a problematic aspect of his masculinity that he must leave behind is consistent with hegemonic masculinity not only demanding its place as the dominating discourse for men but calling on both men and women to uphold it. It is when

Felipe and Martín are together that they share many moments in which they bond over their likenesses as men that center on weakening the image of women, of expressing repulsion towards the body of women and reinforcing the superiority of men to women. There first encounters are more focused on their emotional feelings towards each other and Martín's coming to terms with his recent acceptance that he is gay.

Starting with the first sexual experience in the hotel room between Martín and Felipe, along with subverting active/passive binaries, the two men engage in their differentiating themselves from women. Due to his own openly bisexual orientation, Felipe makes small talk with Martín about each of their sexual experiences with women. Felipe tells Martín that "lo bueno de acostarse con mujeres es que todo es mucho más fácil --dijo --. Entra con facilidad, se lubrica sola y nadie sale lastimado, no hay dolor" (39). After his declaration, Felipe asks Martín if he's been with women to which he responds that he has but only a couple of times and he confirms his preference for men stating "prefiero a los hombres porque me dan asco las vaginas --le dije, y nos echamos a reír" (40). Felipe's commentary that sexual experiences between men and women are easier and lacking in any type of pain demonstrates this differentiation of these gay men from women and reinforces that there are no passive partners between two men. Even though two men may be engaging in a sex act that mimics its heterosexual counterpart, it takes on a masculinized aesthetic by adding the element of pain, struggle and violence to it. It also reflects his weakening of the feminine body and reinforcing a masculine superiority to them. Then they laugh together at the statement of repulsion of feminine bodies. Felipe and Martín are actively separating any perceptions they may be like women as gay men by expressing their disgust for the female genitalia. These occurrences in the early stages of the book mark a beginning of a process that plays out as the novel progress with Martín growing more aggressive

towards the women in his life and expressing repulsion towards the bodies of women or effeminate behavior in men. It is also from a woman, a friend of Martín's named Victoria, that Martín acquires the knowledge of how to handle anal sex and find a way to make it more pleasurable. That this knowledge of an important type of sexual behavior for gay men comes from a feminine place of knowledge represents even more reason that Martín must differentiate himself from women and prove that he is not a passive participant in his sexual encounters with Felipe. While these open declarations of misogyny and disgust of the female body participate in a process to differentiate from gay men from women reflects certain pejorative aspects of hegemonic masculinity, these gay men never outright challenge hegemonic masculinity in openly heteronormative spaces to show themselves as dominant men.

Relationship to Heteronormative Spaces

For the gay men in these literary works, their gay masculinity does not empower them to act in public spaces that are traditionally heteronormative as a dominant male figure as hegemonic masculinity empowers heterosexual men to do. Their interactions with men in heteronormative spaces reveals their masculinity is not the type that seeks to impose itself on all men and be dominant as hegemonic masculinity demands. They have to contend with what David Halperin describes in his work *How to Be Gay* (2012) as "social conditions and cultural codes that we do not have the power to alter (not in the short run, anyway), only the power to resist" (380). Their resistance is made manifest in the way they still hold on to their gay identity despite not imposing it on others. These heteronormative social conditions and cultural codes generally construct gay subjectivities from its own perspective instead of from within gay culture. The gay characters have to resist the heterosexual men in charge with the way they approach their interactions with them and push back against the norms expected of them as men

in these spaces. In spite of a recognition that they are men like their heterosexual counterparts, the gay men in these texts do not use their gay masculinity to impose themselves as authority figures on all men like hegemonic position of patriarchal heterosexual men empowers them. Instead, they are able to use other types of masculinity like Connell's "transnational business masculinity" in which they are able to gain a sense of power over others who are not gay. The obsession with economic status and money amongst the gay characters of these two novels shows how they use this empowered business masculinity to gain a sense of dominance over their gay counterparts through economic advantages and sometimes over heterosexual men. In other words, gay men are able to use their social class and economic power to gain power, but they do not use their gay masculinity to push themselves into a position of representing the norm as patriarchal masculinity does. In both novels, Alf, Martín and Felipe show how they blend and pass as regular men when they are in the various heteronormative spaces they encounter, and they do not impose their way of expressing gay masculinity as the norm. They maintain an interesting place of gaining, but their gay identity still remains in a place of tension and invisibility at times.

Heteronormative spaces in *Mi amado Mr. B* are generally places of tension, discomfort and anger for Martín but less so for Felipe. The reader is able to see this tension as Martín and Felipe visit a gay friendly beach in Miami where they are free to be open about their feelings towards one another. However, back in Chile and Argentina things are different for both men. Felipe has a more complicated sexual orientation than Martín's direct interest in men as he has an ex-wife, children and confesses to feel bisexual more than strictly gay. He also has a social status of high value as the presenter of a popular television station. He often directs Martín to be discreet if they are out in public so as not to draw attention to themselves as lovers and it is when

this dynamic is broken at the end that Felipe tells Martín to not come live with him and they should stop seeing each other once he is safely out of Buenos Aires and within the safe confines of Miami. Until this moment, we see Martín in both gay spaces and predominantly heteronormative ones where Martín has to respond to hegemonic representations of masculinity. During a taxi ride, Martín has to endure the chit chat of the driver who inundates him with conversation themes that "se trata de fútbol o de mujeres" (43) while he wonders to himself "¿Qué pretende que haga? ¿Qué lo felicite? ¿Qué le cuente cómo la mama mi supuesta novia? ¿Y si le digo que soy yo al que le gusta mamar?" (43). His first comment shows the connection of women to masculinity, framed as a feminine body to be conquered and service the sexual needs of the man and also football. Football, according to Eduardo Archetti represents "una poderosa expresión masculina de las capacidades y potencialidades nacionales" (46) that "se reproduce la fuerza cultural masculina" (46). The questions follow and show his recognition and resistance to these heteronormative expectations of men and his recognition that he as a gay man has to be careful how responds. Martín recognizes that he does not embrace the cultural and social codes of hegemonic masculinity, but he does not impose himself on the driver and berate him for his interests in football or women. He instead elects to keep silent in the backseat about his own sexual feelings on oral sex and let the conversation die out and go no further. This interaction is likely influenced by the fact that the two men are strangers. When Martín finds himself amongst old high school friends, his reaction is different than with the taxi driver.

In another instance, Martín visits with friends from his religious high school and tells of the tension with an openness about his sexual orientation and his friends with whom he "nunca había hablado de [su] lado gay" (109). They, like the taxi driver, talk openly about sex with girls and football until Martín disappears for a while to take a phone call from Felipe. Martín needs

the empowerment of Felipe at this point to make visible his gay masculinity amongst this group of known heterosexual men. Upon returning, they want to know who was on the phone and Martín tells them of his new boyfriend and gay sexual orientation. Their reaction is one of shock described as a “silencio general” (114) and “ninguno de los tres salía de su asombro” (114). The tension created by Martín’s revelation makes him feel he needs to leave the apartment and admit to them he hopes they’ll still be friends. One openly says he doesn’t care who Martín fucks as long as he doesn’t try to fuck him. The themes of conversation revolve around one’s sexual prowess with women and sports. In spite of proclaiming his acceptance of alternative sexual orientations to heterosexuality, the heterosexual men still feel they must make clear that Martín is acceptable as long as he does not try to have sex with them. Their need to make clear Martín's gay masculinity is acceptable on the terms it does not mean he can have sex with them shows the sexually charged and dominant nature of hegemonic masculinity. Their immediate concern, and the concern of heterosexual men in general, is that empowered gay men will want to do what masculinized men have been trained to do, have sex with others in order to be dominant towards them. This tense position is what keeps gay masculinity at odds with its heterosexual counterpart, whether one will dominate the other. At a cousin’s wedding, Martín speaks to his cousin Marcos who repeats almost verbatim what his high school friend said, he's accepting of Martín's gayness as long as he keeps it away from him. In his family home, the heteronormative space par excellence, Martín has arguments with both his sister and his mother about his sexual orientation leading to lots of anger from them that he does not want to participate in having his own family one day and reproducing the patriarchal social system that structures traditional Argentine society. His father interestingly is accepting of his sexual orientation but does express his disappointment that he was never up front with him. This acceptance from a father figure

symbolizes a positive step forward and the gap in understanding between gay men and heterosexual men. Even though the reader is privy to an up-close look at the traditional family setting in Argentina, Alf in *Sudor* does not offer glimpses into his family life but still has interesting encounters with heteronormative spaces.

Alf also encounters feelings of tension, anger and discomfort when interacting or dealing with heteronormative spaces and people. Part of Alf's manner of resistance is that he participates in transforming the heteronormative spaces of Santiago into gay spaces and accommodating to a previously unwelcome public site of gay men that are proud of who they are. Alf recognizes that "ser gay en una sociedad esencialmente homofóbia" (62-3) makes his life more challenging and fuller of tension between him and his society at large. His gay masculinity empowers him to feel like a strong gay man, but it does not spur him on to outright challenge patriarchal masculinity since he is able to incorporate elements of it to pass as man enough. Alf surveys the heteronormative society he lives in with a watchful eye and acknowledges he feels that "ser gay no era fácil, pero teníamos una bendición. O varias." (72). He wants to be an average guy whose only difference from any other random guy is that he enjoys sex with men. An interesting project of his character is the use of smart phone apps like *Grindr* that works to transform spaces previously coded as heteronormative into gay spaces. Since Alf is constantly on the app looking for future hook ups, the spaces in which he finds potential partners can venture outside the normal boundaries of spaces that previously would have been coded as gay friendly and moved them into more mainstream places around Santiago. Instead of neighborhoods coded as exclusively gay, *Grindr* allows the user to see that men interested in having sex with other men are available in more places than just those known as friendly to the gay lifestyle. Alf has more confidence and comfort than Martín with his sexual orientation and he comports himself in

heteronormative spaces with more openness than occurs in *Mi amado Mr. B*. He shares an apartment with a heterosexual man, but they share a mutual respect with each other and discuss their love/sexual interests openly and freely. These discussions tend to turn into a critique of heterosexuality by Alf when he hears of the trials and misfortunes his roommate encounters as noted previously in which he claims Vicente is turned down for oral sex by a woman would never occur with a gay man. In several instances, Alf proclaims his relief at being gay and attempts to questions heterosexuality's claim to power by claiming it's better to be a gay man searching for sex as opposed to heterosexual.

Alf has some one on one interactions with Don Rafael, father of Rafa and an important writer to Alf's publishing house. During his interactions he shows he is not going to challenge a man who represents the hegemonic form of masculinity. Don Rafael visits Santiago to attend the book fair that Alf is preparing for throughout the three days of the novel. His son Rafa is his main concern and he enlists Alf to watch after him. He recognizes that his son has some eccentricities and he wants Alf to guarantee he will not "dejarlo solo de noche" (413) and ensure that he and his son go on to Peru and are not slowed down because Rafa might be "preso, hospitalizado o muerto" (413). He understands that Rafa is "un hombre a pesar de que en efecto parece un adolescente" (413) and if he wants to dive down into the sticky depths of Santiago's nightlife, he is free to do so as long as Alf brings him back and keeps him alive. Don Rafael's comments signal he is aware of his son's sexual preferences and he wants them to remain out of sight and out of mind for himself. He does not openly acknowledge he thinks Alf is gay but recognizes he likely is as Rafa has been influencing his father to enlist Alf to show him the city and he approves of it as long as Alf can keep him alive. Alf has no interest in a feminized role of caretaker for some rich client's spoiled son, but he has no choice in the matter as the

transnational business masculinity of Don Rafael imposes itself on Alf's because of the nature of the business relationship between them. Alf must comply with the orders and when he fails to keep Rafa alive at the books end, the once famed editor finds himself without a job. It is only with Vicente that Alf openly challenges a heterosexual man that receives the positive power dividends of hegemonic masculinity but in their interactions, he questions the value of heterosexuality because of its lack of embracing what Alf calls the more unbridled male sexual drive. For him, there is tension for heterosexual men because they must play games to get what they desire sexually, and gay men are freely able to enjoy this aspect of their masculinity without worries. His challenges to dominant masculinity casts doubt on its worth of providing men a positive sexual outlet.

These tensions, uncomfortable situations and provocations of anger are part of the norm for these gay men living and working in heteronormative spaces. While Felipe has a leg up on Martín because of his comfort with women both socially and sexually, his ability to pass as heterosexual makes his life much easier when involved in predominantly heteronormative spaces. Martin on the other hand does not have a wife and children to hide his gayness and does not allow him to pass as heterosexual as wealthy bisexual Felipe. Martin's constant source of anger, tension and discomfort having to constantly live and work in the heterosexual world plagues him with doubts of his gayness, thus making his fulfillment of gay masculinity more challenging than his heterosexual counterparts fulfilling their own masculinity roles. While most heterosexual men are concerned with performing masculine roles and giving off the perception as a manly man, for gay men like Martín and Alf, there is more at stake and they are more conscientious of the performance aspect that goes into their own masculinity. Their conscientiousness stems from their recognition of their difference, that is their preference for

romantic and sexual love to be found with other men. As a contrast to Martín, Alf has a stronger sense of self and his gayness, but he still has moments where he is forced to recognize the homophobia of the society in which he lives and subordinate himself to heterosexual men he would rather dismiss as part of a community of men that offer nothing more than hindrance to his ability to live his life to its fullest potential. These two men show that they have to navigate the heteronormative world in a way that is more conscientious of subtle differences in men and how they live their masculine identity.

Concluding Thoughts

The purpose of this chapter is to outline a set of behaviors and actions that form a cohesive gay masculinity found in texts coming from gay authors in the post-dictatorship Southern Cone. By taking novels from both Chile (*Sudor*) and Argentina (*Mi amado Mr. B*) in the post dictatorship years, a close reading shows the emergence of strong gay voices that are no longer interested in veiled representations of men like them. There is a concern with making the gay body visible and leaving behind the pathologized and diseased visibility ascribed to gay men throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Instead, they are more interested in open, forthright (re)presentations of gay men and the lifestyle they are able to lead in the 21st century. If Halkitis' claim that the task of developing gay masculinity and identity continues to be an overwhelming task for the individual and the community, it stands to reason that by having more positive representations of strong gay men like the ones present in the novels mentioned here that the gay community will be able to move forward their struggle to stop focusing on the negative aspects reiterated by heteronormative discourse and start to look at their own desires and wants to construct their own identity. The examples discussed here cannot speak for the entire gay community at large. A crucial aspect both Alf and Martín mention themselves in how diverse the

gay population is within their own cultures, they can offer a starting point for Jáuregui's call to construct, define and elaborate a gay identity. These gay men do share commonalities and even though they may give many hope for a better future, it cannot go unnoticed that there are certain commonalities that enable them to live the way they do and construct their versions of gay masculinity in the way they do by still replicating aspects of hegemonic masculinity. Even though I only focus on these two novels, it should be noted that other writers develop gay identity and elements of gay masculinity I discuss here in their works. They include but are not limited to: Oscar Hermes Villordo (*Ser gay no es pecado* - 1993), José Sbarra (*Plástico cruel* - 1995) Pablo Simonetti ("Cerro Santa Lucía" - 2000), Pablo Pérez (*Un año sin amor* - 1998, *El mendigo chupapijas* - 2005 and *Querido Nicolas* - 2017), Rodrigo Muñoz Opazo (*La trilogía de las fiestas* - 2007) and Alejandro Modarelli (*Rosa prepucio* - 2011) among others.

The gay masculinity outlined in this chapters includes traits that can be found in other books from the region with openly gay characters as above. The focus on challenging the heteronormative imposition of active/passive stereotypes in sexual encounters, the (re)signifying of the gay male body as a site of beauty, strength and charged with sexual energy, the willful separating the gay male from women and the tension, the manner in which gay men comport themselves in heteronormative spaces all come together to make up a decidedly gay masculinity that gives the men in these novels an identity to call their own outside of the boundaries of the heteronormative world that has dictated what gay men are and can be. The image of the diseased body is cast aside and the images of degenerate men who prey on unsuspecting boys and men to disease them with their homosexuality is no longer the only image available to gay readers. There is an increasing number of readers both gay and of other sexual orientations that are reading these newer novels and participating in their own way in the active creating of gay

masculinity. While it's important not to conflate sex and gender identity, it must be noted that the expression of one's sexual orientation, or sexual interest in men by men as is the case here, is an important and defining factor for the men enacting their own gay masculinity. This masculinity fits with current definitions of what masculinity is, it is what men do and gay masculinity is what gay men do to express themselves in a way they see fitting of how they perceive themselves to be as men. This ability to express how they feel as gay men is different to the way men who view themselves as more queer than gay express themselves through their queer masculinity.

CHAPTER 4

QUEERED MASCULINITY

Similar to gay masculinity, queered masculinity has taken on an anti-normative meaning to imposed heterosexuality for all the Southern Cone region. The period from 1990-2016 will also be under examination in this chapter to discuss what queered masculinity is and how it functions to challenge supposed stable notions of masculinity in Chile and Argentina. In addition to a gay masculinity there have emerged queer literary voices from the economic and social margins of Chile and Argentina to represent the citizens that do not fit within the heteronormative expectations of society. The gay characters in the previous chapter mixed elements of hegemonic masculinity in with their own out of the closet and visible gay identity that celebrates their same sex desires while mixing in elements of hegemonic masculinity to their masculine identity, but gay men will not always identify themselves as queer. The difference in using the word queer from gay in reference to an identity in this chapter reflects a marked difference in queer identity and gay identity. While queer can encompass gay identities and was born out of gay and lesbian studies, it does not only refer to gay identity but rather a challenge towards categorization based on heteronormative categories of men and women. The worldwide gender revolution is proposing new queer identities that can destabilize the current notion of men and women, such as that in Chile and Argentina where gender roles have been firmly entrenched since the founding of each country. Men whose identity is labeled queer or self-identify as queer purposefully emphasize their separation from dominant heteronormative culture and seek to undermine the categorical binaries of authentic “man” and “woman” or “natural” and

"unnatural" sexuality. Gay men will tend to still categorize themselves as pertaining to standard categories of men whereas men with a queered identity will challenge the categories, such as man, as stable structures. J. Jack Halberstam lamented that "the theoretical undoing of gender stability has had so little impact out in the real world" (71), but the activism from the LGBTQ+ community demanding rights and protections is changing this reality. For those who identify as queer, it is the body that becomes a site of political protest and a deconstructive process of destabilizing formal constructions of gender. By engaging in this deconstructive process of gender and sexuality, queer writers and academics are working to challenge the nature of them as fixed categories of people. Sexuality is also challenged from a queer perspective and the manner in which heterosexuality is often portrayed as the only acceptable manner to express sexual desires is challenged. Halberstam states that "there really is little in the way of a normal core to any set of sexualities; 'normal' is just the name we give to the cleaned-up version of sex that we wish to endorse on behalf of social stability and moral order" (74). In this chapter, I will explore queered versions of masculinity that challenge this social stability and moral order in the short story "La tan compleja y heterofóbica historia de Juance" (2015) by Argentine poet and performance artist Mhoris eMm and the novel *Tengo miedo torero* (2001) by Chilean chronicle writer/poet Pedro Lemebel.

Despite the presence of LGBTQ+ issues in public discourses in the late 20th and early 21st century, their rise to more prominent visibility has not promised a complete change in societal attitudes and treatment towards them. There are still a plethora of crimes and assaults, including homicides, perpetrated against members of the LGBTQ+ community in both Chile and Argentina. Since, as Brighenti claims, social relationships are stabilized and power effects determined through visibility, an emerging visibility of queer subjects affects these social

relationships by challenging the stability of the categories they form and questioning the effects of power they impose. A queer subject's visibility is often seen in their appearance and noted by the way they present themselves and their bodies in public. Their body can often mark them as queer from the dominant heteronormative perspective as it does not fit into the categories deemed acceptable and normal. In addition to their body their ideas of gender and heteronormative ideals also mark their lives as queered from the norm. It is another threshold where the two worlds of the normative sexuality and the anti-normative sexualities come into contact. From a heteronormative perspective, heterosexuality is confirmed by what it is not, the visible appearance of a queer subject. With the rise in pride celebration events and public spaces where queer subjects can come together and openly celebrate their expression of their sexuality, visibility regimes are changing and constructed from within the LGBTQ+ community. José Maristany notes the influence of the use of *queer* thinking in Argentine academic circles that "lo *queer* permite hacer visibles e incorporar los cuerpos y las subjetividades anclados en la ambigüedad y la frontera y que desafían los marcos binarios de inteligibilidad identitaria: transgéneros, transexuales, intersexuales, bisexuales etc." (105). I argue that the queer subjects under investigation here have more focus on their anti-normative aspect to their representations as they use their queer bodies to challenge heteronormative conventions, a critical difference from the more gay centric men of Chapter 3. In Lemebel's *Tengo miedo torero*, a revolutionary group enlists the help of a transvestite, La Loca del Frente, who helps hide their group from view as they plot to assassinate the Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet. After their attempt fails, the revolutionaries flee the country but La Loca stays behind to continue fighting in her own revolutionary manner. In eMm's short story, Juance tells of his suffering from heterophobia, a made-up condition marked by his hatred of his own sexual orientation that he feels he must hide

from the public view. eMm takes on issues of homophobia through a queered perspective and its destructive tendencies from within the LGBTQ+ community. The subjectivities of La Loca in Lemebel's novel and Juance turning the tables on homophobia of Mhoris eMm present a queered look at sexuality and how it can be expressed apart from heteronormative demands.

Lemebel and eMm use their literary works to represent a cross section of Chilean and Argentine representations of queer bodies and perspectives that have at their center a male body that is challenging the binaries of gender and sexuality, i.e. heterosexuality vs homosexuality, authentic female vs authentic male, etc. Their characters queer representations of male bodies and use the body and its ability to engage in performance action as a political act. A notable difference of the characters in the previous chapter that represent gay masculinity is that the male characters from the works analyzed in this chapter tend to come from poorer and more marginalized parts of their respective societies. This too reflects the everyday realities of the writers behind the works. Lemebel, while being the most famous of these three writers, was never one to use his status as a famous literary figure to leave behind the segments of society he wished to represent, the poor and struggling gay figure, trans figure, or queer figure. Mhoris eMm is more involved directly with his community, doing performances and participating in more localized events rather than trying to take his voices to a broader national level or even international one. Lemebel as well was involved at a more local level to his community and engaged in public performances in the waning years of Pinochet's regime. He formed part of a duo known as *Las yeguas del apocalipsis* with fellow Chilean writer/poet/performance artist Francisco Casas Silva. The two engaged often in controversial public performances such as riding naked on the back of a mare through the streets of Santiago, thus queering representations of the biblical four horsemen of the apocalypse riding on horseback by using female horses and

their naked male body. They brought visibility to the struggles of the LGBTQ+ community under the Pinochet dictatorship at a time when the public discourse and discrimination against them was not punished. It is in this same social arena that the queer male body that inhabits the principle space of *Tengo miedo torero* becomes the catalyst that pushes for a revolution to free Chileans from Pinochet's dictatorship. Mhoris eMm, a self-described queer writer, has put together a collection of stories that queer everyday reality of sexuality by challenging what is presented as traditional gender and sexuality. He spends his time participating in slam poetry events where his performances of works centered in the LGBTQ+ experience of Buenos Aires takes center stage. In addition to this, he is part of the theater group that performs in *La sala de los chasquidos* which is run by donations and showcases theatrical plays that include queer characters and themes and provide a space to offer them visibility.

The queer turn against hegemonic masculinity by Mhoris eMm and Pedro Lemebel in their works seeks to destabilize its place as an all-encompassing masculinity and challenge the common images of men that hold a place of importance in society and are held up as the norm to which men should aspire to be. One way both authors/artists begin their queering stance is through their names. Each have stopped using the paternal birth names they were given, a remnant of the patrilineal order. This is a challenge to the idea of the father, Mhoris quit using his birth name of Mauricio while Lemebel is actually the surname of Pedro's mother. Family names have carried significance in Latin America since the arrival of the Spanish and served as a way of denoting genealogical connections and a way to claim lands and capital connected to powerful and wealthy families. In today's society, a family name is a way for many men to pass on their legacy and demonstrates a central tenet of a male dominated society. By undermining the capitalistic property label of a name, these writers are not only working on projects that queer

masculinity in literary cultural production, but they make the phrase "the personal is political" come to life in how they choose to represent themselves to the world through a queering of their patriarchal birth names. Each of the works in this chapter challenges notions of masculinity with queered representations of what men can be that come charged with political implications. They are a challenge of the validity of hegemonic masculinity's demands that all men are born heterosexual, must reproduce, must seek out power and must define oneself in binary opposition to femininity. Before delving into my analysis of the works, I want to briefly discuss queer theory and how it has impacted literary and cultural studies in Latin America.

In Chile, Juan Pablo Sutherland has discussed queerness at length and he poses a straight forward question "*¿Qué es el queer?*" (12) in his work *Nación marica* (2009). His answer confirms the importance of the theoretical framework of this chapter by noting that it is the work of Judith Butler and Michel Foucault that informs the background of queer theory both in the US context and Latin America. Sunderland states about queer theory that "desde una caja de herramientas foucaultiana-butleriana diría que puede entenderse como una *teoría de la acción performativa*, que tiene efectos políticos en los cuerpos. Habla en una primera persona que desenfoca el ejercicio identitario, devolviéndole al otro su gesto objetivador" (12). Sutherland references Butler's ideas of performance to show the importance it has in explaining repeated and expected behaviors tied to gender roles and sexuality from a queered perspective also applies to the social context of Chile. In addition to the ideas of Butler and Foucault that have helped develop a queer theoretical lens, other voices that have given consideration to defining queerness (and several in the Latin American context itself) include Eve Sedgwick, José Esteban Muñoz, Amy Kaminsky and Brad Epps. A key part of queerness is a focus on performative actions, mentioned in Chapter 2, and how they can have political effects tied to the body. At times

because of the ever-fluctuating nature of queer thought, defining queer has been challenging in academic circles (Petersen 1998). Thus, if it's difficult to define it, how does one use this category to analyze literary cultural production from two Latin American countries? Queer ideas and identities have taken root in Latin American countries as they have provided a more politicized set of ideals to bring people together in discovering what lies outside of the boundaries of heteronormative sexuality.

Several scholars have worked extensively on the queer question in the Latin American context such as Sutherland, Sylvia Molloy, Daniel Balderston and Gustavo Subero along with artists, performers and writers. They often employ the term queer to describe a specific set of actions, behaviors, viewpoints, aesthetics and bodies present in Latin American cultural production that seek to rupture with the norms or challenge their legitimacy. Queer is a word that has meant strange and unusual and took on a derogatory connotation for anyone labeled as such, especially after the Oscar Wilde trials and spectacle in England. Part of the history of the word has been reclaiming it and changing its meaning. Epps notes that "la resignifación o resemantización de 'queer' consiste en la inversion de la acepción injuriosa y la asunción desafiante cuando no orgullosa de un lema que antes era motivo de escarnio y vergüenza" (223). Amy Kaminsky discusses the development of a Spanish language verb for queer, a term appropriated from English and used in Spanish. Some critics and queer spaces in Buenos Aires have implemented the word "cuir" as a Spanish word with the phonetic representation of the English equivalent. Even though the debate over the problematic nature of the use of an Anglo word in Spanish language to express theoretical ideas will likely always be present, it has done little to slow down the acceptation and implementation of the word in Spanish. Kaminsky states "lo *queer* se asimila a lo lésbico-gay" (882), "*queer* puede referirse a una identidad autorial o a

una temática: también puede nombrar un proceso, un modo o una actitud" (882) and that queerness "rechaza tanto la estabilidad del sujeto como una teoría arraigada en una concepción esencialista de la identidad" (882). There are several important aspects of queerness that she brings to light. First, she recognizes that queerness was born out of lesbian-gay themes but importantly it is not limited to only gay and lesbian themes. It's important to make clear that while gay and lesbian themes can be part of queer representations, queer representations do not only signify gay and lesbian themes as transvestite, transsexual and other non-heteronormative sexualities fall under its purview. Another important aspect of *queer* that Kaminsky explores is its capacity of being a verb, noun or adjective. It can describe an attitude or it can be the process of forming an attitude that is labeled *queer*. *Queer* has transformed itself into an umbrella term that unites subjectivities marginalized by dominant discourses on sexuality. This can include marginalization of any type of sexuality deemed deviant or unacceptable by a dominant social group. Queer is a word that, as Subero claims in the way he uses it in his own book about queer masculinities, needs to possess "a political willingness to take the findings of this study beyond gay and transgender theory" (19) as not all bodies fall under standardized binary definitions of gender. By engaging in this political willingness further, queer ideas and bodies are changing the visibility regime about themselves that still often continues to label them as deviants or suffering from psychological disorders, including voices from self-identified gay men who do not see themselves as queer. While the first two themes of Kaminsky have relevance to this chapter, it is her third idea on queerness that is most important.

Kaminsky states that *queer* "rechaza tanto la estabilidad del sujeto como una teoría arraigada en una concepción esencialista de la identidad" (882). By rejecting the stability of the body and the theoretical framework that props it up, queerness intends to destabilize the

hegemonic heteronormative identity that governs much of the social demands of heterosexuality being labeled as the essence of men and women and used to explain gender roles and sexuality. Essentialism proposes that a body has a set of characteristics that make it what it is and supposes that there is something already there guiding the behaviors and characteristics of those things to determine its state of being. The essentialist argument for men and women thus creates them as categories and assigns them each socially constructed sets of behaviors that are known as gender roles. This creates a space in which heterosexuality is dictated to be the norm against which everything else is compared and often trivialized and marginalized. Historically, these gender roles have been defined as what is socially acceptable for men and women to be and the behaviors they are permitted to engage in in a society. What queerness proposes here, according to Kaminsky, is to destabilize these scripted behaviors. By proposing that bodies can engage in behaviors, have attitudes or participate in processes that undermine and destabilize the traditionally concrete categories of men and women, the perception that compulsory heterosexuality is the only appropriate and acceptable way of expressing one's sexual desires is put into doubt. Importantly, these essential behaviors diminish the impact of social norms and attitudes towards the expected behaviors of men and women as David Córdoba García notes in his chapter of the reader *Teoría queer* (2005). He states that sexuality "se ha visto generalmente como el último reducto de la naturaleza en el ser humano, como lo más indiscutiblemente presocial que hay en él" (24). When artists and writers queer subjects, they engage in a process where the personal becomes political and bodies are transformed into subjectivities that destabilize normative categories.

It is often challenging to translate every nuance of queer from English to Spanish, but it is nevertheless an ongoing debate we must address before moving on to the works to be analyzed

here. Sutherland articulates some of the problems in translating it stating that “la traducción del *queer* en América Latina ha tenido sus derroteos. Algunos han corrido a inscribir sus prácticas dentro de la catedral queer como santificándose en la última neo-vanguardia de las políticas sexuales radicales” (13). One problem he does emphasize is that “traducir ya plantea una lejanía con la lengua y el objeto, es tomar una distancia o en sí mismo ya es un problema cultural” (13). David William Foster, mentioned earlier as one of the leading scholars on Latin American LGBTQ+ literature, has also taken part in the debate about how the word *queer* cannot be associated exclusively with homosexuality. He states that “hay una inquietud con respecto al término *queer*” (925), a word that “se ha usado tanto en español como en inglés como sinónimo de *homosexual* (porque trasciende las resonancias médico-legales de esta última) y también de *gay* (porque trasciende la política de movimiento de esta última)” (925). Foster also recognizes that the word queer has its origins in gay and lesbian studies but that since its acceptance as a discipline alongside gender and sexuality studies (Queer Theory coined as a term is generally credited to Teresa de Lauretis). It has grown to incorporate other identities that destabilize heteronormativity such as bisexuality, transgender, transsexuality, intersexual (this is more biologically based because of chromosomal changes) and transvestite identities among others. One of the important aspects these identities do by their mere existence in contrast to normative behaviors is they challenge in a destabilizing manner the power dynamics between reproductive heterosexuality (in a position of power) and other sexualities deemed inappropriate and thus, having no power.

Another important aspect that a study looking into queer writings from any region of the world, the Southern Cone in this case, is whether the text is queer or the way one reads it is queer. In thinking about one of Argentina's founding works of fiction, *El matadero*, there are

critics and academics, such as Peralta and Chris Girman, who see the text as representative of the problems between the two political factions vying for control of the country at the time. Some have argued though that by putting a queer lens on this story, we are able to see that it can be read as having a queer representation of sexuality and gender. In Girman's *Mucho Macho* (2006), he states that "by placing the political struggle in terms of gender conformity and nonconformity -- and the possibility of *forced* nonconformity -- Echeverría shows that gendered notions of femininity and masculinity were deeply embedded in Argentine consciousness" (247). He claims that an important aspect gained from this type of reading is how it changes the reading to show "that the unitarian was not getting whipped, but fucked" (247). Was the text written to be a queer text? This text was likely not written with contemporary ideas of queerness in mind, but it is possible to read a text that was not written with queer readings in mind and find it has a queer intention of destabilizing the gender and sexuality norms of its time period. There are also authors who are queer and write queer texts. As Mhoris eMm expresses in his interview about this subject "sí, un autor que no es *queer* puede hablar de lo *queer* y un autor que es *queer* puede tener una obra que no es *queer*. Para mí, ahora, pensándolo bien se podría decir que la obra es *queer* cuando habla de la temática *queer*, en los hechos, en los personajes" (Ward 3). Most texts have a potential to be read from a queer perspective. De Lauretis states that "a queer text carries the inscription of sexuality as something more than sex" (244) referring to the uncomfortable or suggestive quality provoked by a queer text. It's not just talking about sex when issues of sex are broached. Instead, it points to something more beneath the surface that is challenging what is considered the norm. It is this theme that inspired editors Emile Bergmann and Paul Julian Smith put together the queer reader *¿Entiendes? Queer Readings, Hispanic Writings* and put a queer lens to older Latin American texts and authors to see what sort of destabilization of sex/gender

have been happening all along and take a closer look at the representations of sex and gender. The purpose of a work such as this is to reexamine the canon of literature to find out if there have been intentions to "silence divergent or dissident readings" (Bergmann and Smith 3). It's possible that queering literature leads to new interpretations and readings of it, but for the time being I only wish to focus on contemporary representations of these challenges to the norms.

Foucault's *A History of Sexuality* (1974) is also indispensable to the basis of queer theory work as he discusses the arrival of a homosexual identity and power relations that open the possibilities for these anti-normative identities to do their destabilizing work. He claims that "relations of power-knowledge are not static forms of distribution, they are 'matrices of transformation'" (99). In thinking through his lens on power relations, it becomes possible to see the claim that reproductive heterosexuality is the norm is actually an incessant fight to impose itself as the norm. By gaining a positive sense of visibility and challenging the visibility regime with their own queer subjectivities, queer identities become not only possible but are a central aspect of a destabilization process that is both sexual and political. Queer ideas started out seeking to destabilize essentialist notions of gender to show their socially constructed nature and at present has moved towards identifying people whose sexuality is not based in heteronormative expectations. In other words, a firm basis for queerness in 2019 is to claim that all sexual identities and expressions of gender are valid instead of only subscribing to the notion that only the categories of men and women are acceptable and being heterosexual is compulsory. It is in this vain that I am employing the term queer in my dissertation in regard to masculinity. A queered masculinity is a method for a person who identifies as a man to express his own way of being a queer man against the hegemonic influence of heteronormativity in the context of Chile and Argentina as they continue the ongoing push of visibility from the LGBTQ+ community.

Queered masculinities in a broader sense are multi-faceted and can describe any type of masculinity of "males who disrupt both heterosexuality and hegemonic masculinity" (Heasley 311). This definition by Robert Heasley is part of his study of the typology of queer masculinity that attempts to define a space within masculinity studies for the straight men who queer their own masculinity by not aligning themselves with hegemonic patriarchal masculinity and demands of compulsory heterosexuality. His take on the key unifying aspect of these masculinities is their disruptive nature. Even though his argument and definition are part of an attempt to ally straight men with their queer counterparts in disrupting hegemonic masculinity, men labeled queer because of their sexuality or identity engage in disrupting dominant discourses. As mentioned in Chapter 2, masculinity is a technology that can bring forth men a sense of feeling manly by assigning them a set of guidelines on how to act as such in society. But what happens when this technology takes a queer turn? I have chosen works to analyze in this chapter that involve male characters who confront the societal demands of this dominant masculinity put on men with their own queer masculinity that seeks to "desestabilizar el binarismo que impone la heteronormatividad" (Kaminsky 885) and "transgredir las normas del deseo" (885). This destabilization means they open up the possibility of various ways of expressing one's sexuality. Through this process of destabilization of the heteronormative binary, these male literary characters are also actively challenging the negative visibility regime and creating their own from their own point of view. Mhoris eMm confirms this importance of queerness and visibility stating "lo *queer* desestabiliza en el sentido desde la visibilización. Lo *queer* tiene esa visibilización al exterior y eso va desestabilizando" (Ward 4). According to his own take on how queerness works in conjunction with visibility, it's mere presence and visibility of the queer body and queer spaces in public has a destabilization affect. It affirms the existence

of queer bodies, the right to exist and celebrates their anti-normative identity.

The queer men in the texts being analyzed here show a marked difference from gay masculinity in the manner in which they undermine heteronormative demands of masculinity imposed by hegemonic masculinity. Men seeking to enact gay masculinity have tendencies to exhibit signs of homonormativity, a problematic idea similar to heteronormativity. Instead of assuming that everyone is heterosexual as heteronormativity does, homonormativity is "the assimilation of heteronormative structures" (Van Eeden-Moorefield et. al 563) and argues that all queer people want to be like their heterosexual counterparts that are considered normal. It results in privileging members of the LGBTQ+ community who mimic heteronormative ideals like monogamous marriages and raising children without taking into consideration the diversity of experience and desire of queer people who may not want to imitate heteronormative structures. The queered masculinity of the men in the works of this chapter not only disrupt heteronormative demands but are political in the manner in which they transgress the limits of patriarchal masculinity. Their queered masculinity is more political in nature than openly gay men and is less focused on sexually charged queer expressions of self as much as queer expressions of themselves as queer men. They engage in a type of performance that is meant to destabilize and question the limits of the norms imposed on them. Their performances are political in the manner in which they challenge the limits placed on the body by traditional discourses. Their bodies are used as part of the queer performance to break through barriers while they show that the discourses placed on the *surface of the body* do not represent an essence that is applicable to all men. These men may be queer, but their representations show men who are not only queer but that also perform behaviors associated with masculinity such as courage, independence, assertiveness and violence. At times, their performance of masculinity will also comply with

demands of machismo that emphasizes power coupled with a disregard for responsibility and consequences of one's actions. One important reason for this act is to work towards the possibility of acceptance of identities and sexualities labeled as queer in the future.

José Esteban Muñoz offers an interesting take on the idea of utopia in terms of queer futurity using the concept of utopia as one that provokes movement towards the future, that something that is not-yet-conscious. In his book *Cruising Utopia* (2009), Muñoz creates a theoretical basis that proposes looking to the past for examples of queer performances of resistance and existence that can empower queer subjects to move towards a queer future that exists as a utopia that is not-yet-conscious. The idea of a queer utopia insinuates a world free of the shame and marginalization that queer people face. In order to demonstrate part of this project of looking towards a queer future, Muñoz contrasts queer culture with the dominant heterosexual culture in which he claims queerness "depends on a notion of the future" (49). In terms of sexually dissident cultures, Muñoz states that "the queer citizen-subject labors to live in a present that is calibrated, through the protocols of state power, to sacrifice what Lauren Berlant has called the 'dead citizenship' of heterosexuality" (49). Muñoz calls attention to the power of the state to enact demands upon its citizens for acceptable comportment, and this was true of the Chile that Lemebel inhabited under the Pinochet regime and similar to the one that shaped post-dictatorship Argentina for Mhoris eMm. By controlling the everyday reality of the citizens, the right-wing governments reached their hands into the personal lives of the citizens to control the discourse on permissible feelings and desires it then labeled as natural and good. For Muñoz, the idea of a utopia gives hope that there is a better tomorrow to look forward to and this hope inspires a queer performance that seeks out this type of utopian ideal to move towards a more positive future. He calls queerness "a performance because it is not simply a being but a doing

for and toward the future. Queerness is essentially about the rejection of a here and now and insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world" (1). Thinking through this lens means it becomes possible to see the present performances of queerness as having a project of creating a more inclusive future in which adherence to reproductive heterosexuality is not the norm forced socially and culturally upon an entire population.

Mhoris eMm

Mhoris eMm has published four literary works in the "under" publishing world of Buenos Aires. As of 2018, he has published: *Queridos heterosexuales* (2014), a reworking of the poem "Dear Straight People" by Denice Frohman, *No me toleres* (2015), *Ninguna peluquería se abre los lunes* (2016) and *Los vecinos de abajo saben cosas* (2017). Mhoris is a self-described queer performer who participates in the LGBTQ+ community of Buenos Aires through performances in local theatres such as *La sala de los chasquidos* and other slam poetry events associated with Slam Capital!. For this chapter, I will focus on a short story from his work *No me toleres* and its representation of a queered masculinity in current Argentine queer cultural production. *No me toleres* is divided into four parts - a structural choice I argue is his part of his project of queering the traditional forms of writing by offering several genres within one short work of literary production and challenging conventional notions of how literary production must appear in print. The work starts with a short poem from which the title of the book is taken. It is then followed by the history of Juance, a heterosexual man who is suffering from heterophobia. The story of Juance is followed by "Cumbia del HPV", a feminized version of the cumbia villera which is a popular dance form in Argentina that is characterized by its misogynistic themes and Mhoris' implementation of an epic poem with queer thematics running throughout. In an interview in 2017, Mhoris described *No me toleres* as queer because "el

escritor es *queer*. La obra habla sobre lo *queer*. Me parece que son dos cosas que se congenian. También *No me toleres* es una obra política pero toda obra es política" (Ward 1). From a queered perspective, Mhoris reflects the idea that the personal is political and his work is a political statement. His coupling of the idea of his work being *queer* along with its political nature reinforces the importance of the political aspect to queering masculinity.

To be *queer* is to engage in anti-normative behaviors and attitudes because "cualquier construcción específica de la identidad es arbitraria, inestable y exclusive" (López Penedo 116) according to queer thinking and to destabilize the (hetero)normative categories of men and women that have always been passed off as the norm to which people must adhere is the goal of queer thinking. This is true for Latin American countries where the influence of the Church and patriarchal masculinity norms has dictated much of the acceptable behavior of men and women since the arrival of the Spanish and Portuguese. In Bazán's and Contardo's historical accounts of the LGBTQ+ community and its struggles from the arrival of the Spanish and Portuguese to Latin America, both authors begin with explanations of more open and complicated systems of gender and sexuality held by the various indigenous groups of Latin American territories that were wiped out by the Spanish and Portuguese conquerors appalled at the open sexual relations and gender roles they labelled as abominations of nature. Bazán explains that sodomy became a powerful weapon for the conquistadors to use against the indigenous populations. Hernán Cortés learned that "acusar de sodomía era la mejor manera de sacar del medio a un adversario molesto" (34) while others called sodomy the crime against nature that defined the lives of the indigenous peoples. Contardo explains that "en Chile - y en otras sociedades similares- el argumento principal para castigar a las personas que se relacionan con aquellos de su mismo sexo es que en dicha relación no es posible la reproducción y, por lo tanto, se pone en peligro el porvenir de la

comunidad" (51). These guidelines were set early in the history of settlement of European interests in Latin America to reproduce their own community aided by religious institutions such as the Church to instill beliefs in the categories of men and women as ordained by God to aid in the expansion of Catholic communities in territories known historically as the New World. The later establishment of independent nations also depended on discourses of nation building and used what at the time passed as scientific ideas to further the belief in men and women having ordained roles in society to come together for reproductive purposes only. This took the pleasure aspect away from sexuality as a means of controlling and regulating its purpose. Pleasure is an important component to queered masculinities as it challenges the more neoliberal and capitalistic function of the male body to be used solely as a procreative entity.

"La tan compleja y heterofóbica historia de Juance" is a satirical story of Juance Villanueva, a young man who "padecía una extraña patología psiquiátrica, despertada en su adolescencia, que los especialistas, en el año 2019, dieron a entender como 'heterofobia'. Juance era heterofóbico" (14). The immediate inversion of the issue of homophobia in the LGBTQ+ community is of central focus in Mhoris' work and functions as a satire of the problem of homophobia. Through these four short chapters the reader learns of how Juance managed to kill a crucial part of his identity in his sexuality, how he had hidden lovers who were in fact women even though he was heterophobic, how he came from a typical middle-class family in post-modern Argentina and how he gave interviews late in life even though he started to suffer from Alzheimer's. The story's narrative voice retells the famous mythical story of Juance and pokes holes in the veracity of the story to propose the idea of someone having a phobia of their own sexuality is a ridiculous notion to suggest. The story is told from the extradiegetic viewpoint of Notary Public B. Egmemm about the research of Bhoris eG-, a narrative voice whose

trustworthiness is questioned constantly throughout the story. It is a queer centric perspective of the damaging discourses of homophobia through the representation of a perspective of the possibility of a person who represents the heteronormative world suffering from a personal crisis due to their sexual orientation. Homophobia has often been a crucial part of anti-homosexual sentiment and a part of the heteronormative ideology to create a negative visibility regime and legitimize discrimination towards anyone who may express same sex desires. Homophobia not only exists from the heterosexual point of view, but it has taken root within the lives of people who make up the LGBTQ+ community itself causing self-hatred, self-doubt and at times leading to acts of suicide. The story is broken up into the life of Juance, the family of Juance, the lovers of Juance and the death of Juance.

The entire story, I argue, is a satirical queered take on homophobia that can leave readers feeling disoriented and unsure of what they have read or wondering what the point of it all is. From the start, Egmemm appears to be undermining the validity of the claim of heterophobia which he confirms at the end that Juance's story is likely an invention of Bhoris eG. As well, he is constantly questioning the validity of the sources Bhoris cites. The language, tending to be baroque in tone, is also reflective of queering the gendered language of Spanish. The first words of the story read "Quizás usted, lector amigx, no me crea mucho la historia" (13). This use of the "x" (which occurs several times throughout the story) instead of an "o" or "a"(although more likely "o" since masculine genders tend to be imposed more often) is part of an activist push in Spanish language to include individuals who use gender neutral pronouns and do not self-identify within the gender binary. In other places, the presence of an "e" occurs instead of the "x". It's not only an act of inclusion but an active crossing out of gender domination and exclusion in the language itself where a large group of people are generally always defined in the

masculine form. The story is also replete with footnotes that call to mind a similar style of *El beso de la mujer araña* by Manuel Puig. In the same vein as Puig's novel, the footnotes have some fictionalized voices of experts who challenge the veracity of the action the reader is privy to and casts doubt at various points of the story. In the footnotes, Egmemm offers conflicting information about the story of Juance and the other sources cited that relate to his story, eventually questioning whether Bhoris is Juance himself.

Bhoris (or possibly Juance) explains that heterophobia is a fear and rejection of heterosexuality, and thus heterosexual people, which can lead to hatred of them and oneself if a person finds themselves to be both heterophobic and heterosexual such as Juance. The story is a queered vision of phobias (both homo and trans) in the LGBTQ+ community. While it's possible for a heterosexual person to have experienced heterophobia, the heteronormative nature of Latin American countries suggests that the only people who likely have some form of heterophobia would be members of the LGBTQ+ community who feel contempt towards the heterosexual majority of society with the power of control. In this queered version of homophobia, Juance's heterophobia drives him to kill himself, but it is not an actual suicide that takes place. Instead, Juance kills a part of himself that is key to his identity, his sexual orientation. Egmemm's epilogue reveals a long and detailed confessional of the likely fictional aspect of Bhoris' account in which the mythologized figure of Juance was created to deal with his own heterophobia. Another interesting aspect of the short story is the timeframe used to set the short story in the future. The timelines of the story are dated in the decade of the 2060's with the initial discovery and diagnosis of his condition being 2019 yet these dates are not revealed until the end of the story. Egmemm claims to have found the file and historical record of Juance and tries to pass off his own interaction with it as just a middle man of information found in the *Compendio universal*

de las más complejas historias de la sexualidad del postmodernismo argentino. This compendio's setting in the postmodern Argentina opens up the queered (re)presentation of issues involving sexual orientation and the LGBTQ+ movement of post-dictatorship Argentina. It is in this postmodern Argentina that a young man's battle with heterophobia can develop as the dominant heteronormative sexuality is thrown into question. It is this world of possibilities that Mhoris is exploring the implications of heterosexuals finding themselves in a personal crisis as they see themselves as not normal as many LGBTQ+ citizens have been made to feel by the marginalizing of their sexual orientation through homophobic taunts and discriminations.

The myriad of ways that homophobia manifests itself in the lives of members of the LGBTQ+ community has been explored in detail by Martin Kantor in his book *Homophobia: Description, Development, and Dynamics of Gay Bashing* (1998). He uses the idea of inhibition to describe how gay and lesbian people "self-closet, renouncing homosexual relationships/homosexuality to avoid accepting themselves as they are, as a way to win a struggle they are having with themselves about being gay" (51). This act of self-closeting describes the life of Juance as he hides his sexual orientation to avoid accepting himself as he is, yet it is because of his heterosexual orientation that he becomes aware of the visibility of his sexual orientation in public. In Kantor's chapter on the manifestations of homophobia within the LGBTQ+ community, he describes several themes that appear in Mhoris' take from a heterophobic point of view that show the destructive ways a self-hating phobia works. Several manifestations of homophobia are: "*distancing* themselves from friends, lovers and family" (52), "refusing to have sex with other homosexuals because of what homosexuals do to their bodies during sex" (52), "avoiding self-fulfillment" (53), "*abuse* their lovers in the belief that the lovers are defective" (54) and "back-stabbing" (55). Aside from these physical manifestations,

psychological problems arise according to Kantor who explains many members of the LGBTQ+ community "become self-homophobic when they make the same homophobic cognitive errors about themselves that homophobia straights make about them" (61). In the story, there are moments where Juance's avoidance of self-fulfillment is evident in how he avoids intimate romantic relationships and his inability to be open about sexual feelings for women. He must keep his heterosexuality invisible from fear of it being made visible to the public.

One of the sources of explanations is the fictional psychoanalyst Sigmund Gray (an imitation of Sigmund Freud) who describes the deep seeded psychological problems Juance faces like his unresolved Chrysothemis complex and the negative structure of the postmodern family that lead to his heterophobia. It is through Gray's work *Su complejo* that these problems are outlined. Bhoris ensures to tell of his family situation as "una familia heteroparental de la clase media del conurbano bonaerense" (19) as opposed to it being a single parent or homosexual parents as had been suggested to be the reason for his heterophobia. Laying the blame at the feet of the disintegration of the nuclear family can be a common way to explain sexual orientations classified as deviant like homosexuality. Boys raised by single moms are often targets of claims that they lack a masculine influence in their life to explain their same sex desires, but this is not the case with Juance as he had heterosexual parents to teach him how to be heterosexual. The parents are described as having "el amor institucional y religiosamente reconocido" (20) that goes against the post-modern family structure and led to Juance being in "un espacio represivo frente al mundo" (20). This (re)presentation of a self-hatred directed towards one's own sexual orientation brings to a public visibility the perception of how homophobia and transphobia can wreak havoc within the LGBTQ+ community as people who identify as homosexual or transsexual learn to hate their own sexual orientation because of how it doesn't match with

heteronormative demands in patriarchal societies such as that of Argentina.

The queering of these anti-LGBTQ+ phobias through the investigation of heterophobia by Bhoris accomplishes a multi-faceted purpose. First, he reverses the sadly all too familiar situation of members of the LGBTQ+ community feeling afraid of going public with their sexuality, which leads to their own self-rejection because they do not comply with the expectations of the socially acceptable heterosexual body. The history of Juance is politically charged and queer in that it undermines and questions a body deemed desirable, male and heterosexual, and turns it into a site of crisis and rejection by the white male heterosexual in the body. According to Bhoris, the issue of heterophobia is becoming more present in post-modern Argentina. By using heterophobia to delve deeper into the issues that come with homophobia, the negative impacts on those who suffer from it draws attention to just how misunderstood it is from a scientific perspective. The input offered from Gray is nothing more than an overly elaborate series of psychological complexes based on mythical figures and the problems they suffered themselves. One of Gray's theories explains that Juance could have avoided his problems had he overcome his complexes in a following a complex set of responses that also mock early 20th century psychological theories that pathologized the homosexual body and mind. In reality, his theory offers no help except to make Juance's problem even more complicated. Second, by queering this condition that is typically the result of heteronormative demands that feelings of attraction to members of the same sex be accompanied by shame and feelings of guilt, Mhoris is actively working to destabilize homophobia's power and grip on the LGBTQ+ community by placing it on the idealized heterosexual male body. He delves into the ways in which homophobia and how it degenerates into a disease that eats a person alive from the inside. There is questioning of the constructed nature of heterophobia from within scientific circles like

psychoanalysis and how it creates complexes that have scripted struggles and answers to questions of how to resolve the problems of hating one's own sexual orientation. Third, the representation of the entire interest in the history of someone who likely invented a farcical phobia creates an image that a phobia of one's own sexual orientation is ridiculous. This important third point of showing a phobia of one's own sexual orientation as absurd can both debilitate the power of issues like homophobia and transphobia in the LGBTQ+ community while also empowering members of the community at seeing the absurdity of putting oneself through self-inflicted cycles of doubt and hatred directed towards one's own sexual orientation. In other words, the visibility regime around it can be changed by destabilizing homophobia's negative impact within and towards the heteronormative world that engages in homophobic actions continually attack and discriminate against the LGBTQ+ community.

The representation of Juance's heterophobia must be placed into the context of how it queers his masculinity, thus reflecting the political and oppositional nature of a masculine body who is not reflecting the key tenets of hegemonic masculinity of power, strength and dominance over others. Juance's queered masculinity is represented in his behaviors that are deemed feminized by wearing tight clothing, layers of make-up and eye liner so as not to call attention to himself and yet he still maintains certain aspects of playing the role of a man desired by many women. Juance is said to have never enjoyed relationships with women, who are also represented from a queer perspective as they would follow him to take selfies dressed in hyper-masculinized clothing that accentuated their muscles. The representations of masculinity have been turned upside down, marking a queered turn as these categories are often presented as being firm, established categories in heteronormative society. A poem Egmemm believes was written by Juance to his female lover shows his "heterofobia y heterosexualidad se conjugan para resolverse

(o no)" (24) and the author of the poem confesses "ay Morena, amarte es un dilema, si te beso, seguro nos condenan" (24). This confession of love coupled with the condemnation for that type of love calls to mind the common reference to gay/queer expressions of love as "the love that dare not speak its name". The home, a typically feminized space, is for Juance the only place where his brief moments of heterosexual masculinity manifests itself. He must keep his masculine identity of heterosexuality invisible because it would not be accepted in public.

In the chapter about his death, Bhoris states that Juance had to "resolver su conflicto identitario aunando su masculinidad latente con el deseo social y personal, matar su lado fóbico" (17). This joining together of the heterosexual body of Juance and an undeveloped masculinity with a phobia that prevents him from expressing his own concept of what kind of man he is complicates and undermines the dominant nature that patriarchal masculinity has taken on in Latin American cultures. It was only at home in privacy that he could spend a few minutes each day in sports apparel and without any type of make-up on and complying with the structured behaviors he felt he needed to perform. He hates his condition so much that he would lash out at himself and eventually ends up killing himself, but it is not his own body he attacks. Instead it is a part of his identity that represents his sexuality that he kills. The narrator tells us that "Juance terminó autoasesinándose" (15) instead of the common Spanish verb "suicidarse" to clarify it isn't a suicide but rather an intentional killing off of a part of his identity targeted by Juance himself. Bhoris claims Juance confesses to killing his problematic side and clarifies that Juance said "no me maté yo, me mataron ustedes. **Y aquí me despido yo, que he confesao a mi modo males que conozco solo, y que contaron todos**" (28-9, emphasis author) dated June 2063. This dating of Juance's final confession so long after his heterophobia diagnosis confirms his death was in regard to his phobia and personal identity but the details of his life after his self-inflicted

killing of his phobic side are not provided. Bhoris does inform his reader that Juance's last years are marred by Alzheimer's disease, an effect can be felt in the disorienting story line.

Notary Egmemm's epilogue is the only chapter in which his own voice is heard, and he confesses that "la cuestión heterofóbica es la más cuestionable" (31) of all the information published on Juance and that Bhoris eG's claim of it being common is also false. This strong rejection of the claim along with all of the other moments of doubt work together to create the feeling of confusion and absurdity to this representation of a heterosexual man. So why does the story of Juance exist in the first place? The story's epilogue and footnotes are where Egmemm calls out the overly fictionalized nature of heterophobia saying "si se han registrado casos de heterofobia, estos más bien constituyen actos de rebeldía adolescente o se desarrollan dentro de la exegesis de personajes literarios de ficción" (31). The story questions what is fictional and what is real and whether or not that matters when it comes to characters in books that have gained fame and notoriety. The veracity of the story Bhoris tells is called into question at every turn and yet it's telling continues because "es el valor de tanta complejidad el que ha convertido esta obra en el libro que hoy y recientemente es" (32). In spite of Egmemm's consistent undermining of Bhoris eG's account, the mythical figure of Juance lives on through the various psychological, sociological and anthropological studies carried out on his condition and the discussion of his life. These notes and suggestions reflect the ideas of futurity that Muñoz discusses in *Cruising Utopia* that is for and toward the future of queer subjects. The doubts and confusing nature of a heterosexual man in such an unpredictable and unstable situation casts doubt on the whole nature of heteronormative masculinity if in reality he hates himself for his sexuality. The character of Juance engages in what Edgar Vega Suriaga describes as "ese ser *queer* en Latinoamérica nos habla de prácticas corporales que devienen prácticas teóricas" (122).

It is through his condition of self-hatred we see how he focuses on his corporal actions and movements, the manner in which he comports himself in public. This representation of a heterosexual man, who is portrayed as the norm, cannot continue to act as an agent of power and domination, maintaining its immunity to the threat of being undermined, because it is taken apart internally by a phobia of itself as happens in the LGBTQ+ community with homophobia and transphobia. Ultimately, it is the ridiculousness of this fear that Mhoris is taking apart and shaking at its foundation with this story and queering the heterosexual and patriarchal masculinity that is generally held up as the hegemonic model. By reversing the perspective and approaching homophobia from a different perspective through the dominant masculine point of view, Mhoris is leaving the public with a queered view of masculinity that shakes and challenges hegemonic masculinity's claim to power by making it weak and vulnerable to itself.

Pedro Lemebel

Pedro Lemebel could be argued to be one of the most recognized figures of LGBTQ+ cultural production in Chile during the last two decades of the 20th century and into the 21st until his untimely death in 2015 from laryngeal cancer. In his literary works, he focuses on figures of gay men (at times using the word homosexual to represent the negative, pathologized view from the dominant heteronormative culture), transvestites and other people that could be considered queer citizens. His *crónicas* in the collection *La esquina es mi corazón* (1995) tell of the difficulties encountered by the poor homosexual Chileans that live their lives prostituting themselves in the street to scrape by. In another, *Loco afán* (1996), he tackles the AIDS epidemic of the 1980's that decimated the LGBTQ+ communities in Chile. Lemebel himself once said in an interview that his work was influenced by a national past that had "ese carácter de letras traumatizadas esencialmente por lo que le anteceden, que es la dictadura" (26). Lemebel's

activism was often directed directly at the Pinochet dictatorship and the heteronormative demands it made of Chilean men. He along with Francisco Casas formed a duo known as *Las yeguas del apocalipsis*. The two frequently performed public protests such as the "Coronación de espinas" in 1988 to protest the Pablo Neruda Prize being given to Raul Zurita or "La conquista de América" in 1989 to commemorate the victims of the New World conquests celebrated as día de la raza. Apart from his activism, crónicas and poetry, he wrote one novel, *Tengo miedo torero,* published in 2001 and translated to English as *My Tender Matador* in 2003 by Katherine Silver. It is the representations in this work of queer masculinity I will focus on the transvestite character simply known as La Loca being the primary focus even though there are other characters who enact a queered masculinity as well.

The novel presents an allegorical story that stages the fight of a country against its fascist government through two revolutionary figures, that of the political revolutionary - Carlos, and that of the sexual revolutionary - La Loca del Frente, against the representation of hegemonic masculinity par excellence - Augusto Pinochet. The story tells of how Carlos and La Loca become romantically involved during Carlos' planning of an assassination on Pinochet based on a real event that took place September 11, 1986. I argue that it is the queered masculinity of La Loca that transcends the boundaries of man/woman to represent a character that challenges the stabilization of the heteronormative ideals of the gender binary and works to queer Carlos' masculinity as well. This destabilization forms part of the future project of a nation free of the dictatorship and a future Chile with more inclusivity and acceptance towards queered forms of representation. Vek Lewis points out this challenge to the masculine institution of the State by La Loca in his analysis of Lemebel's work inverting the masculine order. He states "in Lemebel's work, the state is always identified with this masculinity. It is not simply any masculinity, but,

rather, the kind of hegemonic masculinity, to use Raewyn Connell's term (1995), reinforced by power and domination: a cold and calculating masculinity that refuses emotions, demands obedience, terrorizes, denigrates the feminine, and vigilantly monitors all borders" (213). The body of a *travesti* such as La Loca is "very much at the cross-purposes in this setting" (213). La Loca's queered masculinity finds a positive space of visibility developed in her love affair with Carlos as he represents the possibility of a positive future for Chile. Carlos' masculinity, while appearing hegemonic at times, is queered to by his acceptance and recognition of La Loca's queered state of being. He too participates in queered expressions of love with La Loca, even entering a queered space of other locas that are like family to La Loca. Lemebel's retelling of a historical event from a queered perspective works to change the visibility regime of queered citizens by bringing them into view in a positive manner. By destabilizing the hegemonic form of masculinity as represented by Pinochet and his demands on Chilean society La Loca forges ahead with a new possibility for a queered future. In thinking on a queer future, implementing the ideas of Muñoz's queer futurity.

Tengo miedo torero contains multiple characters that perform a queered masculinity that is presented in a way that constantly contrasts it to traditional patriarchal masculinity and works to undermine its power and authority by destabilizing its foundations and demands of men. As Mhoris develops in his works, Lemebel's subjects are not ones who come from well-to-do economic backgrounds but rather represent the poorer and working-class segments of society. I focus primarily on the queer masculinity of the story's main character, La Loca del Frente, or the Queen as she is known in the English translation by Silver. I will also briefly discuss the other characters, Carlos and Gonzalo, who display a queered masculinity and also support the same politicized project of La Loca in challenging hegemonic notions of masculinity through queered

representations. Samuel Manickam describes La Loca's character as such: "por el simple hecho de ser un travesti homosexual la Loca del Frente está expresando una inconformidad con lo aceptado, lo normal, lo dictado de esta sociedad bajo Pinochet" (43). It will also be important to mention some key moments of portrayals of the body of Pinochet, the self-proclaimed role model of this hegemonic masculinity, and how they work to destabilize and undermine the authority behind his claim to power via his masculinity. In looking at the novel from a perspective of masculinity/femininity, it becomes apparent quickly the importance of maleness with being able to engage in political action. La Loca's queered masculinity is crucial to the novel's plot and subsequent goal of undermining Pinochet's Chile and his demands of patriarchal masculinity by literally trying to kill its representative in an assassination attempt. It is fitting that the form of masculinity that has claimed hegemony can only be vanquished from its privileged position of power by the threat and use of the same violence it enacts against other masculinities it classifies as inferior and weak. In the case of La Loca, hegemonic masculinity's problem with her is made clear in that she is a biologically born male who is living as a transvestite and is making queer existence visible.

Queer culture does not need an out in public protest to break with normative conceptions of gender as Manickam affirms that "es decir, la cultura queer no necesariamente expresa su inconformidad con la cultura dominante de una manera explícita como, por ejemplo, a través de protestas públicas sino, más bien, la presencia quieta pero insistente de un ser inconforme puede expresar su postura subversive" (43). The visibility of a queer subject is enough to pose doubts and stir consternation from the dominant culture. The subject of transvestism in the Latin American literary context is an often-visited site of a way of showing queer visibility. Ben Sifuentes-Jáuregui states that transvestism is fulfilling "the subject's desire to represent

normative gender difference seamlessly" (4). Throughout his book *Transvestism, Masculinity and Latin American Literature* (2002), he engages in close readings of literary works prior to the 1990 date that starts the period covered in this study. The subjects he analyzes do engage in this seamless representation of normative gender but with the figure of La Loca, this seamlessness becomes more muddled. Her visibility in public causes tension as government entities treat her a confused man but it is this recognition of maleness that often allows her to pass without problems in public. She traverses multiple spaces throughout Santiago from her poor barrio to the movie theater where she offers oral sex for money and onto wealthier parts of the city where her rich clients live who are part of the Pinochet establishment and pay her for decorative tablecloths. She also travels outside of the city to help Carlos and to flee at the end and her enactment of gender is recognized as both a woman and a man dressing as a woman. She does little to try and make her masculine qualities disappear when in situations where men of power and authority recognize her masculine qualities behind the femininized appearance. This queered appearance in public situations causes consternation and tension with men who represent hegemonic masculinity.

La Loca's performance of masculinity demonstrates its queered expressions from the multiple perspectives of each character in the book that have personal face to face interaction with her. This queerness challenges a basic tenet of patriarchal masculinity that gender roles are set and defined by one's biological gender. The representation of La Loca often switches between masculine and feminine descriptions depending on who is talking about her or to her. This means that her queered nature is not only described from her own perspective, but it is also recognized from the perspective of others that also define how she is queer in the manner in which they describe their own recognition of someone who doesn't follow normative

expectations of men and women. La Loca sees herself as queer, openly using queer based language to describe herself, her lifestyle and her sexual desires. Both the narrator and La Loca herself refer to her with feminine descriptors. The Spanish possessive pronoun “su” and the lack of subject pronouns often found in the original Spanish version both work to maintain an ambiguousness in the original version. This becomes problematic for the English translation as the gender specific possessives “his” and “her” and a need for a subject marker with verbs still tended to be used at the time of its translation in 2003 as opposed to the English gender neutral “its” or “they” that has been since adopted by many gender non-conforming members of the LGBTQ+ community. What emerges in both versions is a consistent addressing of La Loca with feminine pronouns and possessives when La Loca is speaking about herself, Carlos is speaking about her or to her and her other queer friends are speaking about or to her. When members of the non-LGBTQ+ community address La Loca, it is in a masculine form. There is a purposeful use of masculine and feminine direct object pronouns throughout the book to make clear how other characters in the novel look at the body of La Loca. From the perspective of characters outside of her LGBTQ+ community of Rana and other transvestites that inhabit the underworld of Santiago, the heteronormative world still looks at La Loca as a psychologically disturbed man playing dress up and refer to her as he/him.

Oftentimes, the other characters like the children, neighborhood women or government officials look at La Loca as a man dressed in drag. In her poor neighborhood of Santiago, “todo el barrio sabía que el nuevo vecino era así, una novia de la cuadra demasiado encantada con esa ruinosa construcción. Un maripozuelo de cejas fruncidas” (8). This recognition of La Loca as a man playing dress up to outsiders yet as someone who sees themselves living as a woman reflects La Loca’s queered masculinity and the muddled nature of her transvestism from both a

queer friendly perspective and its counterpart that looks at queerness as deviant behavior. The visibility regime created about queer figures like La Loca from a heteronormative perspective is negative and often paints them as deviants and confused. Whether they realize it or not, the characters that view La Loca as a man also think of her as a queer man and thus being queerly masculine as they still recognize her traits and they code them as masculine. Pinochet himself encounters La Loca in passing as she is on the side of the road while he is heading to Cajón del Maipo. At first, he doesn't think anything of her but then suddenly has a realization that she is a biological male dressing as a woman and exclaims to his wife that "eran homosexuales mujer, dos homosexuales. Dos degenerados tomado el sol en mi camino. A vista y paciencia de todo el mundo. Como si no bastara con los comunistas, ahora son los homosexuales exhibiéndose en el campo, haciendo todas sus cochinadas al aire libre. Es el colmo" (48-9). For Pinochet, the visibility of La Loca causes him anger and discomfort as she is destabilizing his utopian vision of Chile. His commentary is quickly followed by a solution of more surveillance to stop the open visibility of homosexuals and reflects his own vision of being the arbiter of hegemonic masculinity in Chile. His solution is to put more agents of surveillance in public to counter the visibility of queer bodies and push them back into a space of invisibility. His words also show a sense of ownership of setting the cultural norms and expectations of how men and women should behave in public. He is claiming ownership to a visibility regime that seeks to keep anyone related to the LGBTQ+ community silent and out of sight. He claims the road to be his own and frames the presence of two homosexuals as a violation of this space, a public space he sees coded as heterosexual and thus normal. Pinochet also politicizes his attack by connecting this outright aberration of masculinity to the communist threat towards his regime. From this, it is clear that the personal is political for him and a good citizen knows how to behave. It is ironic the notion

that communists support gay rights as the leftist socialist Allende government was not very friendly to the idea of gay liberation or rights as Oscar Contardo argues in *Raro*.

The novel's overarching political tone involving the attempted overthrow of the Pinochet regime through the hands of a queer man becomes clearer as the novel's plot unfolds. This act of rebellion is coded as masculine in nature and our attention as a critical reader must be called to this masculinized nature of the revolutionary act. An important aspect of the masculinized nature of the revolutionary act is seen in the representations of women such as Laura or first lady Lucy, women who are dependent on men to be part of the political or revolutionary action. Aboim states that "without a subordinate, dominated, oppositional femininity, masculinity cannot be defined as 'naturally' superior and dominating" (47). This opposition to femininity is also noted by Connell as one of the key aspects of how masculinities are formed, in opposition to women. By looking at the representation of the women, it becomes clear that they are peripheral characters in comparison to the men. Laura may belong to the Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez, but she is never shown as having the same power and influence as the men of this group. She accompanies them to places and goes along with their plans but is never shown to make her decisions or plans. Laura even looks at La Loca as more a masculine, albeit queer, figure than a woman when she picks her up after the attempted assassination as is seen when La Loca pushes back against leaving her apartment for good. Laura responds with a command and her action is described as: "lo interpeló la mujer mirándolo fríamente tras los cristales" (185). It is the gaze she casts onto the body of La Loca that despite her intent to live as a woman, Laura still recognizes enough of her masculine attributes to participate in political actions that Laura can only be an accomplice to. Laura still sees a man, albeit queer, because of La Loca's ability to participate actively in the revolutionary activities of the Frente group.

Throughout the novel, La Loca has her own sense of agency and is included in many dangerous and necessary actions that can only be carried out by someone who can navigate multiple worlds at once such as carrying a dangerous package across town to meet up with a contact of the group. Despite the constant harassment and questioning of La Loca's queered masculine appearance, she still manages to use her masculine traits to convince the men of power and agency to let her pass without complications. Lucy, wife of Pinochet, plays a role of critiquing his regime from within and Pinochet's character views her as a nagging voice to be ignored rather than possibly having her own agency or a voice with equal value. She critiques the military lifestyle and the distantness it causes for them on a personal and social level. She describes one of Pinochet's favorite places as "tan helada, tan llena de fierros y sables y pistolas y cachuereos militares que [él cuida] como si fueran flores" (45). Her critique though does nothing to change him or his perception of his militaristic and patriarchal masculinity. This shows the feminine voice that have agency and can act are the characters who also have a claim to masculinity - La Loca and Gonzalo, the confidant of Lucy I discuss later in the chapter. It is her ability to inhabit both worlds at the same time that bridges this gap between women and men in terms of having political agency in this fight of the revolutionaries against the State. The queered masculinity of La Loca is constantly being juxtaposed to the masculine representation of Pinochet as the vignettes go back and forth between the lives of the two of them as the plot to assassinate Pinochet reaches its conclusion in the failed coup attempt. The vignettes of Pinochet do not represent a man who is strong and domineering but rather erratic, out of control and paranoid of everything.

The importance of La Loca not only living her queer lifestyle as a transvestite in a visible manner but also being recognized as a biological male by certain people of Santiago including

the government officials, local neighborhood members and police force goes beyond a surface level lack of recognition that traverses the various social classes. The higher-class women who pay for La Loca's tablecloths from time to time only tolerate her appearance because of her talents and have no other interest in supporting protections for people like her. It displays a divide within the culture of those who adhere to the strict rules imposed by the State and those who know those rules can't reflect the vast diversity of sexuality and gender expressions. The connection of gender roles to one's biological sex at birth is shown to be inseparable for many who take gender as a natural given, a representation of one's innate drives as men and women. The women in a local store recognize La Loca more as a man than one of their own as they agree that "este chiquillo está tan contento. ¿Y cómo no? Con el regimento de hombres que lo vienen a ver" (53). The children's confusion at how to address La Loca and the way they tattle on Manolo because he "se equivocó y le dijo tía" (97) during Carlos' birthday party confirms the heteronormative lens the children are taught to use to view the world around them. These moments may seem insignificant, but they actually reveal a great deal about the clashing of two worlds, one created by Pinochet as one that is heterosexual centered at its foundation and the other that permits a queer man to break the rules that dominate Chilean society and challenge the validity of Pinochet's State and its obligatory heteronormative reality. The separating of these two ideas regarding gender and sex roles through the representation of the revolutionary force that seeks to change the politics of Chile and create a more open and inclusive country is at the heart of the political nature of La Loca's queered masculinity. This political aspect of La Loca's queered masculinity also changes the demands of masculinity towards the society around it. Pinochet's patriarchal masculinity that has established itself in a position of hegemony and dominance seeks to keep a watchful eye on other men and how they comport themselves. La

Loca's queered masculinity does not have this same demand to seek out other men as threatening to its position of power but rather acts as a mode of self-expression. She is not imposing her ideals on the world around her but instead her queer turn in masculinity is changing the way it is performed to not only break with the idea of controlling the body of the individual man but also the rest of men that control the norms of a society, such as Chile in *Tengo miedo torero*.

While I have only gone into detail about the queered masculinity of the character of La Loca thus far, there are two other characters that merit mention of how their queered masculinity is important to the novel. The first is the character of Gonzalo, a confidant and stylist of Pinochet's wife Lucy and a constant thorn in the side of Pinochet even though he is never directly seen or heard from in the novel. His lack of physical presence yet ever-present influence and annoyance to Pinochet demonstrate the power and the destabilizing capabilities that queer masculinities can have towards their hegemonic counterparts. It would be impossible to assume where Gonzalo falls in the world of queerness as the reader is never privy to his actual presence, but it is understood that he is at least gay as Pinochet constantly refers to him with derogatory terms like "maricucho" (192). According to Lucy, he foretold of the pending insults of Pinochet for his trip to visit leaders in South Africa, he has good recommendations to change the uniformed and drab look of the general and other leaders of Chile and Lucy argues for him to be appointed to a position of importance in the government. Pinochet relents after Lucy scolds him for not listening to Gonzalo's warnings about an impending attack and admits he should consider naming him as "asesor consejero del gobierno" (192) after the assassination attempt. This queer man works his way into an intimate position of authority within the government even though it does not come without his access to the Pinochet's via his relationship with Lucy. Nevertheless, Lemebel is proposing a queering of Pinochet's government, a space of strong men who rules the

country with their example of how the model Chilean citizen should be.

A counterpart to Gonzalo is Carlos, the main revolutionary figure of the novel who we are led to believe is one of the main conspirators in the plot to assassinate Pinochet. Vinodh Vinkatesh notes that Carlos experiences a queering process because he is a character who "undergoes a gender-morphing game of metaphorical transvestism that will cement the novel's focus on non-Masculine positions" (48). La Loca praises his masculine beauty and has a dreamlike interaction with him in which she imagines herself performing fellatio on him as he lies asleep on her couch looking like the figure of Hindu gods and Christ all at once. The queered masculinity of Carlos reflects the ideas of Heasley's straight queer masculinity in the form of a "social justice straight-queer" (316) who "take[s] action publicly and at the risk of being responded to as if they were gay" (316). Carlos' association, proximity and acceptance of a person that pertains to the LGBTQ+ community in what the reader knows is the year 1986 in Chile because of the historical circumstances of the novel place suggests he could pertain to Heasley's category of social justice straight-queer. Carlos is never open about his own sexual orientation, but he never rejects the love and admiration La Loca bestows on him. Even though he uses La Loca as a cover for some of his planned missions such as taking photos of the highway where the attack is planned, he still takes a great risk by performing these tasks with La Loca at his side in public knowing how recognizable she is as someone who is seen as queer. Carlos' closeness to La Loca is such that it allows her to change his perspective on a childhood incident in which he and a friend mutually masturbate in front of each other until his friend finishes first and ejaculates onto his leg and angers him. Carlos even partakes in a symbolic gesture of entering a queer space when he joins La Loca in visiting the house of Rana, La Loca's self-described transvestite mother who took her and helped her when she had nothing left and

was homeless. Carlos' presence in a queer space where he acknowledges "era extraño, pero en esa guarida de maricones se sentía bien, como si en alguna vida anterior hubiera conocido a la Rana" (148) is an important moment of reconciliation, acceptance and possibility for a future where queer men who do not identify as heterosexual are not marginalized or pathologized for the way they choose to express their queer masculinity. Carlos is a symbol of the future, both open to queer representations of masculinity and not inclined to impose a hegemonic masculinity on his fellow citizens.

Concluding Thoughts

These queered versions of masculinity seek to change dominant forms of masculinity and challenge the stability of the categories of gender and sexuality. The different representations of queered masculinity collected together in this chapter show a common thread of a political nature in which the body becomes a site of challenging and destabilizing notions of masculinity and what it means to be a queer man while also still showing interest in recognizing one's sense of being a biological male. Unlike their counterparts in the previous chapter concerning gay masculinity who view themselves as trying to reconcile their gay lifestyle and hegemonic masculinity demands that seek to take away their claim to it, men who are queer are not trying to reconcile anything but rather challenge the paradigm of conventional hegemonic masculinity altogether. This challenge directed at strict definitions of what it means to be men is meant to destabilize hegemonic masculinity's claim to power and propose new possibilities for men to enact their own forms of masculinity. They are also not the only representations of queer masculinity in the literary cultural production of Argentina and Chile. Matthew Edwards' discussion of the queer consumption of Naty Menstrual in his book *Queer Argentina* (2017) provides an excellent overview of another well-known figure of the LGBTQ+ community in

Buenos Aires. He states that Menstrual "is not looking for power, despite what her popularity on social media may suggest. Rather, the community Menstrual builds is minority-oriented" (135). Menstrual is focused on building a stronger, more visible LGBTQ+ community that is welcoming of a diverse array of voices and expressions of gender and sexuality. Susy Shock is another popular figure public figure in the queer/trans community and has published collections of poems like *Revuelo sur* in 2007 and *Hojarascas* in 2017 that call for urgent action from members of the queer community to continue fighting for political recognition, representation and protection of their bodies and communities and not become complacent that some legal changes have resolved all of their problems. Fernando Noy is yet another queer voice that spent time abroad in Brazil during the dictatorship but has since returned and continues to work in various fields of cultural production publishing collections of short stories like *Sofoco* in 2014 and *Historias del under* in 2015 as well as helping produce and write theater works and collections of poetry. In Chile, works by LGBTQ+ activists like Victor Hugo Robles, Rodrigo Muñoz Opazo, Juan Pablo Sutherland and Jorge Marchant Lazcano also represent queer forms of literature that challenge conventional norms of gender and sexuality.

Queered masculinity comes in various forms and the studies on queer masculinities within academia thus far focus on straight, heterosexual men rejecting hegemonic notions of masculinity as well as queer men who enact their own forms of masculinity. The general thread of continuity that runs through each queer representation of masculinity is the broadening of the definition of how men can represent themselves to others as men without feeling obliged to participate in hegemonic demands of surveillance of other men, tactics of dominating other men to show strength and power or the need to engage in reproduction to prove one's worth as a man. It also brings this queered man visibility in a positive manner by having these voices challenging

the derogatory aspects against the queer community. The phobias challenged by Mhoris eMm in his satire of a mythical person whose self-hatred based on their own sexual orientation by use of the heterosexual male body placed in a position of weakness and ineffectualness challenges the notion that to be straight is always desirable and preferred in Argentine society. Lemebel's La Loca renews the problematic figure of the transvestite in Latin America who was made in famous in Chile with Jose Donoso's La Manuela in *El lugar sin límites* and continues to stir problems. La Loca works with other men and uses her own queer masculinity to take part in a revolutionary act to assassinate Pinochet and overthrow the fascist government that uses the power of the State to enforce norms of patriarchal masculinity that seek to repress figures like La Loca because of the way she challenges their claim to masculinity. The queering of masculinity is only starting to take shape in both Chile and Argentina and promises to see more forward progress as laws that guarantee rights and protections for LGBTQ+ citizens to shake and bring forth changes to not only the legal but cultural landscape.

CHAPTER 5

GAY FATHERS IN LITERATURE

Safeguarding the family from the influences of the LGBTQ+ community is strong due to the understanding of how it can be an agent of social change in cultures all around the world. In an article from December 2003 in the Argentinian newspaper *La nación*, Carolina Arenes sums up her account about families as such: "El modelo tradicional de familia se desdibujó de manera notable en las últimas décadas a la par que la sociedad transformaba sus funciones clásicas. El incremento de las familias monoparentales o ensambladas, la legalización de las uniones gay, son sólo el síntoma de una nueva cultura afectiva" (Arenes, *La nación*). *La nación* also reported on March 27, 2018 of an attack on a same sex couple (two men) out for breakfast with their adopted daughter by a couple claiming the world needed to eradicate people like the gay couple raising a small child. Sylvia Chant, studying gender across a broad spectrum of social aspects of daily life in *Gender in Latin America* (2003), states that families hold an influential role in the formation of social policy and due to "the dissolution of the 'traditional' family in various parts of the South" (166), the possibility of what a family can be is changing. Both Chant and Arenes confirm the power of social change the family unit can enact on society and echo the ideas that Dore cited as a lack of recognition that in reality, most families in Latin America do not actually fall into the category of patriarchal led houses. Ricardo Cicerchia also notes the power of the family to enact social change in his chapter "The Charm of Family Patterns: Historical and Contemporary Change in Latin America" from the reader *Gender Politics in Latin America* (1997). He states that the "discussion lacks engagement with the evidence that family forms as

social organization contribute to social change" (118). The arguments from more conservative based politicians and their supporters to defend what they have labeled the traditional family recognizes the power the family unit can yield on social changes on society which is why they work so hard to deny rights and protections to those they see as antithetical to their world view (Diez 2016). This family power towards social change is still playing out in both Chile and Argentina as same sex marriage laws and adoption rights are debated and recognized under the law in some form in each country. In Argentina, full adoption rights have been granted and codified in the law for same sex couples, but the reality is a bit more complicated in Chile. As of 2018, Chile's Congress is still debating a bill that would recognize adoption by same sex couples that are married. Also, adoption in Chile in regard to same sex couples only recognizes the right of one person within the union to adopt a child and same sex couples together cannot both become the legal guardian of a child.[16] Children who are adopted by a gay/lesbian parent generally will not have a difficult time having their custody transferred to their parent's partner in the case of death of their parent, but it is not an automatic guarantee and must go through a State controlled apparatus before custody of the child is finalized. The novel from Chile, *La razon de los amantes* (2007) was written by Pablo Simonetti, and the other from Argentina, *Vos porque no tenés hijos* (2011) by Osvaldo Bazán. Both novels develop the complicated problems the gay father figure encounters when navigating how the question of gay/queer men challenge the expectations of who can be a father by engaging in parenting without a mother figure and the structure of the family.

Pablo Simonetti, Chilean writer, activist and former engineer, is one of the few gay writers from the Southern Cone region to represent the struggles of a gay father in the Latin American context albeit in quite a negative and tragic manner reminiscent of Dr. Flórez in *Los*

[16] MOVILH keeps an up-to-date status on adoption rights for members of the LGBTQ+ community on its website.

invertidos. His most famous work is the short story "Santa Lucía" for which he won a prize in *Paula* magazine in 1997. The story tells of a secretly gay husband who is caught by his wife one evening after returning from Santa Lucía Hill, a notorious spot in Santiago for gay meet ups and discreet sexual encounters between men. While this work is seminal to Chilean gay letters and was included in Juan Pablo Sutherland's collection *A corazón abierto: Geografía literaria de la homosexualidad in Chile* (2001), it is in his novel he published a decade later, *La razón de los amantes*, that he develops a full-length novel of a man who is both a father and finding himself falling in love with another man and wanting to explore his same sex desires. Simonetti has a penchant for representing well-to-do Chileans and overall, his representations of gay Chileans tend to want to imitate heteronormative cultural norms as noted by critic Carl Fischer in *Queering the Chilean Way* (2016). He states that Simonetti has a particular view of the manner in which a gay Chilean should always be "projecting a conventional masculine, homonormative image" (193). Fischer's critique of Simonetti's tendency to reflect an upper-class point of view where gay men can move with more freedom provided by their wealth and social status shows the tension gay men face in moving away from dominant images of what is expected of men. They are afforded this freedom as long as they do not cross certain boundaries and keep certain aspects of their gay lifestyle from public view, thus demonstrating the importance of the intersection of social class and sexual orientation has in patriarchal based cultures such as Chile. This image is also part of the homonormative image that he portrays of gay men who do not disidentify with aspects of dominant heteronormative culture as José Esteban Muñoz discusses in his work *Disidentifications* (1999) to break with certain cultural expectations of men who are fathers. In the case of his novel in question here, the need to want to belong and want to explore one's same sex desires leads Manuel to a tragic end and suggests that the real hero of the novel is

in fact Manuel's lover who does not demonstrate any sort of desire to want to be a father and challenge societal expectations of who can be a father.

La razón de los amantes recounts the life of Manuel and Laura, a married couple with a young daughter, Martina. Manuel is a banker that meets and has an affair with Diego Lira, an influential former attorney turned publisher of an online newspaper and well-known socialite in Santiago. Their affair becomes more intense as the plot revolves around the national election of 2000 in which Ricardo Lagos wins the presidency and uses the occasion to present an anti-Pinochet perspective and the negative consequences his regime held towards non-heteronormative sexualities. The relationship of Manuel and Laura has allegorical undertones as she is more conservative and defensive of Pinochet era viewpoints while he is more liberal and openly despises the era of Pinochet and what it means to the nation's history. These differences are highlighted in a personal way with the election of 2000 and offers the characters chances to make critiques of Chile's sordid past. It is the night of election where the promise of a more open, inclusive national project becomes clear as Diego and Manuel celebrate together and touch each other affectionately in public. It is in this key moment that they are able to rise from their invisibility and make a public display of affection. They are able to attain a positive sense of visibility as "thresholds between different social forces" (Brighenti 4) come together in their act of public affection in a country known for its socially conservative attitudes. Their personal relationship is always clouded by their business one in which Manuel works for the bank that Diego is soliciting funds from as his online newspaper is starting to fail. Manuel is eventually caught authorizing loans for Diego and fired for his decisions and chastised by his boss not only for his bad business dealings he tried to pull off in secret but also for his brazen and openly homosexual activity that has been made public. His boss symbolizes the visibility regime with

power and authority in Chile, the heteronormative society, and reminds Manuel his homosexual desires should remain invisible to the public. A short time after the election, Diego and Manuel fight about their relationship and Diego reveals that he has had sex with Laura too when she tried to pursue him. Diego also informs Manuel that he is not interested in pursuing their relationship any further and wants to break it off. Manuel is heartbroken as he had fallen in love with Diego, or at least the idea of what Diego represented, and his feelings of betrayal at knowing Diego does not care for him as much and had an affair with Laura pushes him to the point of committing suicide. The second to last chapter reveals the dramatic end as Manuel is denied access to his daughter and the realization that he has lost his family life, professional life and the promise of a future with his male lover pushes him to throw himself off of the balcony of his home.

One of Argentina's more famous openly gay writers, Osvaldo Bazán has published literary works with his first novel *Y un día Nico se fue* (2000) that made its mark on queer Argentine letters and tells of the romantic affair between Osvaldo and Nico in addition to his collection *Historia de la homosexualidad en la Argentina* (2004) referenced in Chapter 2. In a more recent novel, *Vos porque no tenés hijos* (2011) published shortly after adoption rights were granted to same sex couples, he examines the roles of gay men and fathers in Argentina. The novel's perspective on gay men as fathers is both distinct from that of Manuel in *La razón de los amantes* and yet similar as it follows the life of Alejandro Marino, a forty-year-old telemarketer, and his ill-fated love affair with Sebastián. Unlike Manuel, Alejandro is openly gay and confident of his sexual orientation but his lover, Sebastián, has a wife and daughter in addition to his relationship with Alejandro. By the novel's end, Alejandro finds himself in the hospital facing the tragic circumstances that will leave him to have to become a father figure to his nephew after everyone else in his family is killed in a bad car accident. The story is told between

present time events with his lover Sebastián and his memories of the past growing up in a home where his mother had rejected him, his father and his new family had rejected him, and he finds himself often wondering how his life came to be the way it did. It is during his trips with Sebastián that he relives his youth when he was outed as gay to his family and outright told by his divorced parents that neither wanted him living with them and that he had been a nuisance since the day he was born. Bazán's book not only provides a chance to get an in-depth view of Alejandro's life but also provides the reader with a perspective of the gay lover to a married man with a heteronormative family. Alejandro is then placed in the position of being the only family member left to become a father figure to his nephew Ezequiel when a car accident claims the rest of his family after his step-brother wrecked the car upon hearing that his wife was pregnant with another man's baby. Bazán develops the tension gay men face when confronted with fatherhood and their same sex desires and yet he does not show any development of Alejandro as a father figure beyond leaving that next step in his life at his doorstep before ending the novel.

In his novel Bazán weaves together a critique challenging the structure of the traditional family that starts from the first words of the novel and works to start a process of redefining the family. In other words, he is challenging the visibility of gay members of families. His main character Alejandro, a gay man, represents this challenge to the invisibility of gay family members as they are generally shown to be useless to the society because of their lack of engaging in acts of procreation. Alejandro states "odio a los nenes, como toda persona normal. No los entiendo." (1) His use of the verb *odiar* (to hate) instead of *no me gustan* (I don't like) shows a strong resentment towards the crux of a traditional family, that of reproduction and child rearing. The narrator's use of the present tense draws the reader into the intensity of his feelings against the traditional family. This action is not something that happened or has passed, but it is

still ever-present, and the reader is meant to feel the weight of this oppressive societal expectation as it weighs down the main character. It also reflects the state of affairs within the LGBTQ+ community in which the reaction is mixed towards children with some interested in participating in the raising of children and others wanting nothing to do with it as a way of breaking from the traditional family is seen by many as part of a queer identity. Bazán interestingly cuts off the novel at this point and leaves the reader wondering whether Alejandro will become a legal guardian to his step-nephew, a clarification he offers several times to doctors at the hospital, or whether he will leave him to the custody of the state. I argue there are clues that insinuate Alejandro will become a father figure, but the reader is not privy to how that plays out in the life of Alejandro. Are the details of him actually being a father too boring for literary representation? Or could it show just how underdeveloped the idea of how gay men as father figures is in a country where as of the publishing of the novel, adoption rights for openly gay men were only months old? In any case, the issues these men face are vastly understudied and the representations in these novels also show issues of how they see they need to identify and publicly perform their identities at the heart of the problem.

A predominant issue in both novels with the men who are both fathers and struggle with admitting openly their own same sex desires shows a fear of engaging in the process of disidentification as developed by José Esteban Muñoz in *Disidentifications* (1999). He describes disidentification as such: “disidentification is about recycling and rethinking encoded meaning. The process of disidentification scrambles and reconstructs the encoded message of a cultural text in a fashion that both exposes the encoded message's universalizing and exclusionary machinations and recircuits its workings to account for, include, and empower minority identities and identifications” (31). Muñoz further elaborates that a result of disidentification “would

always foreground that lost object of identification" (30). In other words, the process of disidentification allows subjects to disregard elements of the dominant culture that are at odds with their queer identity and can bridge gaps between dominant culture and marginalized subjectivities. Before continuing on, it must be acknowledged that Muñoz's ideas of disidentification were originally based on queers of color who are not only breaking with dominant ideologies not only along socio-economic lines and sexuality lines but also with the issue of race. The issue of race is not part of the disidentification process for the men in these books as their race is not exclusively mentioned because it is assumed that they are part of the dominant white culture that forms the dominant culture in both Chile and Argentina. The lack of discussion on race within the LGBTQ+ community of the Southern Cone overall is quite lacking in current literary cultural production of the region in general but that does not mean the basic ideas of purposefully disidentifying with the dominant culture is not relevant to my analysis here.

Through a close reading of both novels, I argue that at crucial points in the stories, both characters Sebastián and Manuel engage in actions that prevent themselves from engaging in the process of disidentification so as to not be seen as separating themselves from the dominant identity associated with patriarchal masculinity. Their action keeps them both grounded in the idea that their role as father to children overrides any other role they can have and that those other roles that may force them to disidentify with cultural norms of sexual identification and values associated with the ideal of men who are fathers. For Alejandro, he is already engaging in disidentifying from the norms of society with his open identification as a gay man in a "minoritarian counterpublic spheres" (5). Alejandro is so committed to disidentifying that by the end of the novel when he is the only family member left for Ezequiel, the idea of becoming a father figure pushes him to contemplating ways he might kill the young child to both put him out

of his own misery and that of Alejandro instead of taking on the role of a father figure. The inability to bridge the gap between cultural norms and expectations and a gay identity coupled with being a father demonstrates the power of the father figure and how closely it is tied to patriarchal ideals. The difficulty that Alejandro has overcome that for Sebastián and Manuel is much harder in disidentifying with the norm of men as fathers is the same process that keeps Alejandro from becoming a gay father figure in his own life and proposes just how challenging of a role that of the gay father is in Argentine and Chilean societies.

The expectations of what being a father figure mean and how their relation to the social category of men is tied to patriarchal demands and expectations can be turned on its head when represented from an LGBTQ+ centered perspective. Beatriz Preciado's (who has since transitioned to and lives as Paul Preciado) work *Testo Junkie* (2013) elaborates on how the rise and focus on heterosexuality transformed Western countries over the past few centuries and how the categories of man and woman are technologies used to control people. He states that "the certainty of being a man or a woman is a somato-political biofiction produced by a collection of body technologies, pharmacologic and audiovisual techniques that determine and define the scope of our somatic potentialities and function like prosthesis of subjectification" (117). One way this technology Preciado alludes to controls people is the creation of family roles and the manner in which a set of behaviors and expectations that constructs one's masculinity includes taking on the role of father. The debate of what constitutes a family unit is under investigation by the challenges posed in these novels by the gay characters and what their role is in a family. In her chapter "The Holy Family: Imagined Households in Latin American History", Elizabeth Dore states that the traditional family has been defined as such "first, male headed households have been universal and transhistorical; second, the patriarchal family is the centerpiece of social

stability" (101). These two statements reflect the importance of the image of men to the family unit in Latin America. First, that it must have a male in charge of it because history dictates it has always been so and that by having a man in charge, social stability is able to be attained. This societal expectation framed as being transhistorical is used to socialize men into becoming father figures under patriarchal ideals which do not look favorably on gay men as able to participate. This image of the patriarchal family has been challenged by anthropologists and historians that have "documented the patterns of domestic life that have emerged under particular social conditions, showing how such arrangements have been shaped by economic pressures and opportunities, by social constraints, and by cultural preferences" (Lewin 16). By becoming a father, a man transforms into a leader and protector of a household and this act gives meaning, purpose and power to men in many cultures throughout the world. In a sociological study of men in Santiago de Chile, José Olavarría's found that for many young boys there are expectations that they will grow up to "trabajar, ganar dinero, ser padre, establecer una vida sexual" (23). In another publication of Olavarría, a chapter from *Changing Men and Masculinities*, he states that "masculine identities have been reproduced in men's own nuclear families by reference to a hegemonic masculinity that encourages a patriarchal type of fathering" (345). The cultural expectation alluded to here is that men need the family and a father figure in order to learn how to be a man and having one or a connection to one is what makes one a man. These findings by Olavarría based on his studies of working-class men in Santiago de Chile show the existence of expectations placed on men and the relationship of men to patriarchal demands that they be a father figure who leads a household forward and complying with and benefitting from a hegemonic form of masculinity.

Questioning what can constitute a family unit and who can be at the head of this family

unit challenges the social fabric that many traditional and more conservative voices advocate for as a key component of social stability. A key aspect to family formation is that "creating a family signals adulthood, responsibility, and community stature; it entitles parents to make social and material claims, to achieve a kind of cultural recognition" (Lewin 48). Men in charge of the family is representative of their role as being in charge and having access to positions of power in society as well. For Latin American cultures and societies, this patriarchal role is a colonial relic leftover from the brutal colonization period of the Spanish and Portuguese in Latin America that brought these values based on patriarchal ideas to Latin America. Dore argues that the patriarchal family of Latin America is in fact more myth than fact when actual census studies have been carried out. She states of Latin American cultures "that society was patriarchal there is little doubt; that it rested on a universe of male family heads is a myth" (108). Despite the visibility regime of men being in charge of families, what remained invisible to society was the reality that more women headed families than previously thought. Manuel Castells describes the patriarchal basis of family relations as such: "patriarchalism is a founding structure of all contemporary societies. It is characterized by the institutionally enforced authority of males over females and children in the family unit. For this authority to be exercised, patriarchalism must permeate the entire organisation of society, from production to consumption to politics, law and culture" (134). This has led to a role for women deemed traditional as mother and resigns them to the space of the house and leaving the men as providers who "do not actively intervene in the order of the household but oversee its correct functioning and ensure anyone under 'their' roof is well looked after" (Subero 15). The reinforced patriarchal notion of the role of men as the strong parental figure that leads their family forward with a high standard of morals continues today although it is being challenged with studies trying to break the myth and change the expectation

that men should be thought of as central to families. In spite of this push for societal focus on the patriarchal family, Chant reports finding pushback against the traditional family in places like Chile where one men's group in Chile reported that they felt "the traditional family reproduces male violence and authoritarianism, and is also responsible for the 'emotional castration' of male children" (167). This harsh yet sobering take on the realities of the traditional family also confirms an aspect of masculinity that most men have to deal with while also taking on their father role, the issue of enacting violence and dealing with violence as part of one's journey towards becoming recognized socially as a man.

The father figure also serves as an embodiment and public acknowledgment of a man's heterosexuality, or in other words his status as complying with social demands. Discourses and narratives surrounding the family and gay lifestyle have often worked to frame them as mutually exclusive endeavours (Newton 1993). Literary production in Latin America has been replete of important father figures like that of Artemio Cruz in *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* (1962) by Carlos Fuentes to the patriarchal lineage in *Cien años de soledad* (1967) by Gabriel García-Márquez that traces the Buendía family via José Arcadio Buendía. More often than not, the father figures, like the ones mentioned here, that are most famous have an understood heterosexual identity that is so ingrained as normal that it's hardly questioned as otherwise. The father figure in many Latin American literary works is often found as a symbolic figure that represents the nation, strength or other social problems and critiques of nations can many times be seen within critiques of father figures. In cases like Artemio Cruz, a critique against his overbearing patriarchal figure is a focus in the novel but it still acknowledges his place in a position of power and influence over the country and his family. Despite the use of the father as a symbol for the nation's ills and problems, as with Artemio Cruz and some of the José Arcadios,

it is still a more common choice of representation of these types of men rather than those that are childless, those considered sexually deviant or women. Not being able to father children is often represented as a crisis of men's own masculinity when confronted with the inability to impregnate a woman. To not possess the ability to reproduce means one lacks an essence within the substance that potent and fertile possesses manhood, and this is tightly bound to a man's ability to proudly display his heterosexuality. This ability to show one's virility is not confined to the Latin American context but is found all around the world. As recently as 2018, there are still representations of this crisis of masculinity on television shows produced in the United States and aired in countries around the world. ABC network released a new series called *The Good Doctor* in which one of the chief surgeons finds out the reason he and his wife can't have children is because his active sperm count is too low. He spends the episode distressed, at times lashing out at others and his wife, due to his own self perceived lack of masculinity and inability to comply with societal expectations of men to be fathers and capable of reproducing offspring.

The ability to father children is not only something that men proudly make visible to the world. It is an aspect of their lives that is closely monitored by the rest of society at large to ensure there are no deviations from the norm. Subero states that "fatherhood vindicates a man and makes him a respected figure in society; by becoming a father he acquires a public identity that severs all ties with his previous immature life" (16). This public visibility of fatherhood though comes with caveats for men who openly identity as gay or queer as it may cause other members of society to express concerns for the well-being of a child under such guidance. Ellen Lewin notes the importance of this visibility of gay parents stating "as the gay and lesbian rights movement began to make all aspects of our lives more public, other forms of family formation became visible. Gay and lesbian parenting became more visible during these years as well" (4)

and is becoming more visible each day. Gay Chilean writer Rodrigo Muñoz Opazo captures this vigilance from society at large in his first openly gay novel *La trilogía de las fiestas* (2007) in a final scene of the novel when three gay university friends reconnect years after graduating. They learn that one of them, Gabriel, has become a legal guardian/father figure to his niece. Despite being granted legal custody by the State, he confesses to his friends that there is a lot of difficulty in being gay and a father figure in Chile. He confesses "no es facíl, Seba. Lucho día a día por su custodia, pues la justicia cree que, por ser gay, no debería estar a su cargo. En cualquier momento veo aparecer a una asistente que viene a quitarme la nena" (231). This scene is set in Santiago de Chile circa 2005 and demonstrates a continued fear and paranoia of being found out as gay with the added pressure of being a father figure and legal guardian to a child. It also illustrates the complicated nature of inhabiting roles as a man in which one is revered and the other has historically been labeled as societal sexual deviants because of the association of a sexuality outside of the heteronormative boundaries.

For these gay men, having their gay identity and their role as a father figure become visible is problematic for their lives but each have different takes on it. Alejandro's situation is similar to that of Gabriel from *La trilogía de las fiestas* in which a single gay man finds themselves in a situation where they need to become the caretaker of a child who is related to them. The focus by society as a whole on the well-being of the child captures what Butler describes as "the figure of the child of nonheterosexual parents becomes a cathected site for anxieties about cultural purity and cultural transmission" (112). The figure of the father is the site deemed the appropriate person to pass on cultural lessons or approve of these lessons doled out by others but when his sexual orientation carries a connotation of deviance or abnormality, his ability to be a father figure is put into doubt. Their bodies become a site where the anxieties of a

society focus and pile up until it crushes the ability of these men to perform even the most basic of parental tasks as Gabriel's character laments to his friends. In many ways, men like the character of Gabriel can pass as single fathers and protect themselves and their children from legal battles that could result in the removal of the child from his custody, but this action comes with the cost of denying his own sexual identity because of a manufactured concern for the well-being of the child. The battle for legal rights and protections under the law in both Chile and Argentina reflects these anxieties as recognitions have been slow coming for many of its LGBTQ+ citizens and still remains a fight for many of them. This continuation of progress is not just in the legal realm but the social one too as laws do not guarantee social mores and attitudes will change or have changed because of a newly enacted law. In fact, the enactment of such a law can often lead to misinterpretations from opposition standpoints who view the lawful protection as a special right and privilege they themselves are not afforded. This is obviously not true, but it speaks to a larger issue that oppositional positions of LGBTQ+ rights and protections, especially those involving the nuclear family, hold and reflects the power of the family unit to spread change throughout their respective societies.

The complicated system of legal recognition between same sex couples that are still seen as outside of the bounds of traditional marriage and family demonstrates that the State still sees the need for strict rules placed on the family in order to maintain control over a group that is still seen as marginal despite their legal gains of recognition. This fight in the legal realm is a demonstration of how different visibility regimes are coming into contact in a contentious manner as one social group, those of the LGBTQ+ community, are fighting for recognition and visibility against the cultural hegemon that wishes to keep them silenced and invisible in the eyes of the law. By legal definition, this still creates a difficulty for two men to both claim any sort of

legal recognition under Chilean law as fathers to a child even though they are both legally tied to each other through a civil union. Full access to marriage recognition is still pending a Congressional vote from government run by re-elected President Michelle Bachelet. In Argentina, the 2010 passage of the marriage equality law granted same-sex couples the right to marry and to adopt children together as a whole family unit. The progress of Argentina's law did not come without a fight as Edwards explains that it took "more than eight years of debates, petitions, controversy, and marches" (1) before the Senators of the Argentine Congress were able to finally have a meaningful discussion that led to the passage of the law that enabled same-sex couples to marry and start families of their own, thus guiding the traditional familial landscape towards a queer turn. The legal recognition of the rights of Argentina's queer citizens has not meant that the social and cultural attitudes towards them has changed for everyone and indeed, there are still rampant problems of discrimination and threats against their lives as LGBTQ+ activists and artists in Buenos Aires make clear. Another prominent voice in the LGBTQ+ community, Susy Shock, is a trans woman who has raised a daughter from the early 1990's through challenging social times for the LGBTQ+ community and is a living example of this queer turn of the traditional nuclear family. She performs regularly in Buenos Aires' famous LGBTQ+ cultural center Casa Brandon in the Villa Crespo neighborhood that is close to the city's famous gay nightclub Sitges and publishing houses/booksellers that are supportive of LGBTQ+ writers. During one such performance in July 2017, as patrons filled in available seating with their food and drinks, a screen greeted the audience with a photo of LGBTQ+ activists holding a sign that paid homage to the memories of slain members of the LGBTQ+ community in Rio de la Plata area. It read "En memoria nuestras sin nombres" and listed the names of fallen members, demonstrating clearly the continued problem of a gray space in which

the LGBTQ+ occupies of being visible but only to be watched and invisible in terms of being recognized as a legitimate social group deserving rights and legal protections. During her performance, Shock continued her call to LGBTQ+ activism by calling on audience members to resist and fight the ever-present threat of a lack of enforcement of legal protections by the government.

As the research on nontraditional families continues to grow and involve members of society that fall outside of the conventions of heteronormativity so too does the visibility of LGBTQ+ parents and the issues they face because of their non-normative lifestyle and sexual orientation. This added attention in recent years has shown how widespread the concept of queering the family has become in countries across the globe. In *Queering Families* (2017), Carla Pfeffer describes the nuclear family that is called a traditional family as more of an ideal than a reality as alternative family types littered the landscape of the family (xxv). Gay fathers in particular "destabilize several key assumptions about family, such as the notion that all families that all families are biologically related" (Goldberg 11). Kinship is often a point of contention with essentialist perspectives often arguing for the importance of blood relations whereas social constructionists will argue for the value of strong connections amongst people as providing a sense of kinship. The legal struggles of the LGBTQ+ community to gain the ability to adopt children and become legal guardians is often compared to what a traditional family structure that is argued to be transhistorical is. In many cultures or societies, the ability to replicate this idealized family unit has become more complicated, confirming the assertions of Dore that the patriarchal family is more myth than reality. Mary Bernstein and Renate Reimann define the queered family in their study *Queer Families Queer Politics: Challenging Culture and the State* (2001) as "the diverse family structures formed by those with nonnormative gender behaviors or

sexual orientation. The term 'family' refers to groups of individuals who define each other as family and share a strong emotional and/or financial commitment to each other, whether or not they cohabit, are related by blood, law, or adoption, have children or are recognized by the law" (3). They further argue of the importance of visibility with the queer family stating that "'queer' families, then, forces issues of visibility and invisibility in distinctive ways" (6). These distinctions are often along racial and socioeconomic lines as certain members of society seem to provoke more discomfort with their open queerness as opposed to the bourgeoise white figure who may cause some consternation but not provoke a moment of hysteria as a person of color may making their queerness visible.

Bernstein and Reimann's definition of the queer family represents the very project of what queering conventional institutions like sexuality, gender and now the family seeks to attain, turning them on their heads and shaking the foundations of their existence as discussed in the chapter on queered masculinity. In the Southern Cone, the predominant form of queered families has seldom appeared in literary production. The novels being analyzed in this chapter offer multiple viewpoints on gay men as father figures or who become father figures and how they handle this double role in a society they feel is watching their every move. The two novels have been selected because of how they both reify and challenge the findings of studies performed on how gay men act as father figures and the ways they face the conventional nuclear family structure. This structure was implanted with the arrival of Spanish invaders and imitates the idea "that culture itself requires a man and a woman produce a child, and that the child have this dual point of reference for its own initiation into the symbolic order, where the symbolic order consists of a set of rules that order and support our sense of reality and cultural intelligibility" (Butler 118). A father who does not uphold patriarchal norms of heterosexuality conquering

women and producing children is outside the bounds of this symbolic order and rules, thus diminishing his cultural intelligibility. It is the challenge towards this order and how cultural intelligibility plays out in the two novels chosen here that will offer some insight into the queer family that incorporates members of the LGBTQ+ community in the context of the Latin American family of Chile and Argentina.

Many of the obstacles and choices made by the gay men who are fathers in these novels represent the intersection of same sex desires with the heteronormative system by being married to women and keeping their same sex desires invisible. These men emulate the findings in studies carried out and developed from a theoretical standpoint about gay fathers as described in Brian Miller's article "Life-Styles of Gay Husbands and Fathers" that appears in the *Men's Lives* (2004) reader edited by Michael Kimmel and Michael Messner. Miller discusses several strategies that gay men use within a conventional heteronormative family while simultaneously fulfilling their desires for same-sex sexual interactions. In other words, these men live at the threshold where the visibility/invisibility of their gay identity clashes with societal expectations of father figures. The first he mentions is covert behavior in which "gay husbands and fathers tend to regard their homosexual feelings as nothing more than genital urges" (476) and claims that in regard to the label gay or homosexual, these men "dislike a label that calls attention to behaviors they would prefer to forget" (476). These men seek to keep their own desires invisible because of the negative visibility regime hegemonic norms have created to describe gay men. This dislike of labels is a manifestation as well of these men trying to not disidentify with the dominant patriarchal masculinity and cut themselves off from the power they still have access to via their roles as heterosexual fathers in a society that reveres such men. Yet their desires are not ones that these men can just forget as they report having elaborate ways of seeking out men to

have sexual relations with them.

The importance of labels is wrapped in a core issue of the LGBTQ+ movement itself: visibility and the continued need to make their community members feel like they do not have to hide from fear of shame or violence against them because of their sexual orientation. The threshold these men find themselves at is due to "the management of visibilities lies at the core of all forms of social control, whether formal or informal. More precisely, as we will come to see, control consists of a purposeful and contextual asymmetrisation and hierarchisation of visibilities" (Brighenti 148). By seeing themselves as moving down the hierarchy of these visibilities, gay men are more likely to hide themselves instead of being open about their identity. In regard to the men Miller spoke with, none would rate their marriage as "happy" but instead referred to their marital ties as a job with obligations rather than a fulfillment of pleasure and happiness. Other men who are more marginally involved confess to feeling regret for how much time their breadwinner role as man of the house takes away time from their children but they "are reluctant to leave their marriages, fearing permanent separation from their children" (479). Miller also explores cases in which gay men have come out and left their marriages but find they have challenges to confront in order to stay actively involved in the lives of their children and meet other gay men to whom they are attracted. Miller states "men who reach the Open Endorsement point often have fears that their father and ex-husband statuses could distance them from single gays" (481). Miller notes that there is a telling sign of what drives most men out of hiding their sexuality, even as father figures, and that is "falling in love with another man" (482). This is represented in Simonetti's book through the figure of Manuel but as is shown at the end of the novel, this can still result in tragic outcomes and replicate the tragic element of gay literature that Melo claims can be a common theme of 20th century gay literature in Argentina.

Overall, the men of these various categories who are covert, marginal or open about their homosexuality all have one thing in common, their desire to continue being a father and have a positive relationship with their children no matter how difficult this may prove. For the characters in the two novels, this proves to be an impossible task and starting with the narration style gives the reader a keen insight into how these challenges are made visible or kept hidden.

The difference in narration styles of both novels plays a role in the presentation of these gay men reconciling their same sex feelings towards other men and their relationship to fatherhood. *La razón de los amantes* is told from a third person perspective that employs a more objective viewpoint than the one employed in *Vos porque no tenés hijos*. This more omniscient point of view reveals all of the feelings and reactions of the various characters without drawing the reader into a more personalized account yet there are moments where it becomes apparent that the narrator is influencing the reader's perception of the action taking place. It creates a less melodramatic as it could sound from Manuel's perspective that would include his narration of his committing suicide. Instead, his suicide at the end comes across as a matter of fact reaction to the circumstances of losing his marriage, his new male lover and his job after his public declarations have made visible his break with dominant culture and forced him to be ostracized from it. Manuel acknowledges that being openly gay and a father will be too difficult to navigate himself, but rejoining the heteronormative culture is impossible leaving him with one choice, ending it all. It also provides the narrator with the opportunity to tell of a revealing encounter between Diego and Laura in which he admits to using Manuel to get money to finance his failing Internet newspaper and brings the novel back to a similar place it started when the business relationship was just starting. The opening chapters set the stage for the rest of the work as the narrator tells of Manuel and Laura preparing to go out for a night at the theater to rub elbows with Santiago's

upper class. Manuel's relationship with his daughter Martina is shown to be positive as she is described as running to "recibirlo con un gritito de júbilo" (12) as he arrives home from work. The family unit formed by Manuel, Laura and young Martina fits the picturesque mold of the patriarchal family. The placement of them in well-to-do social circles and Manuel's job as a banker shows they have access to wealthy socialites and money in the Chilean capital. This supports Fischer's critique that Simonetti primarily concerns himself with rich Chileans when it comes to issues of homosexuality and the way he attempts to normalize it through representations of people who inhabit higher social classes. This focusing on the upper class introduces the reader to Laura who is from a wealthy family that supported Pinochet and shown her attitude of support for the old days as the novel incorporates the 2000 election of Lagos. It is in the wealthy high culture space of the theater where Manuel and Diego meet in public after having had conversations in private about business dealings. Diego is surprised Manuel never mentioned he had a wife, a subtle move on his part because of the awakening of feelings he notices Diego provokes in him as he is "el primero en interesarle en años" (26). This suggests that his same sex attractions have always been there even if he has not engaged in performing that aspect of his identity. His potential to disidentify has been sitting below the surface for most of his life but he chooses to engage in performing the more dominant, patriarchal masculinity instead because it gives him access to power and wealth through his relationship with Laura, her family and his job as a banker.

Bazán on the other hand employs the first-person point of view for his main protagonist Alejandro to show a more personalized viewpoint of a young gay man growing up in a family with patriarchal values that clearly sees no capital-based value in him to Argentine society since they view his sexual orientation as a hindrance to his ability to be a good Argentine man and by

becoming a father. His father is a scientist and claims to know well “la naturaleza más que ninguna otra cosa” (66) and questions Alejandro about his same sex desires. He states “ahora me vengo a enterar que sos...no reproductivo. --Se quedó en silencio, entrecerró los ojos, pensó, siempre tan caricatura de sí mismo--. Es...interesante...¿tenés alguna idea de por qué la naturaleza te puso en el mundo si no es para reproducir?” (66). In his dialogue, the father connects reproduction and nature seamlessly as if any other thought to the contrary is impossible to imagine as Gabriel Giorgi explains is part of the ideas of extermination associated with homosexuality. In his book *Sueños de exterminio,* he says that “la homosexualidad ha sido tradicionalmente asociada con la extinción de linajes, con el final de las familias y las progenies, la crisis del orden reproductivo, tanto biológico como cultural” (16). This concern with lineage and reproduction for the sake of the nation reinforces the position of Alejandro’s father in his concern for the future of his family and indirectly, the nation. He takes a position of authority on the subject and because of his claim to patriarchal power in his own position as head of the household, he feels empowered to express his disapproval as to why a person would exist who isn't going to reproduce. His questioning Alejandro inspires anger and a response of “¡Andate a la puta madre que te re mil parió!” (67). The intimate explanation of emotions that lead to Alejandro’s outburst connects with the reader on a more personalized level than the narration of Manuel’s life.

Even though Alejandro is of interest to this chapter, it is his personal relationship with Sebastián, and Sebastián himself, that are equally pertinent too because it represents the involvement of a self-identified gay man and his interpretation of himself as openly gay and a man he is having a romantic affair with who is married and has a child but doesn’t admit openly he is gay. The reader is never privy to the actual wife and child of Sebastián, but he is very

forthcoming in how important they are to his life in spite of his romantic involvement with Alejandro. This importance is constantly recognized by him because they symbolize his worth as a man and his connection to the institutions Argentine society has deemed to be the most important, the family. The accomplishment of Bazán's novel is that it offers a multifaceted point of view of a gay man who is a father figure, Sebastián, satisfying his same sex desires coupled with Alejandro who is more confident of his gay identity and questions the value of a traditional family and what having children means for him as a gay man. It should be noted here that despite their differences in terms of explaining the world and the supernatural, science and religion find common ground when it comes to their outlooks on gender. They have different reasonings, but both are arguing for the validity of heterosexual relationships over others because of their reproductive capacity. When Sebastián claims to Alejandro "soy católico, apostólico, romano, eso lo sabés, pero además soy casado y tengo una hija" (163), Alejandro's critique of patriarchal institutions that complicate their lives can connect with the reader on a more personalized level. Sebastián claims he had to ignore everything to be with Alejandro and he believes this "ponía en contradicción su religión, su idea de la sociedad y su paternidad, todo para tener esa historia de amor conmigo. Evidentemente, la cabeza del muchacho era un paquete de pochoclos en un microondas. Y yo fui el encargado de girar la perilla hasta la temperatura máxima y ponerlo en funcionamiento" (175). For Sebastián, he sees a direct contradiction and tension in having same sex desires and being a father. Alejandro attacks Sebastián's lifestyle apart from their love affair and lays bare the perceived contradictory aspect of upholding the values of a patriarchal family that can oftentimes look to religious validation to reify its claim to power and legitimacy by men who have desires beyond the limits of patriarchal masculinity. The interesting aspect here is Sebastián is in the line of fire from both sides as Alejandro critiques him for his behavior and

hiding his same sex desires yet if he were to be more open about it, society at large would critique his dual role as a father and gay man. In the context of being a gay father "one becomes a father within a web of meanings in which gayness, family, love, sacrifice, belonging, and other attributes compete with each other for starring roles" (Lewin 73). As a father figure, he is caught between a cultural expectation that he must act and comply with the heterosexual demands as he has done in forming his own familial unit and wanting to explore his same sex desires with someone who is highly critical of religion and the idea of the traditional patriarchal family.

Manuel and Sebastián both share an interesting characteristic that Miller mentions in his study of gay fathers, a fear of labels that calls attention to things they'd rather forget about than acknowledge openly. This is a manifestation of the visibility regime present in Chile and Argentina that does not deal with gay fathers in a positive manner and has separated the two spheres from coexisting. Even within the LGBTQ+ community, there is a more positive connotation around lesbian mothers than gay fathers. In the case of both, labels would call attention to the socially unacceptable nature of their sexual orientation since they are both viewed as father figures and could the use of language that would label them as gay or queer would force them to disidentify with their patriarchal masculinity. Before Laura learns of the affair between Diego and Manuel and Manuel's new-found desire to explore his homosexual side, she uses disparaging words towards homosexuality to describe Diego. Laura's comments about Diego often allude to herself and people of her social class' opinion of finding out someone is sharing a secret that a decent person would not want to circulate about themselves, that he is a "maricon" (47). She makes the comment several times much to the dismay of Manuel who reacts with surprise, disdain and condemns her use of the term because of its derogatory meaning. Manuel objects to Laura labeling Diego as *maricón* because it means for him that if Laura is able

to label Diego, a man for which Manuel feels intimate romantic feelings towards and has become intimate with, it means he too can fall under this label. In the novel's early stages of their love affair, Manuel is still trapped in wanting to explore his feelings and not wanting to call attention to his relationship and lifestyle that go against social norms and expectations for Chileans, especially men of his social class and standing. Laura isn't the only character who speaks this way about Diego and treats him in this manner. Her sister Isabel is another person who shares with her and their mother about Diego's homosexual lifestyle. Despite the constant spreading of this news about Diego, Laura does defend him to some fellow high-class friends who spoke of how lowly they thought of him because of his homosexuality. Laura's use of the term and offering a public label to Diego's perceived deviance places him in what she perceives to be a lower rung of power where his deviance caused his inferiority. She admits to wanting to conquer him once she learns of the affair between him and Manuel and her use of degrading words towards his sexuality is an expression of her power game towards him. Her feelings are described as "una locura que la encandecía por dentro, un intento de subjugar a Diego a como diera lugar. Se sentía poderosa al conseguir que un homosexual claudicara ante ella" (270). Laura's desire for him to relinquish himself to her and her insistence of labeling him by using the denigrating words like *maricón* that try to make him a socially recognized disidentified second-class citizen attempts to subject him to her social power as both a heteronormative representative and upper-class citizen.

Manuel's fear of Laura and the public in general toward using the label *maricón* stems from the tension of associating himself with an identity he views as both attractive and shameful at the same time. He risks recognizing his active role in the process of disidentification which "can be understood as a way of shuffling back and forth between reception and production"

(Muñoz 25). His role as a married man and, more importantly, as a father shows an interstice between his inner desires and outward projection to his fellow citizens. He does not want to be publicly caught shuffling back and forth between his public life of a father and married men and secret life with a gay lover that may lead to his ostracizing from the dominant culture to which he belongs by way of his status as complying with the performance of a patriarchal family of power and wealth, working at a bank and being part of the control mechanism of the single most powerful source of capital available. His paranoia of what people in the street think gets to a point where he wonders if "al pasar lo mira con suspicacia, hábiles en distinguir su pasión por los hombres. Por un hombre. Ama a Diego Lira y no le importa que sea notorio" (253). He demonstrates the fear of visibility, for if they can distinguish his attraction to men by simply looking at his behaviors and body language, they can use that as indications of his homosexuality. Despite the narrator's statement that it doesn't matter to Manuel that the news be well-known, he still shows his suspicion that people might know this secret about him that marks him noted by the constant use of the subjunctive tense to suggest a hypothetical situation as opposed to a certainty. He is constantly standing with one foot in the heteronormative demands of him as a man and a father and the other in wanting to explore his gay identity and the gay culture of Santiago. The mark of his gayness is also captured and brought to life by the word *maricón* and the way Laura uses it to mark the body of a man she sees as inferior to her heteronormative standard. Manuel himself has a difficult time coming to terms with his sexual orientation and only partially marks himself with the identity of gay to his boss when he is fired for approving loans to Diego that the bank initially denied. During the meeting in which he is fired, his boss Esteban Aresti agrees to be discreet about Manuel's sexual dalliances with Diego. He assures Manuel that "no mencionaré el otro tema" (250) alluding to his affair with Diego but

never outright naming it. It's a topic so far outside the purview of heteronormativity, to which Aresti ascribes, that it is not worth mentioning or giving it recognition. Manuel responds sarcastically "aaah...que yo sea maricon" (251). Manuel's own fear of calling himself a derogatory word for a homosexual man, even at the end of the novel when his affair is in full bloom and he has lost his job and his marriage to be with his lover, is still present as he uses a verb tense to suggest his gayness can still be considered hypothetical instead of an outright certainty. After confronting this secret part of his life with his boss, Manuel is forced to deal with the possibility that his parents may know while talking to Laura on the phone. Again, he is indignant in his response to the threat that he may be outed as homosexual with Laura. She asks "¿Les digo que tienes a un hombre por amante y que te despidieron por prestarle dinero baja cuerda?" (290). Even though he acknowledges they will find out about his new lover, in his own mind "lo mortifica imaginar cómo reaccionarán. Primero la incredulidad, después la vergüenza" (290). Manuel's thoughts acknowledge the cultural reactions and expectations that go along with a person making public their same sex desires and the shame their deviance is expected to cause. This is compounded for Manuel because of his status as a father who by the defined nature of his role is to be a leader and upholder of hegemonic masculinity to which he has failed.

The whispers and rumors of the relationship between Diego and Manuel make their way to Laura and confirm her suspicions, but it is her reaction to Manuel that is problematic for fathers who find themselves acknowledging they have same sex desires. He is forced out of his home and is unable to see his daughter Martina again. His strong desire to want to maintain contact with Martina is described as "su primer instinto por la mañana es llamar a su casa. Quiere saber cómo está Martina" (288). He asks about a visit and is hostile towards Laura's plans that do not involve the three of them spending time together. His last words to Martina are "te quiero

mucho" (290) before Laura hangs the phone up on him and leaves him to his thoughts on Diego and his life. His connection with her is relegated to the space of a phone call where he cannot see or touch his daughter. Laura intercedes as a controlling authority of the social territorial space of the heteronormative world where Manuel is no longer accepted. The anxiety he feels over this is further compounded when a future together with his lover is scuppered once Diego sets the record straight that he is not interested in a long-term relationship with Manuel. Manuel thinks of him with more certainty than he's had with anything else that "ya verá él cómo se les arregla con sus remordimientos. Manuel no tiene dudas de cómo hará frente a los suyos" (291). In this statement, his certainty of how to act just before committing suicide contrasts sharply with how he approached every step with Diego showing constant uncertainty of whether he would be able to keep their affair hidden or if he should continue to see him. He repeatedly shows anxiety about them being seen in public together as on the night of Lagos' election victory when "Manuel aprovecha la aglomeración para tomarle la mano a Diego. Nadie se percata de lo que pasa de los hombros hacia abajo" (156). Due to the invisibilized nature of gay men as fathers, Manuel has no idea how she should comport himself. It's only the reassurance that the tightly packed crowd of bodies in the public space that creates a sense of privacy when Manuel's nerves calm down despite everyone in the street celebrating the victory of a candidate the narrator is painting as a more liberally focused leader. Yet the social reality of Chile is that two men publicly showing romantic affection to each other is still a sight that calls the attention of many to focus on it and perceive them as not belonging to the dominant culture. Laura confirms this aversion to calling attention to her family by placing a distance between Manuel and herself to prevent a public recognition of homosexuality staining her family's reputation. It's the recognition of this stain and the inability to maintain any sort of relationship with his daughter that pushes Manuel to end

his life. He is only certain of how to make it all stop once and for all, a permanent solution to leave his gay identity permanently invisible to the public world.

The character of Sebastián in Bazán's novel has a similar way of avoiding the outright naming of his gay relationship with Alejandro and an equally troubling reality that he is concerned he will face or else risk losing the connection he has with his daughter over what he labels "los deseos carnales" (223). He is successful in avoiding suicide to resolve his problems because he is able to invoke his religious beliefs that reflect the cultural norm to which he identifies. Whereas Simonetti avoids outright discussions of the influence of religion and the Church on reinforcing hegemonic ideas of patriarchal masculinity, Bazán tackles the problem head on with his critique of its influence on the LGBTQ+ community and the public's perceptions of it. Furthermore, within his critique, he shows how tightly bound up the idea of a traditional family consisting of a heterosexual married couple headed by a man who embodies patriarchal masculinity is to the image of the ideal Argentine family and the man at the head of it and the implications of being identified with it. We have already seen this represented in the questioning by Alejandro's own father as to what the point of his existence is if he is not going to reproduce. In one of the more forceful attacks on the religious influence, Alejandro and Sebastián find themselves face to face in the hospital directly following the chapters that show a mixture of memories of Alejandro's mother waiting on an answer about why he hit his step-brother Javier and a present-day argument with Javier's wife Gabriela about why he won't take their father into his own home to care for him. In the haze of memories and present-day demands, Sebastián calls Alejandro to inform him "no podemos vernos más" (202). Sebastián's words are clear about them not seeing each other but they are also ambiguous in that they fail to name the exact nature of their relationship. He is carefully ensuring his continued ability to

identify with dominant patriarchal culture. In other words, he is avoiding using explicit words to describe their relationship as gay and making it visible not only to himself but society as well.

Their conversation continues once Sebastián arrives at the hospital to visit with Alejandro. Alejandro had no time to react to the phone call from Sebastián as it is cut off and he quickly receives another phone call informing him of a deadly car crash that has claimed the lives of his entire family with the exception of his step-nephew Ezequiel. Sebastián's words reinforce his patriarchal based identity as a father when he admits to having desire to be around Alejandro but quickly changes his tone to one of guilt. "Fui débil, vos no tenés la culpa" (221) he tells Alejandro. Then he steps into the debate of whether same sex desires are a choice or not by telling Alejandro "vos elegiste esa vida, yo no. Yo elegí una familia, amo a mi esposa, a mi hija y no hay manera de engañar a Dios" (222). Sebastián demonstrates he is clearly open to invoking religious ideas to justify bettering his life by leaving behind a gay lover, yet he does not use the same explicit nature of describing the relationship he is leaving behind. He is combining two of the traits that Miller mentions by regarding his homosexual feelings as nothing more than some genital urge while not engaging in labeling it as such so he can keep his gay identity invisible. He is also echoing an idea that comes from religious influenced thought on the aspect of choice in regard to one's sexual orientation that Alejandro spends most of the book undermining with his open and candid confessions of learning to accept himself as he is, a gay man. Sebastián then continues to press his religious beliefs, backed by societal norms and the influence of the Church, to construct a path to safety from his same sex interactions. It is his family, which is ordained by God, that provides him a way back to safety. His defense of his values is an attack on what he calls a lack of values by Alejandro, stating "tengo valores, Ale, tengo valores. Yo no sé si podés entender lo que es eso" (223). He implies Alejandro is incapable of understanding

values because of his gay lifestyle. His words are deliberate and, I argue, intentional to not label himself as gay and risk breaking with the cultural norm of a man who is a father by arguing that he is a man of value and a man of value is not homosexual. Even though he has engaged in a romantic relationship with Alejandro, he intends to define himself as part of the societal norm while othering Alejandro into a category that threatens the stability of the heteronormative culture and its most important feature, the family.

The relationship between Alejandro and Sebastián symbolizes the complicated nature of finding a point of reconciliation for men to have visibility in regard to their same sex desires and their role as a father and how religion is folded into the dynamic to further complicate how men are able to self-identify. What the two men show through this novel is the complex reality that fathers encounter when as if they can't acknowledge and express their same sex desires because they fear they will destroy their families. In the case of Sebastián and Alejandro, one lives with fear and guilt and the other openly acknowledges and fulfills their homosexual desires and spends a majority of the novel critiquing the traditional family because of its limitations towards them as a gay man in a religious society. Alejandro has no problems with labels of gay or homosexual, using them himself freely to describe his relationship with Sebastián because for Alejandro it is more important to describe himself as a gay man and not a father. This makes it difficult for him to see himself as a father figure to Ezequiel when he has no one else left after the accident. As their argument about why Sebastián must stop seeing Alejandro unfolds in the hospital, the critique of religion and its backing of hegemonic masculinity that obliges men to be heterosexual father figures is reinforced as the cultural norm. Sebastián comes to the hospital both for support and to clarify his position. His diatribe of going against the societal norms and blaming their relationship for Alejandro's family's misfortune is represented in an absurd

manner. The outlandishness of his response intends to highlight the problematic nature of religious influence on ideas of human sexuality. Alejandro expresses his anger with God for waiting so long to punish him after hearing Sebastián chastise his sexuality. He states "si ahora me está castigando porque me gustan los hombres me parece que tardó cuarenta años antes de enojarse" (228). Sebastián's tone in his response is condescending and repeats the dogmatic lines of his religious beliefs. "No, Alejandro. No se enojó con vos por eso, se enojó con vos porque me estás llevando a destruir una familia" (228). Sebastián signals the blame lies in the influencing a man to act on his homosexual desires that can lead to the destruction of a heteronormative family. He places the family in a higher position of importance compared with homosexual encounters to alleviate his own feelings of guilt, but his actions still must be dealt with. By dint of Sebastián's romantic involvement with a man (in this case Alejandro), his reassurance that he will face destruction is symbolized by the terrible health conditions his daughter faces and the tragic accident suffered by Alejandro's family. The irony is that Alejandro does not have the same opinion and not because of his atheism but rather because he recognizes that the family unit that is so central to Argentine society has betrayed him and he has disidentified with it. This continued reinforcement of the independent nature of these two roles for men continues to complicate the possibility of a reconciliation where men can be both gay and a father.

Sebastián's claims that his romantic involvement with Alejandro led to his child being sick and caused the car accident that claimed the lives of Alejandro's family, thus further entwining the nature of the socially accepted patriarchal family and religion. He exaggerates his daughter's illness, saying "tuvimos que internarla de urgencia" (222) and that it was "un virus extraño, dijo la pediatra, una cosa rarísima que estadísticamente es uno en un millón" (222). To him, this sickness "era la respuesta de Dios a lo que yo terminaba de hacer con vos. Dios pega

donde más duele. Dios es justo y por eso mismo es terrible" (222-23). He then references the biblical passages that most often is associated with homosexuality, that of Sodom and Gomorrah, and describes himself as one of the people who committed the sins of the two biblical cities associated with homosexuality. The juxtaposition of such terrible punishments with the rhetoric of a just deity is the apogee of the gay religious critique. Alejandro points out the obvious point of contradiction, one that is also present in his own father, that Sebastián is quoting such religious beliefs while also being a scientist. Often despite their differences of beliefs in the spiritual realm, science and religion have come together in support of normative gender roles for men and women in regard to the necessity of heterosexuality as a function of society and the nation surviving and succeeding. To Sebastián, the rejection of his religious ideals is nothing more than sarcasm, Alejandro's "escudito de defense" (224). He boldly tells Alejandro that "¡Mirá lo que te está pasando! ¿Qué más precisás para darte cuenta de que estás desatando la furia divina? Dios es enorme y misericordioso pero también es terriblemente justo" (224-25). It is this sense of being terribly just in defending the sanctity of the heterosexual family that reinforces Sebastián's way of thinking despite his scientific background. His place in society is guaranteed by defending the beliefs and ideals of patriarchal masculinity in which he must choose the honorable job of defending the virtue of his family over desires that can be cast aside as mere genital urges that he can claim forced him to make ill informed decisions for a short period of time. Sebastián, like Alejandro's father, is both a scientist and a devout Catholic and feels able to use his religious beliefs to justify his decisions as he states clearly "Dios es generoso, pero no se puede desafiar su plan divino y su plan divino es la procreación, nos da un mundo, Alejandro, tenemos el don de crear vida, no podemos jugar con eso" (227). For Sebastián, there is no arguing with the commands of God and that includes denying his own

body's desires and attraction toward Alejandro in order to comply with it. The only acceptable outcome here is to honor the family the way society has deemed is acceptable, as a patriarchal unit with a man in charge, his wife by his side and his children obediently listening to his commands. The potential destruction of this entity would be the destruction of Sebastián's existence and a tension he'd rather not face as we have seen with Manuel.

Returning to the representation of the discord between a man being both gay and a father in *La razón de los amantes*, the representation of Diego from the perspective of Laura in relation to being a man of the house with a family shows a similar ideal towards a lack of reconciliation for men to be these two things at the same time. During a visit to their home, Diego has an interaction with Martina, calling himself a friend of Manuel's to which Laura immediately tries to establish his lack of belonging in such a place as a home. His words complimenting their home and thanking them for inviting Diego into this space makes her pause and think that "algo no calza en esas frases convencionales" (195). The narrator then reveals that "Laura debe admitir que Diego se ve fuera de sitio en ese ambiente" (195) of their home. It could be easy to write off her thought of him not belonging within their home on a personal level because of the newness of the relationship between him and Manuel but it is the choice of words "ese ambiente" that signals to something more than just seeming out of place in their home. He seems to be out of place in a space that has been designated as that of a family and reflects the societal expectations of what a family should be, a man and woman married and reproducing to continue the project of the nation. Diego's visibility in the space of the family home, a place centered and coded as heteronormative, reinforces the idea that men who are openly gay, as Diego is known for in the novel, cannot pertain to the world of the nuclear family. Instead, they must imitate a family life as Manuel does if they are wont to have children as men are socialized to want in order to

comply with the demands of patriarchal masculinity and hide their same sex desires from public view and seek out some sort of fulfillment in private. Maintaining an air of privacy protects one's own self-image in public as an upstanding citizen while also more importantly protecting the image of the family. The stain of homosexuality is so strong and so unwanted in this democratic Chile that even in the face of the many problems Manuel faces by coming out to work and his wife, the choice of suicide is more desirable than facing down the tensions and challenges of moving forward and trying to be an openly gay father to his daughter.

The suicide of Manuel comes loaded with negative implications and tension for gay and queer men that find themselves caught between two worlds of wanting to explore and indulge their same sex or queered desires that have been coded as deviant and unacceptable and wanting to be a father figure to a child. To begin with, it reflects the tragic nature of gay characters that has been prevalent in Argentinian letters throughout the 20th century that Melo developed in his work. He describes it as such: "la tragedia y la ausencia de final feliz han sido la recurrencia en la literatura argentina al retratar amores entre hombres" (156). Some examples he provides of the type of tragedy that prevents a happy ending are "*gay bashings*, suicidios, asesinatos, enfermedades letales que actúan a modo de redención" (156) that occur frequently in regard to gay and queer men in Argentine literature. In the case of Manuel, he is a literary representation of a tragic figure who engages in suicide to resolve what he sees as a life without the futurity of his queerness that Muñoz writes[17] is so important to the future of the queer movement and its people. The lack of a way forward for Manuel is a common perception many gay citizens have encountered in which the only solution to their issue of being outed as gay and losing the life they had before is turning to suicide and to cease being by turning towards death. Is this the path

[17] José Esteban Muñoz states that "queerness is not yet here. Queerness is an ideality. Put another way, we are not yet queer. We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality" (1). He also describes queerness as the "potentiality or concrete possibility for another world" (1).

forward though that Simonetti sees for gay men in Chile who also want to be father figures to children? He is not proposing a solution to the problem in *La razón de los amantes* but instead is engaging in the reproduction of a tragic gay figure that has been present in Latin American literary representations of gay men for a long time. As with the figure of La Manuela (whose name is identical to Manuel's) who is also a queer parental figure of Chile's literary past, the path of reconciling parental duties and responsibilities with queer sexualities seems to inevitably lead to a violent death. Manuel's suicide reveals the tension with problems of reconciling one's homosexuality and one's desire to be a father figure is still culturally unacceptable, especially when one pertains to the higher social classes of Santiago as Manuel does unlike his literary predecessor La Manuela who was from the poorer rungs of society in a rural area. Once his secret is no longer safe, and the honor of his family will become stained by the still present homosexual pathology many upper-class heteronormative Chileans project onto people who identify as gay or queer.

In Bazán's work on the other hand, Alejandro finds himself in a unique situation but one that is cut off at the end of the book and not allowed to develop into a more detailed possibility of action for an openly gay man who finds himself thrust into a parental role. As Alejandro stands in the room looking at his step-nephew, he notices that Ezequiel "me mira y sonríe. No me da ternura ni ansiedad ni alegría ni piedad. Sería cuestión de que esta presión aumentase un poco, sólo un poco" (252). His first reaction to standing over him is to deny himself as a father figure and instead he turns toward ideas of putting him out of his misery with his family gone and Alejandro's own misery of having to deal with a child. The thoughts of killing Ezequiel pass and he starts to think of himself like his father and the book ends with the joining of an openly gay man and the image of a father figure. This is prompted by a heart to heart talk with his father

just before he dies in which he learns of how unwanted he was and how awful his father was as a person. His father never outright says his job, but it's implied he was a spy or torturer under the military junta. This pushes him to reject imitating his father and all of the social meanings that come with his image as a patriarchal family man. He thinks of his father and tells himself- in his mind "Yo no soy él. No soy mi papa" (252) and that "no voy a caminar con los pasos de papa" (252). He is consigning his father's role as a patriarchal man and a father to a place of invisibility. The second comment can be read as his own declaration that he won't become a father type figure, but this becomes hard to believe when he later tells young Ezequiel, who he calls Solcito, that "conseguiste un cambio en mi vida" (253) which signals his intent of a change in his life that means he will become the caretaker of Ezequiel. This signifies that his comment about not following in "los pasos de papa" (252) means he won't behave in the same way his father did towards him. It is only moments before his father's death that his father reveals to him how he was a government agent who killed people and only impregnated his mother because she had found out and he did not want her following him. Alejandro confesses to himself "acabo de confirmar que nací para nada" (247) after his father's deathbed confessional. It is Alejandro's candid manner in which he learns of and deals with being told his life does not carry much meaning for his family members that makes his comments about not following in his father's footsteps more personalized to his own situation than a father figure in general. Since he has no interest in being a father, he doesn't feel any emotional attachment to Ezequiel and he's unsure of what to do now that Ezequiel has been left orphaned. The novel abruptly ends leaving the reader with Alejandro's intention to take on raising Ezequiel but in a different way.

Bazán's lack of development beyond leaving the story of a forty-year-old gay man who finds out he is the last living relative of a young boy is an interesting choice as it shows the

current state of affairs in a country where, at the time of the book's publishing, had only seen legislation granting same-sex couples the right to marry and adopt children for less than a year. This doesn't imply that gay fathers haven't at some point carried out the role of being a father and gay. It also obviously does not mean a gay parent was incapable of taking care of a child before legal recognitions were created but the lack of development of how an openly gay man takes on the role of father in a socially acceptable manner suggests that its visibility is low. In the role of being a father and being openly gay, the issue of visibility is one that must be addressed. As noted in the brief encounter from *La trilogía de las fiestas* earlier in the chapter, the character Gabriel notes that the men of authority and power who regulate the implementation of the law feel that a gay man should not be in charge of the custody and well-being of a minor. He must keep his visibility as a father high while keeping his sexual orientation hidden. He warns if the hidden gay side were to become to public, it would mean a strong possibility of losing custody of his niece. This feeling of unease and lack of trust stems from the common themes of deviance, marginalization and pathologizing of the gay male body. The gay man is forced to choose between performing as a heterosexual man who has a child or being open about his sexual orientation and risk losing rights to his child. The title of the book *Vos porque no tenés hijos* comes from a phrase that the two heterosexual fathers use to explain condescendingly to Alejandro that he cannot understand their point of view because he doesn't have children and he lacks an ability to gain that knowledge because of his gay identity. They also use it in a way to confirm he not only doesn't have children but can't have children because of his sexual orientation. Therefore, he is denied the right to understand how to handle situations involving raising children because of his homosexuality.

Concluding Thoughts

Both of these novels reflect a harsh reality for gay men in Southern Cone cultures, that being open about their sexual orientation and being fathers can come loaded with more challenges and tensions than fathers who pertain to the heteronormative norm must confront on a daily basis. Neither novel openly gives a positive representation of the situation in both Chile and Argentina. Even though it is likely that gay men have raised children before the publication of these books, it is certain that they have not found acceptance at every turn as their heterosexual counterparts because of the combination of two aspects of their masculinity, being a father and having same sex desires. Connell and the many other voices mentioned here have made clear the connection of fatherhood with manhood as part of the culmination of a young boy's journey into adulthood and taking his place as a leader and representative of the heteronormative cultural expectations that dominate both countries. Through the characters of Manuel and Sebastián, we are able to see the complicated nature of navigating one's same sex desires while also being a father and maintaining a heterosexual marriage. Miller's research on how men who find themselves in these situations and also recognizing they have same sex desires that force them to undertake various strategies in order to fulfill their own needs while also maintaining a heteronormative relationship they feel is crucial to their survival in society. As Goldberg and Lewin also make clear, the status of gay fathers is also complicated by a lack of representation in public, acceptance as a possibility and pushback from members of their own community. The man who has come to openly endorse his homosexual lifestyle and continue embracing their fatherhood role finds it comes at a cost to his ability to date men of the gay lifestyle who see children as a hindrance more than a desired aspect of their lives. The other danger these men who are fathers and openly endorse their gay lifestyle incur is a rupture with the dominant heteronormative culture. But they do not engage in disidentifying with the dominant demands of

obligatory heterosexuality. Instead they acknowledge the cultural power of the social pressures of men who enact a patriarchal masculinity and maintain a performance of the heteronormative lifestyle. By using the tools of disidentification, these men could have challenged the dominant ideas of what a father figure could be and changed their lives. But as the characters in the novel reveal happens often, bridging the gap between gay men and father roles still has a long path forward for progress.

In the case of Manuel, he is careful to maintain a secrecy to his affair with Diego because he knows the consequences of making his gay identity visible and openly disidentifying with his heteronormative life and upper-class family he is part of. He must exist in an in-between place of visibility and invisibility where he must hide his desires, yet he knows that making them visible will come under scrutiny. It is his falling in love with Diego that pushes him beyond limits even he was unaware he had to seek out a relationship a same sex relationship at all costs. Despite the rumors of Diego's sexuality, Manuel persists in their affair until he is eventually outed to his wife. Her response is one that reflects a dominant position in Chilean society, to deny Manuel access to his old life and their daughter. His eventual suicide represents his feeling he has no other way forward after losing his job, his marriage, his family and his lover that inspired him to take all of the risks he had deemed worth it. Sebastián on the other hand relies on his religious beliefs to save him from his perceived mistake of getting involved with Alejandro. His views on God and the power to be punished by him reflect a very traditional point of view and the discourse in the novel criticizes it in an absurd manner in which they are portrayed. Bazán though, like Simonetti, succeeds at representing the complicated nature of navigating one's homosexual feelings and the traditional family life. They both show in their novels that the path forward for gay men who want to be open about their sexual orientation and be fathers to

children have a challenge ahead of them and will be watched closely by the dominant society. Even though legislation in Argentina and Chile has made the legal path forward easier, it still does not reflect the societal expectations of men reconciling two very different dynamics of masculinity, that of being a gay man and a father. We can only hope that as more and more LGBTQ+ families come together with the legalizing of the processes to allow them to form their own family units that more positive literary representations will emerge to challenge the conceptions that gay families are problematic for society. For now, the representations of gay men as father present in the works by Bazán and Simonetti as examples of the complicated and challenging nature of how gay men navigate the worlds of fulfilling their own desires and establishing themselves as valid father figures.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, an in-depth analysis of contemporary gay and queer works of literary cultural production in Chile and Argentina demonstrates the complicated and challenging future for men of the LGBTQ+ community as they work to leave the shadows of invisibility in regard to their own identity that goes against the demands of heteronormative and patriarchal ideologies. With their project of creating a positive visibility regime for themselves and leaving behind their status as invisibilized citizens, they construct their own positive visibility regime developing their own subjectivities from a more LGBTQ+ centric perspective. As happened throughout the 19th and 20th centuries when there were many public discourses and counter narratives controlling the visibility of the members of the LGBTQ+ community, the new-found visibility has also come loaded with what Leo Bersani describes as "once we agreed to being seen, we also agreed to being policed" (12). There is tension still present as the LGBTQ+ community gains more and more visibility with citizens who still believe in the traditional roles of family and men (sometimes coming from within the LGBTQ+ community too) protesting their queer presence such as in the case of the same sex couple out with their child for breakfast in Buenos Aires mentioned in Chapter 5 where outright physical violence was still used against them. While they are making progress, it does come at a cost of being made hyper-visible.

Despite this understanding of knowing a watchful eye will be upon them, gay and queer writers have continued to publish works that create new and empowered representations of themselves that challenge the narratives and negative images often associated with them. At

times, this meant going out into the city and participating in publics spaces as Pedro Lemebel did with his many public appearances that sought to challenge the patriarchal ideals meant to silence him and as Mhoris eMm continues to do with his slam poetry competitions and public performances. For gay men, it has meant developing a complicated and intertwined masculine identity that empowers them to embrace their gay lifestyle and sexual orientation along with aspects of dominant culture to attempt to gain legitimacy and recognition in public. For some gay men who want to be fathers, it means challenging the status quo idea of what a family can be, combating images of women being seen as the only capable nurturing members of society and pushing back against backlash in the gay community about being a gay father. The visibility of gay and lesbian parents is still so new that positive and empowering representations in literature are still lacking in positive representations as was argued in Chapter 5. The question is still complicated and full of tension in regard to how LGBTQ+ families are repreented in public discourses. These projects of visibility present an interesting perspective "because it allows us to enhance our understanding of the social as simultaneously a material and immaterial phenomenon – or better, as a specific prolongation and convergence between the layer of the material and that of the immaterial in the constitution of the social" (Brighenti 4). In other words, by looking at how these writers and authors are creating their own visibility regimes about the LGBTQ+ community, we can see our society is constituted and controlled by dominant, hegemonic images.

Images of men as strong, stoic and most importantly heterosexual have been a hallmark of nations around the world to utilize as the symbol of a strong nation and family but these images are being challenged by members of the LGBTQ+ community as the only acceptable images of men. Despite hegemonic masculinity not being a type of masculinity enacted by most

men, its presence and demand of men to comply remains present in contemporary times in Chile and Argentina but this is changing. Emerging authors that have had less influence from the Peronist or Pinochet years and show less inhibitions towards embracing and making visible their anti-normative sexuality. What does this propose for the future of gender relations, identity and sexuality if the boundaries and expectations shift from a set cultural expectation to the freedom and ability of each individual to self-identify as they see best reflects how they see themselves? This question poses the existence of a post-gender world that is nowhere near close to existing, but questions are being asked and challenges are being made to ideas of gender and sexuality that have dominated the cultural landscape of Chile and Argentina. Once a place where being perceived as queer could be grounds for arrest and disappearance, Argentina in the 21st century is seen by some in the LGBTQ+ community as a bastion of tolerance and acceptance. Yet this acceptance and tolerance is confined to certain spaces within the country and even within the city of Buenos Aires. A gay or queer couple would not find the same acceptance and tolerance of their open and visible expressions of affection for each other in the southern neighborhood of La Boca as they would in San Telmo or Palermo. Argentina's perception of being a beacon for the LGBTQ+ community comes from their active participation in responding to demands from the community for rights and protections guaranteed under the law. Chile has been slower with laws and protections than its Southern Cone counterpart as Jordi Diez notes in his study of same-sex marriage laws and how the Chilean LGBTQ+ community has faced more problems with coming together to fight as a collective.

The issue of visibility is one at the forefront of the LGBTQ+ movement as silence and erasure have often been the dominant culture's demands of their anti-normative citizens. The strong presence of activism in Latin America has helped push these issues to the forefront as

activists in Chile and Argentina push for rights and protections under the law. Their strategies bring visibility to the LBGTQ+ community and the issues they face because of the long past of discrimination and pathologization of any sort of sexuality not heterosexual in nature. In Latin America, "conservative religious groups still treat homosexuality as an illness, and conversion therapies are available throughout the region" (Rocha 54). Despite the gains made at the legislative level, changing the cultural and social attitudes towards the LGBTQ+ will take more time. It might even be a stretch to use the word citizen in some cases as looking at the manner in which people who were labelled as *raro* or *homosexual* were often mistreated without fear of repercussion or punishment but the coalescing around a common goal of fighting for rights and visibility with the Gay Liberation Movement has helped fuel a gradual change towards the negative perceptions of the LGBTQ+ community. In reviewing the presence of gay and queer men in literary representations and the debates at present in academia surrounding their changing representations and visibility, the discussions are often focused on a recovery process that highlight the presence of gay and queer voices in literature throughout the late 19th and entire 20th century to show they have a historical presence despite their often tenuous relationship with visibility and invisibility. Their visibility generally came coupled with hyper-visibility and invisibility within a public discourse that argued their sexual interests stemmed from a psychological disorder and deviance with the goal of relegating them back to a space of invisibility. It also came through employing their own versions of masculinity but the relationship between gay men and hegemonic masculinity is distinct to that of men who identify as queer. For many men (and women) who identify as gay (and lesbian), their search for rights and protections is often centered on gaining access to the same recognitions of the dominant heteronormative culture of marriage and family life. On the other hand, those who approach

gender, sexuality and the family from a queer perspective have less interest in replicating heteronormative institutions and focus more on creating possibilities for expression of themselves as people outside of the boundaries of normative gender and familial roles. Even one of queer theory's pioneer voices in Judith Butler has not been a vocal proponent of same-sex marriage initiatives as she finds them to be limiting in regard to the plethora of identities that form the LGBTQ+ community.

The development of a cohesive gay masculine identity for gay men is an important step in the process of creating their own gay identity centered on their own gay lifestyle and culture as Carlos Jáuregui made clear in his own work and activism. Gay masculinity as a manifestation of the plurality of masculinities is just another step forward in chipping away at the power hold that patriarchal masculinity has held in Argentina and Chile. By changing the dynamic of the active/passive binary, gay men are challenging a problem David William Foster identifies as common in Latin American literature involving gay characters. He states that "it is an unavoidable fact of Latin American fiction that the insertee – aside from any characterization as morally, emotionally, and psychologically disadvantaged – is routinely portrayed as the victim of macho exploitation, whether in terms of male rage, power politics, person and social revenge, or opportunistic randiness" (4). It is here that I argue new representations of empowered gay men written by gay men is challenging the representation of an imposed heteronormative active/passive binary that can serve to liberate the image of gay as being weak and effeminate in sexual encounters and thus subordinating them to other men. But do these gay men enacting their own masculinity weaken the hegemonic hold on power for patriarchal men? It depends on the point of view from which one is arguing but public perceptions towards the LGBTQ+ community in Chile and Argentina are changing to a more positive perspective and influencing a

change in the outlooks of younger men to being more open and accepting of gay men. Through the development of an intersectional look at men through the lens Masculinity Studies, Gender Studies and Queer Theory, the challenges to masculinity as being a monolith guiding the identity development of men and the emerging plurality of masculinities is changing the conversation on how men can express themselves and their subjectivities.

The magazine and cultural association *Ajo blanco* that is distributed throughout Spain, Argentina and Chile discusses the appearance of a multitude of masculinities in various articles published since 2016. Coral Herrera Gómez states in her article titled "Otras formas de ser hombres son posibles" that "en la medida en que vamos visibilizando otras masculinidades y vamos inventando otras nuevas, el patriarcado se va resquebrajando. Cada vez hay más hombres trabajando para visibilizar la diversidad de las masculinidades y para generar espacios de resistencia al patriarcado" (Herrera Gómez 2017). As I have discussed at length here, a key aspect to these other forms of masculinity is their visibility which allows them to become part of the larger discourse of masculinity. It has allowed men who identify as gay to engage in constructing their own masculinity which has incorporated elements of patriarchal masculinity, but it does not impose itself on others as hegemonic masculinity is wont to do. Identifying a developed and cohesive gay masculinity is empowering for gay men to see themselves as men and valued members of their culture and society. The question then becomes whether the recognition of a plurality of masculinities will cause a move towards a post-gender society. At present a post-gender world is still far more a theoretical idea than reality as gay men are not looking to differentiate themselves as much as find a way to be a more acceptable part of the hierarchy of power associated with masculinity. Gay men who want to get married and have children find their situation to be far more complicated as they often face push back within the

gay community and from the public at large. In Latin America, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Colombia recognize same-sex marriage and mutual adoption rights of both partners and Chile and Ecuador recognize civil unions of same-sex couples and adoptions are permitted at the time of this study to one of the members of the union. In Ecuador, a May 2018 Supreme Court ruled that for the first time a young girl to be registered as the daughter of a lesbian couple. In Chile, Michelle Bachelet is pushing for a reform of the Chilean legal system to recognize marriage and full adoption rights for both members of a marital union but the debates in the Chilean Congress continue at present.

The issue of gay and queer parents is not new, but its visibility to the public is. The gay male characters of Chapter 5 are caught in between being able to enact their own gay masculinity and the demands of fatherhood which has often found itself at odds with both heteronormative and gay culture. A lack of role models coupled with a perception of opposition from within the community can make it challenging for gay fathers to find access to tools that can help them succeed and belong to a supportive community. In addition to a lack of resources, there still exists tension between societal expectations of men who are fathers and gay. The attacks come from all sides as seen with Manuel who is ostracized from his family life because of his exploration of his gay identity. Sebastián feels drawn back to the role of a heteronormative fatherhood due to the influence of his religious beliefs. In addition to the tension of gay fatherhood, the novels also show a lack of role models. Even when placed into a position where he will become a father figure, Alejandro is left unsure of what to do as he's been made to feel his entire life that he is not capable of performing those duties as a gay man. Caretaker roles are represented as feminized due to a lack of men's role around the home with child rearing. Interestingly there are children's books emerging such as *Nicolás tiene 2 papás* in Chile by

psychologist Leslie Nicholls that has generated a fair amount of criticism from religious groups and those who defend the patriarchal structure of the family. Throughout the novel, Nicolás narrates his life living with his two fathers and his interactions not only with them but his mother as well. His narration of a homoparental(same-sex) family unit challenges the convention that all families involve just one mother and one father. The rejection of a children's book narrating and normalizing these LGBTQ+ families demonstrates the continued resistance to challenges of the idealized patriarchal family but the continual visibilization and discussion in public discourse surrounding the LGBTQ+ family unit is provoking changes of what is socially acceptable.

The queer question is also shaking the foundations of hegemonic masculinity with the manner in which it "attends to the interdependence of gender, sexuality, and family in relation to heteronormativity, and to how heteronormativity is produced through discourse – that is, the talk and action of everyday life" (Goldberg 11). By taking a closer look at daily life with the intent of analyzing and destabilizing the gender and sexuality systems that construct important parts of people's lives, queer theory asks the questions of whether these systems are necessary and has been a basis for proposing new approaches to gender and sexuality. It has challenged the binary man/woman assigned to children from birth based on their biological sex as being the only way for people to express their gender identity. It would be difficult to say that the binary of man/woman will disappear into a post-gender reality, but the concern of queer questions of gender and sexuality will continue to ask whether these norms and guidelines of socially constructed gender roles are necessary for people more interested in constructing their own subjectivities. The queered realities analyzed in the works of Lemebel and eMm in Chapter 4 demonstrate a challenge to the notion that the heteronormative system of gender and sexuality is the only stable choice for people to express their own gender identity and sexual orientation.

Despite Halberstam's lamentation that queer theory needs to move from the academic sphere to the everyday world, queer theory has helped shift the conversation from one of using socially constructed notions of gender to the possibility of individuals constructing their own gender identity. As recently as March 2019 in Buenos Aires, Lara María Bertolini successfully argued that her DNI card should read "femeneidad travesti" instead of "femenino" for her gender identity. Judge Cataldi who oversaw the case insisted Bertolini's gender should reflect her preference and that the Registro Civil should offer more choices of gender identity for Argentine citizens. It will be interesting to see how this same issue plays out in Chile during 2019 and 2020 as Sebastián Piñera halts the push for more reforms and legal recognitions of members of the Chilean LGBTQ+ community.

In addition to the authors examined here, there are many more who are merit examination and analysis such as Ioshua from Argentina. Ioshua is the performance name of Josué Belmonte who grew up in the slums of Buenos Aires and died in 2015 from AIDS related complications. Ioshua published a variety of cultural production including poetry, graphic novels, short stories, and novels. Ioshua did not see himself as living in a closet to come out of as he states: "nunca le confesé a nadie que era homosexual porque nunca consideré a nadie por encima de mí a quien yo debiera confesarle nada" (13). He creates an image of his queer self as already existing and visible to the world. In regard to the closet he says: "nunca permití que me encerraran en uno. No tenía que salir si mi vida era natural, franca, auténtica y avanzaba así por el mundo, por el barrio" (13). He breaks with the performance of the closet Sedgwick discusses as a "performance initiated as such by the speech act of a silence -- not a particular silence, but a silence that accrues particularity by fits and starts, in relation to the discourse that surrounds and differentially constitutes it" (3). By breaking this silence of the closet, he is able to focus on the

representation of a masculine figure he calls “los wachos”, a group of poor men whose visibility is often tied to poverty, drug abuse and living on the streets as prostitutes. His dedication to them was such that he named a publishing house he founded and operated from 2010-2014 Wachodelacalle. In spite of their suffering, Ioshua seeks to change the regime of visibility of these young men by (re)constructing an image of these disposable bodies as men capable of love, loving themselves by loving each other. In other words, he is challenging the negative visibility regime around los wachos and creating a new regime in which they are represented as queer men capable of love and tenderness, not just bodies to be used and discarded. In 2015, publishing house Nulú Bonsai published a collection of Ioshua’s works called *Todas las obras acabadas de Ioshua* (2015) that collects his works from 2008 published as *Piola petero* and continues up until 2015 with poetry and other works collected in *Guarda bien este secreto*. Ioshua’s focus is not only on his sexual orientation but the political and economic aspects associated with the boys and men that inhabit his queer world.

Ioshua’s *Cumbiagei Comix XXX Para vos wachin* (2011) opens with a faceless young man wearing a hat that says “para vos wachin”. By invoking the cumbia, Ioshua is referencing a style of music that is popular in Argentina (and throughout many countries of Latin America as well). The cumbia villera came out of Argentine slums and employs the language and vocabulary of marginalized lower classes paired with themes of drug use, prostitution, poverty and nights out at clubs that play cumbia. Ioshua is taking this well-known musical genre and putting it through his queer perspective to show voices even more marginalized within those poor communities. In the cover photo of this short graphic novel, he pairs several symbols together that for many of the traditional family and heteronormative culture could be considered heresy. He joins together the naked male body of the wacho with images of four penises pointed as his

face, a fifth penis is in a thought bubble next to his head to suggest he is thinking about them, a heart and a cross necklace worn by the young man. The appearance of the male genitalia as a cover image is common in many of Ioshua's short graphic novels to bring to the fore images that are generally deemed to be against the public standards of decency. The placement of the penis with a heart and cross join these two images together with a previously censored object. Ioshua is pushing his reader to see these images as belonging together and queering the public's sense of what is acceptable. Above the young man reads the words "Para vos wachín, ya no va a doler" (489). This reference to pain is not just one of exterior status in poverty but the negative impacts of this poverty that leaves these young men marginalized and represented as being unlovable.

His focus on the *wacho*, or *guacho*, brings to the forefront issues of poverty and marginalization as the word *guacho* has several meanings. Colloquially it can be a term of endearment between friends in spite of its meaning that someone is dishonest or mischievous. It also can reference someone who is poor or an orphan child. As is often the case with marginalized groups and members of the LGBTQ+ community, terms from heteronormative spaces towards them generally can be taken as insults and used to dehumanize them while members within the community will use them amongst each other as terms of endearment, likely to weaken the negative connotation from the central societal power structure. By bringing this figure that is both marginalized by poverty and a lack of familial bonds that grant access to the higher echelons of porteño society, Ioshua is queering, or challenging and attempting to destabilize the figures of men and masculinity that are put at the forefront of Argentine society through his own literary cultural production. It is not the wealthy, aristocratic or well-connected man that the story revolves around as can be seen in the stories involving representations of gay masculinity discussed in Chapter 3. We, as the public and spectators, are getting a different

perspective of two men who would generally be assumed to be engaging in some sort of relationship that involves money for sex and/or drugs. Grau Hertt, one of the editors at Nulú Bonsai, stated that "Ioshua, encarnando un montón de prejuicios que le jugarían en contra a cualquiera, se encargó de romper todos los tabúes en torno al lenguaje, a las apariencias" (Diario Contexto Interview). Ioshua queers our perceptions of these marginalized men by breaking these taboos about them, by taking us into their lives and beyond any type of capital focused interaction from someone who might seek them out for paid sex act and showing they are capable of deep feelings and love. The queered masculinity of these young men finds happiness and love amongst each other instead outside of boundaries of heteronormative expectations of how men must find and express love.

In closing with this brief analysis of Ioshua, another important figure of the contemporary Argentine LGBTQ+ community, I want to show how he represents another example of an important queer voice that merits more attention of the rising tide of positive LGBTQ+ visibility. The reworking of negative visibility regimes and the proposing of newer more positive ones from writers/artists/performance artists who openly identify as gay or queer themselves is helping to change the public perception and social acceptability of a marginalized community. A critical point of this shift has been transforming the concept of masculinity from one of a hegemonic and patriarchal nature to a more open-ended expression by men of how they view themselves as men. By stepping beyond the rules and regulations that have dictated men's behavior and the acceptable images of men in public discourse, a plethora of expressions of masculinity are changing the way men see themselves in society. Instead of masculinity existing as a black or white highly structured model, it's transforming into more of a spectrum of possibilities for men to choose how they see themselves as men. It reflects what Edwards

describes as “learning about queer culture expands dominant heteronormative traditions: it not only permits, but insists upon, renegotiation and reorientation within contemporary frameworks” (193). This expansion of dominant heteronormative traditions can work to transform them from imposing monoliths to more open and accepting expressions of gender identity and sexuality. By transforming masculinity from a technology that is imposed on the male body to an open expression of how men see themselves in an individual level will transform the concept and potential of masculinity as a whole. The works examined in this project are part of this transformation process that is taking place and working towards a more inclusive future in which men feel less as if they have to comply with strict demands of how to express their masculinity and permit them to formulate their own ideas of what being a man means in Chile, Argentina and other countries around the world in which LGBTQ+ visibility continues to grow and create a dialogue on the changing status of gender and sexual identity.

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